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# Editorial

Preparation of some of this year's issues of CODESRIA journals, most notably *CODESRIA Bulletin* and *Africa Development*, started under the direction of Prof. Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi while he served at the CODESRIA Secretariat in Dakar.Oanda, as we call him, was Senior Programme Officer in the Training, Grants and Fellowships (TGF) Programme and Acting Head of the Publication and Dissemination Programme. In August 2022, his contract with CODESRIA came to an end. The Council retained his services under CODESRIA's sabbatical arrangement until October 2022, when he formally resigned to join Mastercard Foundation as Head of Research Strengthening. A few of the forthcoming issues of CODESRIA journals, including *Africa Development*, *Journal of Higher Education in Africa* (JHEA) and *CODESRIA Bulletin* will still bear Prof. Oanda's name as editor because he edited the manuscripts and oversaw the production of these articles before he left the service of the Council.

Oanda, as he is popularly known at the Secretariat, first engaged with CODESRIA during the 1997 Democratic Governance Institute. Then a young lecturer at Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya, he acquitted himself admirably at the Institute, whose director was the late Jean-Marc Ela. His first ever peer-reviewed publication was titled 'Economic Reform, Political Liberalisation and Economic Ethnic Conflict in Kenya', published in 1999 in *Africa Development*, Vol. 24, Nos 1&2 (10.4314/ad.v24i1.22118). Since then, Oanda has published on several platforms of intellectual engagement but especially in his area

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CODESRIA

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of expertise, the field of higher education studies. His accomplished interventions in this field led him to be appointed one of the editors of the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa* and he contributed significantly to revitalising the journal to its current standing. He also scaled the heights of academia to become Associate Professor at Kenyatta University before he joined CODESRIA.

At CODESRIA, Oanda served as Programme Officer in the Research Programme from June 2015 to August 2016, before being appointed by the Executive Committee to the position of Senior Programme Officer in TGF from September 2016 to 31 August 2022. Oanda revived several programmes at CODESRIA, including the higher education component of CODESRIA's work and, briefly, the economic justice aspect of the Council's programme. He was a key proponent of investing in what he justifiably understood to be CODESRIA's core areas of work and in doing so he went the extra mile to secure funding to establish the Economic Justice Institute, which ran until 2017. While the initiative did not last, it remains a good illustration of Oanda's belief that issues of economic justice ought always to be core to CODESRIA's research agenda.

Oanda stands out for his ability to raise funds for the Council. Over the period he worked at CODESRIA, he developed funding proposals to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Andrew Mellon Foundation and Open Society Institute of Southern Africa (OSISA). By our internal calculations, he single-handedly raised USD 6,380,000. He also contributed to other funding proposals the Council developed, most importantly the proposed project on the Sahel. This project, developed jointly with the Arab Council for the Social Sciences, was meant to enable a reflection on the Sahel using the humanities as an entry point. Oanda developed and nurtured the Council's relationship with funding partners and left a rich legacy of fundraising on behalf of the Council. Indeed, among CODESRIA's senior programme staff he holds the record for fundraising, which he was focused on up to his last days at CODESRIA. To the last day, he remained concerned about the health of the Council especially in the context of the series of audits the Council went through after 2020.

But perhaps Ibrahim Oanda's greatest legacy to CODESRIA is its publishing system. By the end of 2019, the Council had accumulated a backlog in all its core journals, including *Africa Development*. I requested senior colleagues in the Secretariat to work together to resolve this challenge. Ibrahim Oanda agreed to step in as Acting Head of Publications and deal with the problem. Through a consultative process, he reorganised the different editorial and production elements of the programme, secured qualified and competent external service providers for copy-editing, cover design, typesetting, proofreading and indexing, and put them to work. He created an editorial and production pipeline, set targets for staff and worked meticulously to reduce and eliminate the backlog.

Oanda facilitated the development of a new database for peer review, created a systematic process of tracking articles and ensured that a proper system of feedback to researchers was established. He nudged the Council to invest in proper dissemination channels so that the work of the Council would be easily and effectively projected to the wider society and the impact of its research would be felt beyond the academy. He even fundraised for dissemination and ensured that modest resources were available in budgets to facilitate dissemination. A significant component of the recent advancements in CODESRIA's communication and dissemination is in large measure due to Oanda's effort.

Once the publication system was running smoothly, CODESRIA was able to generate enough content to sustain a daily update to the community through our different platforms, including our website and social media. This was in no small measure due to the effort, commitment and hard work of Oanda. By the time he departed from the Council, both *Africa Development* and *JHEA* had a sufficient number of articles. He left behind enough fully edited and typeset articles to cover all the available issues of *Africa Development* for 2023. This is the reason his name will appear as editor of some of the forthcoming issues of *Africa Development*, even though he has formally left the Council.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, staff of the Secretariat, and the community in general, I want to express our gratitude to Prof. Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi for his excellent service to CODESRIA and its community of scholarship. His dedication to work, his commitment and loyalty to CODESRIA as an institution, and the humility with which he engaged with everyone, are all attributes worth emulating. As a Council, we wish him the very best in his new roles and look forward to reunion whenever opportunity allows.

**Godwin R. Murunga**
Executive Secretary,
CODESRIA

# Éditorial

La préparation de certains numéros des revues du CODESRIA de l'année en cours, le *Bulletin* du *CODESRIA et Afrique et Développement* en particulier, a commencé sous la direction du Professeur Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi, alors qu'il était encore sous contrat avec le Secrétariat du CODESRIA à Dakar. Oanda, comme nous aimions l'appeler, était l'Administrateur principal du Programme Formation, Subventions et Bourses (TGF) et assurait l'intérim du Programme Publications et Dissémination. Son contrat avec le CODESRIA est arrivé à son terme en août 2022, mais le Conseil, dans le cadre de son dispositif sabbatique, l'a retenu jusqu'en octobre 2022, date à laquelle il a officiellement démissionné pour rejoindre la Fondation Mastercard en tant que Responsable du renforcement de la recherche. Quelques-uns des prochains numéros des revues du CODESRIA, notamment *Afrique et Développement*, la *Revue de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique* (RESA) et le *Bulletin du CODESRIA* porteront encore le sceau du Professeur Oanda en tant qu'éditeur parce qu'il a révisé les manuscrits et supervisé la production de ces articles avant de quitter le service du Conseil.

Les premières interactions entre Oanda et le CODESRIA remontent à l'Institut sur la gouvernance démocratique de 1997. Alors jeune enseignant à l'Université Kenyatta de Nairobi, au Kenya, il s›est admirablement acquitté de sa tâche à l'Institut, dont le directeur était feu Jean-Marc Ela. Sa toute première publication évaluée par des pairs était intitulée *« Economic Reform, Political Liberalisation and Economic Ethnic Conflict in Kenya »* (Réforme économique, libéralisation politique et conflit ethnique économique au Kenya), publiée en 1999 dans *Afrique et Développement*, Vol. 24, Nos 1&2 (10.4314/ad.v24i1.22118). Depuis lors, Oanda a publié sur plusieurs plateformes de discussions intellectuelles, mais surtout dans son domaine d'expertise, celui des études sur l'enseignement supérieur. Ses interventions accomplies dans ce domaine l'ont amené à faire partie des rédacteurs en chef de la *Revue de l'Enseignement supérieur en Afrique,* et il a contribué de manière significative à la revitalisation de la revue jusqu'à son niveau actuel. Il a également gravi les échelons universitaires pour devenir professeur associé à l'Université Kenyatta, avant de rejoindre le CODESRIA.

Au CODESRIA, Oanda a occupé le poste d'Administrateur de programme au sein du Programme de recherche de juin 2015 à août 2016, avant d'être promu par le Comité exécutif au poste d'Administrateur principal du Programme TGF de septembre 2016 au 31 août 2022. Oanda a revitalisé plusieurs programmes au CODESRIA, notamment la composante enseignement supérieur du travail du CODESRIA et, brièvement, l'aspect justice économique du programme du Conseil. Il a été l'un des principaux promoteurs de l'investissement dans ce qu'il considérait, à juste titre, comme les principaux domaines de travail du CODESRIA et, ce faisant, il a fait un effort supplémentaire pour obtenir le financement nécessaire à la création de l'Institut sur la justice économique, qui a fonctionné jusqu'en 2017. Bien que l'initiative n'ait pas duré, elle reste une bonne illustration de la conviction d'Oanda que les questions de justice économique devraient toujours être au cœur du programme de recherche du CODESRIA.

Oanda se distingue par sa capacité à lever des fonds pour le Conseil. La période pendant laquelle il a travaillé au CODESRIA, il a élaboré des propositions de financement adressées à *Carnegie Corporation of New York*, *Andrew Mellon Foundation* et *Open Society Institute of Southern Africa* (OSISA). D'après nos calculs internes, il a levé à lui seul 6 380 000 USD. Il a également contribué à d'autres propositions de financement élaborées par le Conseil, notamment le projet proposé sur le Sahel. Ce projet, développé conjointement avec le Conseil arabe des sciences sociales, devait permettre une réflexion sur le Sahel en utilisant les sciences humaines comme point d'entrée. Oanda a développé et entretenu les relations du Conseil avec les partenaires financiers et a laissé un riche héritage

de collecte de fonds au nom du Conseil. En effet, parmi les Administrateurs principaux de programme du CODESRIA, il détient le record de levée de fonds, sur laquelle il s'est concentré jusqu'à son départ du CODESRIA. Jusqu'au dernier jour, il est resté préoccupé par la santé économique du Conseil, en particulier dans le contexte de la série d'audits que le Conseil a subis après 2020.

Mais le plus grand héritage d'Ibrahim Oanda au CODESRIA est peut-être son système de publication. À la fin de l'année 2019, le Conseil avait accusé un retard dans la publication de toutes ses principales revues, y compris *Afrique et Développement*. J'ai demandé à mes collègues du Secrétariat de travailler ensemble à la résolution de ce problème. Ibrahim Oanda a accepté d'assurer l'intérim de l'Administrateur principal du Programme Publications et de s'attaquer au problème. Par le biais d'un processus consultatif, il a réorganisé les différents éléments rédactionnels et de production du programme, s'est assuré le concours de prestataires de services externes qualifiés et compétents pour la révision, la conception des couvertures, la composition, la relecture et l'indexation, et les a mis au travail. Il a créé un portefeuille rédactionnel et de production, fixé des objectifs au personnel et travaillé méticuleusement pour réduire et combler le retard.

Oanda a facilité le développement d'une nouvelle base de données pour l'évaluation par les pairs, créé un processus systématique de suivi des articles et veillé à la mise en place d'un système adéquat de retour d'information avec les chercheurs. Il a incité le Conseil à investir dans des canaux de diffusion appropriés, afin que le travail du Conseil soit facilement et efficacement projeté dans la société au sens large et que l'impact de ses recherches soit ressenti au-delà de la communauté des chercheurs. Il a même collecté des fonds pour la diffusion, en s'assurant qu'un certain pourcentage des budgets, même modeste, soit disponible pour faciliter la diffusion. Nous lui devons en grande partie les pas de géants récemment accomplis dans la communication et la diffusion du CODESRIA.

Une fois le système de publication sur les rails, le CODESRIA a été en mesure de générer suffisamment de contenu pour une mise à jour quotidienne au profit de la communauté à travers nos différentes plateformes, y compris notre site Web et les médias sociaux. Cela est dû en grande partie aux efforts, à l'engagement et au travail acharné d'Ibrahim Oanda. Au moment où il a quitté le Conseil, les publications que sont *Afrique et Développement* et *RESA* disposaient d'un nombre suffisant d'articles. Il a laissé suffisamment d'articles entièrement relus et mis en page pour couvrir tous les numéros pour *Afrique et Développement* 2023. C'est la raison pour laquelle son nom apparaîtra comme rédacteur en chef de certains des prochains numéros de *Afrique et Développement*, même s'il a officiellement quitté le Conseil.

Au nom du Comité exécutif, du personnel du Secrétariat et de la communauté en général, je tiens à exprimer notre gratitude au Professeur Ibrahim Oanda Ogachi pour l'excellente qualité des services qu'il a rendus au CODESRIA et à sa communauté de chercheurs. Son dévouement au travail, son engagement et sa loyauté envers le CODESRIA en tant qu'institution, et l'humilité avec laquelle il a échangé avec tout le monde, sont autant de qualités qui doivent servir d'émulation. En qualité de Conseil, nous exprimons nos meilleurs vœux pour sa réussite dans ses nouvelles fonctions et sommes impatients de le retrouver à chaque opportunité qui se présentera.

**Godwin R. Murunga**
Secrétaire exécutif,
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# The Globalisation of Football is Closing Performance Gaps among Countries in the World Cup

**Yusuf Bangura**

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The 2022 Qatar World Cup has been hailed as the best in the tournament's ninety-two-year history, producing moments of magic and upset, nail-biting finishes and amazing goals. This World Cup will also be remembered for signalling a serious challenge by African, Asian and North/Central American teams to football's dominance by teams from Europe and South America—the two regions that created the tournament in 1930 and have dominated it since its inception. Despite the two finalists in 2022 (Argentina and France) being European and South American teams, the World Cup is on the cusp of becoming a truly global competition in which teams from other regions have a fair chance of winning it.

Qatar 2022 has shown that there is a clear narrowing of the performance gap between countries. Gone are the days when many teams from Africa and Asia suffered heavy defeats or were mostly eliminated at the group stage of the competition. The globalisation of football, which allows players, managers and money to flow freely across football leagues around the world, accounts largely for the closing gap in football standards.

## European and South American Dominance[1]

Europe and South America have enjoyed the lions' share of participation slots for most of the tournament's history. Partly, this was due to the colonial status of much of Africa and Asia during the formative stage of the tournament and the late development of football in the two regions. Indeed, it is debatable whether the eight World Cups of 1930–1966 should be classified as World Cups because of the extremely limited or zero participation by these regions.

Prior to 1970, there were no guaranteed slots for every region or football confederation. In fact, in 1930, participation was by invitation and only thirteen countries took part in the tournament. Hosted by Uruguay, the 1930 World Cup was largely a tournament for South America, which had seven teams; Europe (four teams) and North/Central America (two teams) shared the remaining slots. No African or Asian team played in the tournament.

Europe asserted its dominance of the World Cup in 1934 when Italy played host, claiming twelve of the sixteen slots, with South America (two), the USA (one) and Egypt (one) sharing the rest. No Asian team was represented. The 1938 tournament in France repeated the 1934 Eurocentric pattern, with Europe getting thirteen slots, South America two and Asia one. There was no African team.

South America readjusted the European-South American imbalance of 1934 and 1938 in 1950, when Brazil hosted the tournament, with five slots allocated to South America, six to Europe and two to North/Central America. Africa and Asia were not represented. Again, there were only thirteen teams in the tournament.

On the Europe–South America axis, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, Italy and France stood out as the dominant countries, with France's Jules Rimet, FIFA's third president, playing a leading role in initiating the tournament. Interestingly, since Euro 1996, England likes to see itself as the home of the World Cup, with the song 'It's coming home'

becoming an English fan anthem in every World Cup tournament. What the fans may not know is that England started competing in the World Cup only in 1950. It did not feature in the founding tournament and boycotted the 1934 and 1938 tournaments, both of which it regarded as inferior to its own four-nation British International Championship of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The absence of African and Asian teams, or participation of only one team from both regions (which were treated as a single group), continued until 1970 when for the first time in the tournament's history both Africa and Asia were guaranteed one slot each. Africa and Asia increased their share of participation to two each in 1982 when the number of teams in the competition was raised from sixteen to twenty-four. However, the new format reinforced Europe's dominance, giving it an average of fourteen slots (58 per cent) in each tournament up to 1994. South America's slot was pegged at three to four (12.5 per cent–16.6 per cent).

It is important to note that Europe and South America already had football tournaments or leagues as far back as the nineteenth century. So football was more advanced in those two regions than in Africa and Asia. The prevailing view was that allocating the slots on the basis of population or number of teams in a confederation would considerably dilute the quality of the game. Africa and Asia had to earn more spots by improving the quality of their football.

FIFA used two criteria to allocate tournament slots: the number and quality of the teams in each confederation. Even before the globalisation of football, Africa was already making progress based on these criteria. In the 1994 tournament, the last time the twenty-four-team format was used, Africa was given an extra slot, bringing its share to three—half a point less than South America, which has fewer teams in its confederation than Africa. Asia's share was still pegged at two even though an Asian team (North Korea) beat a European team (Italy) in the 1966 tournament.

By the 1990s, African, Asian and Central American-Caribbean football federations had become active members of FIFA and accounted for the majority of the organisation's membership. The clamour for more slots for non-European/South American teams increased, leading to the current thirty-two-team format that was adopted in 1998. Africa's share increased to five, Asia's to 3.5 and South America's remained the same (four). Importantly, Europe's share fell from 58 per cent in 1994 to 43.75 per cent in 1998. In 2026, when a forty-eight-team format will be implemented, Europe's share will decline further to 33.3 per cent (sixteen slots). Africa will have 9.3 slots (19.3 per cent) and Asia 8.3 (17.3 per cent).

## Turning Parity in Participation into Good Performance Outcomes

The struggle for parity in participation did not immediately lead to a narrowing of the gap between Europe/South America and the other regions. In the first three World Cups that followed the allocation of single slots to Africa and Asia (1970, 1974 and 1978), no African or Asian team won a match or went beyond the first group stage.

Africa's first positive impression was in 1982, even though—as in 1978—no team got out of the first group stage. Cameroon drew in all its three group-stage matches and Algeria beat West Germany and Chile but failed to qualify for the second group stage because of collusion between West Germany and Austria, in which both teams limited the number of goals Germany would score against Austria in their final group match. The three teams ended with four points each and Algeria was eliminated on goal difference. It was this disgraceful act that prompted FIFA to schedule the final games of all teams in each group at the same time in subsequent tournaments. And in 1986, Morocco became the first country outside Europe and the Americas to qualify for the Round of 16 by beating Portugal and drawing with England.

Africa's big breakthrough was in 1990, when Cameroon topped its group at the group stage, scaled through the Round of 16 and qualified for the quarter-finals. Asia had a bad World Cup that year, as its two representatives—South Korea and the United Arab Emirates—failed to win a single point at the group stage. Africa's second representative, Egypt, also failed to get beyond the group stage. In the 1994 tournament, the Nigerian team, which had a bucketful of highly skilled players plying their trade in European leagues, put down a marker by topping its group and playing attractive, attacking football, but went out to Italy in the Round of 16. After Cameroon's brilliant performance in 1990 and Nigeria's swashbuckling display in 1994, many pundits believed that Pelé's prediction in 1977 that an African team would win the World Cup before the end of the twentieth century would be realised easily.

The only other tournaments in which an African or Asian team qualified for the quarter-finals be-

fore Qatar were in 2002, when South Korea went as far as the semi-finals and Senegal reached the quarter-finals, and 2010, when Ghana qualified for the quarter-finals. Ghana was minutes away from qualifying for the semi-finals but a goal-bound shot was flagrantly handled on the touchline and stopped from entering the net by the Uruguayan striker, Luis Suarez, and the Ghana striker, Asamoah Gyan, missed the awarded penalty.

The overall performance of African and Asian countries in World Cup tournaments before 2022 was one of few peaks, which rose above quarter-final level on only two occasions. Most teams often failed to get out of the group stage. One way of assessing the progress that African and Asian teams have made in the World Cup is to examine their performance between 1970 (when they were first given guaranteed slots) and 2022, focusing on the number of times African and Asian teams qualified from the first group stage or appeared in the Round of 16. Four African and Asian teams participated in the quarter-finals and two in the semi-finals.

As Table 1 shows, before 2022, three Asian and African teams qualified for the Round of 16 only twice—in 2002 and 2010. In three tournaments (1970, 1974 and 1978), no team from those two regions got out of the group stage. In five other tournaments (1986, 1990, 1998, 2006 and 2018) only one team featured in matches beyond the first group stage. And only two teams qualified in 1994 and 2014. In 2022, however, five African and Asian teams made it to the Round of 16. This is all the more remarkable as only one or two teams qualified in 2014 and 2018. Indeed, the 2022 Qatar tournament was the only time a team from every regional football confederation was represented in the Round of 16.

The competitive nature of the 2022 World Cup is sharply evident when we examine the number of third-place teams in the group stage that won four points between 1998 (when the thirty-two-team format was introduced) and 2022. In the previous six tournaments, it was only in 2010 that five third-place teams won four points. In 2002, four teams got four points, but in the remaining tournaments only one or two fourth-place teams secured four points. In contrast, in the 2022 tournament seven fourth-place teams received four points. Two African teams (Cameroon and Tunisia) were among the seven teams that placed third with four points, suggesting that they narrowly missed qualifying for the Round of 16. The least-performing African team, Ghana, got three points. The worst-performing teams in the tournament—Qatar, Canada, Denmark and Serbia—scored zero or one point. Qatar 2022 was a good tournament for Africa.

The Qatar tournament was, indeed, highly competitive. After two matches in the group stage, only three teams qualified for the Round of 16 and only two teams were eliminated. Thus, twenty-seven teams battled for thirteen of the sixteen slots in the final matches of the group stage. It is not surprising that these matches produced some of the most thrilling games in the tournament. African, Asian and North/Central American teams were well represented in those matches. The most memorable were the Germany–Costa Rica and Japan–Spain matches in Group E; Croatia–Belgium and Canada–Morocco matches in Group F; Ecuador–Senegal and Netherlands–Qatar matches in Group A; Argentina–Poland and Mexico–Saudi Arabia matches in Group C; and Ghana–Uruguay and Portugal–South Korea matches in Group H.

**Table 1:** Number of African and Asian teams in post-group stage/Round of 16 matches

| YEAR | AFRICA | ASIA |
|---|---|---|
| 1970 | 0 | 0 |
| 1974 | 0 | 0 |
| 1978 | 0 | 0 |
| 1982 | 0 | 0 |
| 1986 | 1 | 0 |
| 1990 | 1 | 0 |
| 1994 | 1 | 1 |
| 1998 | 1 | 0 |
| 2002 | 1 | 2 |
| 2006 | 1 | 0 |
| 2010 | 1 | 2 |
| 2014 | 2 | 0 |
| 2018 | 0 | 1 |
| 2022 | 2 | 3 |

Source: FIFA and Wikipedia reports on the results of World Cup matches

The Germany–Costa Rica and Japan–Spain matches in Group E will live on in the memory. For Germany to go through this stage, it needed Spain to beat Japan or at least force a draw, and Germany needed to beat Costa Rica. Germany played its own part by beating Costa Rica, but the goal difference was not enough to lift Germany out of the group. Japan scored a technology-sanctioned goal in the fifty-first minute to lead Spain and dash Germany's hopes of qualifying. The base of the ball was out of play but part of the ball's circumference was on the touchline. At one point

both Germany and Spain were going out, as Costa Rica led Germany 2–1 in the seventieth minute.

However, Germany saved Spain by equalising against Costa Rica in the seventy-third minute. Germany kept pushing for more goals to overtake Spain if Spain failed to beat Japan, while at the same time hoping that Spain would equalise against Japan and put Germany in second place behind Spain and ahead of Japan. It is difficult to think of a similar drama in previous tournaments when a team pursued contradictory preferences to qualify for the next round. In the end, Germany couldn't get the required number of goals and Spain couldn't equalise against Japan. Germany's 4–2 victory only helped Spain to qualify, with Japan, for the next round.

Qatar 2022 was also noted for large-scale upsets, which are a good measure of the competitiveness of a football tournament. Football analysts define an upset as a match in which a team with lower odds wins. Using data on team odds from the website *oddsportal*, *The Economist* (9.12.2022) examined the odds and results for all matches in all stages of World Cup competitions between 2002 and 2022. It found that five of the ten least-probable results in the six tournaments between 2002 and 2010 occurred in Qatar.

Remarkably, European and South American teams were beaten twelve times by African and Asian teams in the Qatar World Cup. This is the same number of times that European and South American teams beat African and Asian teams. The most spectacular African and Asian victories were Morocco's defeat of three European football giants (Belgium, Spain and Portugal), Saudi Arabia's defeat of Argentina, and Japan's victory over Spain and Germany. We could also add Cameroon's defeat of Brazil and Tunisia's victory over France, even though these were dead rubber games.

Qatar 2022 also had more penalty shootouts than any other World Cup. Penalty shootouts, which occur when no team emerges as winner after 120 minutes of play in the knockout stages, were introduced in the 1978 World Cup. They can be used to measure the competitiveness of tournaments. As Figure 1 shows, there were five penalty shootouts at the Qatar World Cup, the highest number since its introduction.

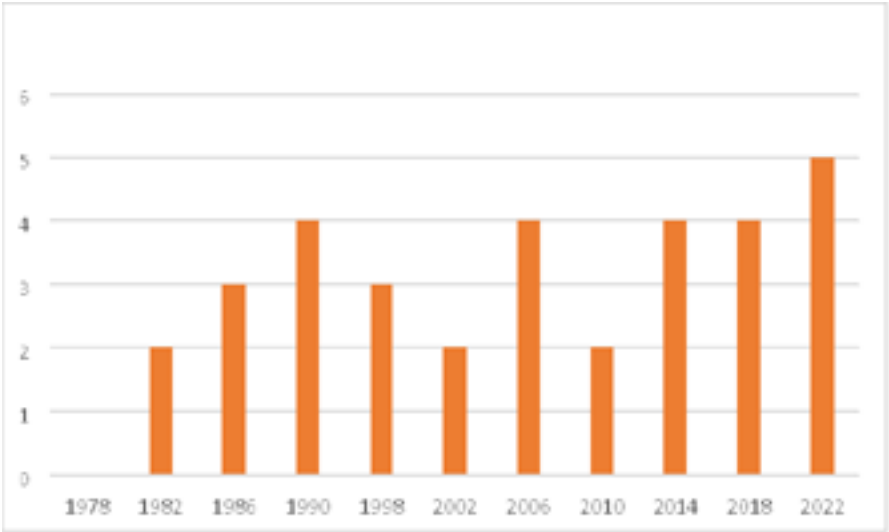


**Figure 1:** Number of World Cup matches ending in a penalty shootout

Source: Extracted from FIFA and Wikipedia documentation of results of World Cup matches

## The Globalisation of Football

Qatar 2022 clearly shows that it is no longer a given that teams from Europe and South America will routinely beat teams from Africa and Asia in World Cup tournaments. The chances of African and Asian teams advancing far into World Cup tournaments have increased substantially. What accounts for this turn of events? The answer surely lies in the globalisation of football, with European leagues becoming the epicentre where most good players in the world play. As Branko Milanovic (2003) has observed, using an economics model, which assumes increasing returns to scale, the free movement of players leads to a concentration of the best players in the same club or league; this improves the quality of those players exponentially as the best players play with others who are also among the best.

As recently as 1992, when the English Premier League was formed, there were only thirteen foreign players in the English league—mostly from other European countries and a few from Argentina. The European Community lifted the ban on foreign players in Europe's leagues in a landmark ruling in 1978, but a few obstacles remained and very few footballers from Africa, Asia and Latin America took advantage of the ruling to play in Europe. Football was still a national game, played by national players, managed by national

coaches and funded by national money. However, the liberalisation of the international transfer market in 1995, which allows players to move freely across leagues at the end of their contracts without financial jeopardy, led to a rapid transformation of the European leagues.

Out of the 502 players registered in the Premier League today, 329 (65 per cent) are foreign. The 2016 CIES Football Observatory Monthly Report shows that European leagues recruited on average about 48 per cent of their players from foreign countries. Even leagues in other regions, such as Asia and Latin America, increasingly rely on foreign players. By 2016, almost half of the players in the USA's Major League Soccer were foreign. In the Premier League, Aston Villa was the last club to field an all-English team—in 1999; and in 2005, Arsène Wenger's Arsenal became the first club to field an all-foreign team (including substitutes) (*Football Stadiums* n.d.; *The 1988 Letter* 2022).

African, Latin American and Asian players form a substantial portion of the foreign players in foreign leagues. The 2020 CIES Football Observatory Report estimated that, in 2019, Brazil had the highest number of players in foreign leagues—1,535 players. Four South American countries (Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Uruguay) were in the top twenty countries with players in foreign leagues. Interestingly, four African countries (Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire) were also in the top twenty. A KPMG study in 2021 ("The African Power in Europe") showed that more than 500 African footballers played in eleven major European leagues selected for the study. The top ten countries of these players by order of importance were Senegal, Morocco, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Algeria, Mali, Cameroon, DR Congo and Guinea.

The free movement of players across leagues has also impacted on the recruitment of managers. The Premier League led the way, with 65 per cent of managers recruited overseas by 2019. Foreign managers were still substantially in the minority in the other four top leagues in Europe—30 per cent in Ligue 1, 25 per cent in La Liga, 18 per cent in the Bundesliga and 5 per cent in Series A (CGTN, 2018). But the key point is that, even in these leagues, the idea of restricting recruitment of managers to those who plied their trade in national leagues was becoming untenable.

The free movement of players and managers is underpinned by the liberalisation of club ownership, from communities to private investors. This has transformed football into a mega transnational business. For context, when the Premier League was formed in 1992, it had a revenue of only GBP 170 million (USD 257 million). Today it is the richest league in the world with a revenue of about USD 9 billion, followed by La Liga with USD 5 billion, Series A with USD 4.8 billion, the Bundesliga with USD 4.2 billion and Ligue 1 with USD 3.9 billion (Ganzallo 2022).

The Premier League is at the top of the revenue pyramid because it is financially attractive and the most liberal in granting ownership to foreign investors: 75 per cent of the clubs in the Premier League are owned by foreigners. The Bundesliga's 50+1 rule, in which 50 per cent of a club's shares are reserved for members, restricts foreign ownership. The top La Liga clubs are owned by members, or *socios*; however, foreign money is now present in some of the other clubs, such as Espanyol de Barcelona, Atletico Madrid, Granada and Valencia. Ligue 1 has also attracted foreign investors, with Paris Saint-Germain topping the list. *Football Benchmark 2020* reports that there have been fifteen foreign-majority buy-ins, although most are at relatively low amounts, of EUR 10–20 million (USD 10.6–22 million). Family ownership of clubs is the norm in Series A; however, five clubs are now owned by foreign investors. *Statistica* (2018) reports that by 2018, 46 per cent of Europe's, 25 per cent of North America's and 21 per cent of Asia's leagues were owned by foreigners.

Broadcasting revenue and sponsorship or commercial deals, which far outweigh matchday revenues, account for the lion's share of club revenues. The Premier League's foreign broadcasting revenue now accounts for 40 per cent of total broadcasting revenue, making global audiences a critical part of the English league's football landscape. Foreign finance and foreign audiences have given the Premier League a formidable lead over other leagues, facilitating the recruitment of top players and managers from all over the world. With 65 per cent of both its players and managers recruited from foreign countries and 75 per cent of its clubs owned by foreigners, the Premier League is, indeed, the quintessential globalised league in the world.

## The Effects of Globalisation

The globalisation of football has had two major effects on the World Cup. Firstly, most of the players from the teams that excel in the tournament play in European leagues and are exposed to the same systems of play. Surely,

the pull of Europe in global football deprives leagues in Africa, Asia and the Americas of top talent. However, nations with weak or non-existent leagues benefit substantially from the exposure of their players to the techniques, tactics, rigour and discipline of top-flight European leagues. As Table 2 shows, the overwhelming majority of the players in the twenty-six-man squads of Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal and Morocco play in Europe. Indeed, all the players in Senegal's squad play for European clubs. Only Tunisia in the Africa group has a large number of players recruited from its domestic league. But even in this case, players from the domestic league account for only 34.6 per cent of the squad; those from European leagues account for 42 per cent.

Asia's integration into European league football is not as high as Africa's, but even in that region a good number of players play in Europe: 76 per cent from Japan, 57.6 per cent from Australia, 53.8 per cent from South Korea and 48 per cent from Iran. Only the Saudi Arabia and Qatar teams fielded no player from a European league. The entire Saudi Arabia squad comprises home-based players and twenty-five of Qatar's twenty-six players are from the national league. Both Saudi Arabia and Qatar were eliminated in the group stage in Qatar 2022.

I've included in Table 2 Brazil and Argentina, the two top teams in South America, with a combined total of eight World Cup trophies and thirteen appearances in World Cup finals, to demonstrate the powerful pull of Europe in global football today. In the 1960s and 1970s, South American clubs were highly competitive against European clubs. Brazil's Santos, led by Pelé, was even better than most of the top European teams. As champions of South America, Santos won the Intercontinental Cup in 1962 against Benfica, which was the champion of Europe. And out of the 124 matches that Santos played against European clubs during Pelé's time, Santos won ninety, drew twenty and lost fourteen (Gregoriak 2002). Unfortunately, the quality of Brazilian, indeed South American, club football today leaves much to be desired as most of the best players now play in Europe. As Table 2 shows, twenty-five out of the twenty-six players of Argentina's squad for the Qatar World Cup, and twenty-two of Brazil's, play in Europe. It is not surprising that FIFA's Club World Cup tournaments have failed to excite the football world. European clubs play against far weaker opponents and most often win. The last time a non-European team (Corinthians of Brazil) won was in 2012.

The second effect of globalisation is the ease with which the standardisation of the methods of play in European football has improved the techniques of players from regions without a strong football tradition. The Brazilian/South American free-flowing, individualistic and joyful style of play (*joga bonito*), which is learned in futsal (five-a-side matches in small spaces) or street football, has given way to systems-based approaches in which managers enjoy tremendous power to influence formations and tactics. The rise of European football academies helps to drill these techniques into players at an early age. Individual flair or creativity, such as Richarlison's juggling of the ball on his head three times like a seal before initiating the passes that led to Brazil's third goal against South Korea in the Qatar tournament, may be seen as showboating or time-wasting by football managers. That goal was the most beautiful in the tournament. Only a player from Brazil or South America could have conjured it.

**Table 2:** Foreign and domestic league players in African and Asian teams

| COUNTRY | NATIONAL LEAGUE | EUROPEAN LEAGUE | OTHER FOREIGN LEAGUE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ghana | 2 | 24 | 1 |
| Cameroon | 2 | 18 | 6 |
| Senegal | 0 | 26 | 0 |
| Morocco | 3 | 20 | 3 |
| Tunisia | 9 | 11 | 6 |
| Japan | 6 | 19 | 0 |
| South Korea | 14 | 8 | 4 |
| Australia | 8 | 15 | 3 |
| Iran | 9 | 12 | 4 |
| Saudi Arabia | 26 | 0 | 0 |
| Qatar | 25 | 0 | 1 |
| Brazil | 3 | 22 | 1 |
| Argentina | 1 | 25 | 0 |

Source: Various news reports on the World Cup squads of the 32 country teams that played in Qatar

With so much money in the game, winning has become the overriding goal and it is the job of managers to enforce it. The master of systems-based football, Pep Guardiola, is fond of saying that his job is to get his players to move the ball to the final third of the pitch, which is the only area where players are given the freedom to be inventive in trying to score goals. In other words, play in two-thirds of the pitch must follow the instructions of the manager. A standardised, systems-based style of play is much easier to learn and replicate than one based on individual skill, intuition or improvisation. It mimics capitalism's standardisation and mechanisation of production, which destroyed the creativity of traditional craftsmanship or artistry in many societies. The owners and administrators of capital can now use well-tested templates to quickly replicate systems of production everywhere. This is not to berate systems-based methods of play. With highly gifted players, as Guardiola was lucky to assemble at Barcelona between 2008 and 2012, touch-the-ball, pass-the-ball, or one-touch *tiki taka* football can be a joy to watch. That team played the best club football I have ever seen.

Some of the most popular football formations today are 4-3-3, 3-4-3, 4-4-2, 4-5-1, 3-5-2, 5-3-2 and 5-4-1. These may indicate whether a team is adopting a defensive or attacking approach. Tactics may include the Dutch team's *total football* in the 1970s under Rinus Michels in which any player can be a striker, a midfielder or a defender, depending on the flow of the game; the possession-based, one-touch football or *tiki-taka*, perfected by Barcelona; the high press, or Gegenpressing, of German teams; the high press and quick transitions of Jürgen Klopp's Liverpool; the counterattack; the use of a false striker rather than a real centre-forward, perfected by Manchester City's Pep Guardiola; the kick-and-rush tactics as well as long balls of traditional English teams; the highly defensive *catenaccio* tactic of Italian football; and parking-the-bus in which most of the players remain in their own half and frustrate superior opponents from scoring—made famous by José Mourinho.

Underpinning these tactics is mastery of the basics of the game. These include knowing how to control and pass a ball; making laser-sharp long crosses; defending corner kicks; setting or avoiding offside traps; committing professional fouls to frustrate goal-bound attacks; close marking of predatory strikers; and avoiding errors that can lead to penalties. Most teams in Qatar got the basics right. However, non-European/South American teams have struggled in the past to master these basic skills. For instance, Zaire's team in the 1974 World Cup conceded nine goals against Yugoslavia, many through set pieces or corners and naive defending.

## Conclusion: Can a team from Africa, Asia, and North/Central America win the World Cup?

Despite globalisation, the World Cup has been won by only eight countries—five European (Germany, Italy, France, Spain and England) and three South American (Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay). And a non-European/South American country has been in the semi-finals only twice. However, as we have seen, African and Asian teams are now competitive at the group stage and Round of 16. With globalisation and the mastery of the basic skills, formations and tactics of the game, it may not be long before an African, Asian or North/Central American team wins the tournament. In my concluding remarks I will focus largely on Africa's chances, some of which may apply to the other regions.

African countries may have to ramp up investment in, and administration of, their leagues and football academies in order to improve the quality of the game in domestic settings and create a seamless transition between playing in national leagues and playing overseas, especially if they are to attract the large number of foreign-born Africans who opt to play for European teams. Morocco's team had the largest number of foreign-born players (fourteen) at the Qatar World Cup, followed by Tunisia and Qatar (twelve each). Cameroon (nine) and Ghana (eight) also had a sizeable number of foreign-born players (Santamaria and Fusco 2022). The key issue is how to attract the super-elite diaspora players who are quickly snatched by the football federations in the European countries of their birth.

Morocco seems to have developed a good model for nurturing national talent and attracting elite-level Moroccan players born overseas. Top foreign-born players, like Achraf Hakimi, Hakim Zyech and Sofiane Boufal, who play in Europe's top-flight leagues, are scouted and incentivised by Moroccan authorities at an early age before they qualify and are tempted to play for the national team of the country of their birth. Developing strong ties with diaspora players makes it easier for such players to opt to play for their country of origin. The Moroccan government also built a first-class academy, the Mohammed VI Football Academy, to attract and nurture local talent. Some of the prod-

ucts of this academy often move to European leagues and, if they are successful, are recruited into the Morocco national team. The team in Qatar had four graduates from the Mohammed VI Academy (Trend news detail. https://news.trenddetail.com/news/295892.html). Morocco stands a better chance than other African countries to get to the final of a World Cup and maybe win it. A Morocco team (Wydad AC) is the current holder of the Confederation of African Football's Champions League trophy.

One drawback that African and other non-European/South American teams faced in Qatar 2022 was the dearth of clutch players, especially at the midfield and forward positions. Mastering the basic skills and tactics of football may allow countries to narrow the performance gap with Europe and South America but may not be enough to get teams over the line. As the gap in standards gets smaller, outcomes are decided by small margins, which may depend on experience and having difference-making players like an Mbappé, a Messi, a Neymar and a Benzema, who can change the trajectory of games and win them. Most World Cup winning teams have such players.

Africa has had many clutch players, such as Roger Milla, Samuel Eto'o, Patrick Mboma, Didier Drogba, Jay Jay Okocha, Mustapha Hadji, Nwankwo Kanu, George Weah, Abedi Pele, Mohammed Salah, Sadio Mané, Yaya Touré and Rigobert Song. Africa and other regions need to produce these kinds of highly skilled, swashbuckling players with a winning mentality if the catching-up process is to yield the ultimate prize.

## Note

1. The data for the analysis of the dominance of Europe and South America in the allocation of World Cup participation slots is extracted from accounts of each tournament by FIFA and Wikipedia.

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# African Feminist Epistemic Communities

***Keynote Address Presented at the Reflections Meeting on the CODESRIA Gender Institutes: Pasts and Futures Kampala, Uganda, 7 June 2023***

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This paper was given as a keynote address at a convening for one of CODESRIA's flagship institutes—the gender institute. The CODESRIA gender institutes have been running for twenty-eight years, with 428 direct beneficiaries. My engagement with CODESRIA gender institutes has occurred across three different periods and different thematic areas. In 2013, I served as a resource person for *African Sexualities: Theories, Politics and Action*, which was co-directed by Professors Tamale and Bennett. In 2018, I was a resource person for *Feminist Scholarship, Universities and Social Transformation in Africa*, directed by Professor Philomena Okeke-Ihejirika. In 2021, I directed a virtual gender institute during Covid-19 on *Women and Girls in Contexts of Shrinking Civic Space*. As a resource person and a director who sets the intellectual tone and coherence of the institutes, I offer two reflection points. The first is on methodology—the institute and its accompanying methods, which are training, research and publications. The second reflection point focuses on the intellectual imperatives for gender institutes that take feminist theories and approaches as a foundational starting point from which to frame intellectual encounters. The continental, transnational and transdisciplinary imperatives of this work are laid out below.

## On the Institute as Methodology

### *Research and Training as Method*

The gender institute proceeds on the basis that an intensive model of knowledge transfer, anchored on two weeks of robust engagement with scholarship through lectures, peer review and discussion of research papers, will collectively begin a process of introducing, re-introducing and strengthening feminist scholarship. Accompanying these two (occasionally three or four) weeks of intensive learning is the idea that a post-institute publication will offer a framework for illustrating and advancing knowledge transfer and learning. In addition, the process of working on a publication within a community of peers should strengthen the cohort and extend an epistemic community. If this methodological orientation is taken as true, then it is important to formally assess whether the body of work that has been developed across the institutes over twenty-eight years has expanded the discursive terrain on various themes. It is here that the question of CODESRIA's role in building, sustaining and nurturing feminist epistemic communities lies because it requires an examination of the demands placed on institute participants to advance knowledge while recognising that the teaching space is often filled with ephemerality.

There are multiple ways of tracking knowledge transfer. One is tracking the substantive approach to citation of feminist scholarship across publications developed from the institutes. The second is cross-citation of feminist scholarship generated through reading lists created for the institute and used by adjacent institutes, such as the governance institute. Third, would be to examine who downloads open access books and journals. The last is conducting a tracing study with institute participants to reflect on the long-term impact of the experience in their journey as intellectuals and academics.

### *Language and Intellectual Genealogies*

CODESRIA has attempted to resolve as far as is possible the colonial legacies of the European language divide, which is often understood through anglophone, francophone, lusophone and arabophone descriptors. CODESRIA language-divide disruption efforts are seen in the reduction of the domination of English—in the choice of resource persons, access to interpretation and the diversity of successful applicants. The question of language justice across Africa is broader than the Council, which means that translation and interpretation efforts, while important, will not resolve this conundrum. Yet, there is a second challenge, which sits at the nexus of language and intellectual genealogies. I have always been struck during my engagements in the gender institutes by the vast differences in who we read and know based on our colonial histories and how these have been sustained by our education systems. What we read or do not read means that we are speaking and writing in very different intellectual languages. For feminist scholarship that also means a Eurocentricity that reproduces Africa through the white gaze, on the one hand, and scholarship that is uninterested in Africa unless it is connected to foreign policy interests, on the other hand. We can think here of the vast amount of Euro-American scholarship on the Sahel that is focused on violent extremism, anti-terrorism and militarisation, or the 'African studies' field. In addition, the dominance of English-language scholarship has cultivated an environment in which scholarship from the global South is underengaged—it is not cited in any substantive way that illustrates a full engagement with the scholarship. Herein lies the impact of scholarship in the world, how it travels and the geopolitical economies that shape knowledge production and transfer.

Closely connected to this knowledge industry is the question of access. In reviewing and engaging with research papers, I am often struck by the age of the literature and theoretical frameworks being used where debates have developed significantly. This observation is obviously linked to the decay of public universities across Africa[1] that is partly a legacy of the structural adjustments of the 1990s, which demanded state divestment in higher education as part of donor conditionalities imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These donor conditionalities wreaked untold havoc on public universities and sustained a political economy of knowledge that consistently places academics in Africa on the backfoot.

While there is a growing movement that pushes for open access publishing[2] as part of democratising knowledge, we must also look at the academic publishing model that generates significant income from academic publishing without any of those resources being redistributed to universities and the academics who are central to sustaining them. The academic publishing economic model as we know it has contributed to the development of established and respected journals across different disciplines. The notion of 'respected', often accompanied by impact factors, is a legacy of a fair amount of gatekeeping framed by 'rigour and scientific standards'. Yet, these scientific mechanisms as secured by the peer-review systems of established journals[3] have over the last decade come under significant scrutiny for unethical practices, which include publishing research that can be considered methodologically dubious.[4]

The specificity of feminist scholarship in the context I describe above lies in a global environment in which there are increasingly deliberate attacks on feminist scholarship.[5] The marginalisation of feminist scholarship, and scholarship by women[6] specifically, is well researched. In resolving the issue of access to scholarship, the ideological and political question around the choices made about what to read, what we refuse to read and why there is resistance to substantively engaging with feminist theorising remains. In my view, at the heart of the erasure of feminist scholarship is the challenge it poses to how we understand power and our location in those constellations of power. This leads me to my last point about naming what undergirds the CODESRIA gender institute as feminist thinking.

### *Gender or Feminisms?*

> *Gender is not the study of what is evident, it is an analysis of how what is evident came to be. Maya Mikdashi, 2012*[7]

I have always been intrigued by who applies for the gender institute, who makes the cut and what they imagine they are going to learn from a gender institute. The traces of expectations and assumptions about the gender institute are found in the participants' research proposals, which institute directors receive in advance. Therein you begin to see the questions that preoccupy people and the avenues along which they think through these questions.

Two main traces can be seen. The first trace is in citations or the lack thereof of established African feminist voices in various fields. The second trace is a focus on the woman question in which the personhood of women is central. The research projects often focus on an interpretation of patriarchy that does not move beyond an articulation of male and female (biology) and instead solidifies the power and/or powerlessness embedded in those binaries as the site from which to define the research problems and make meaning. To offer this observation is not to ignore the material realities that structure our very gendered societies. Rather, it invites us to think about the liberation potential that is missed in the expansive interpretation of gender that foundational African feminist scholarship[8] has offered to us through which to re-interpret and re-organise power.

Consequently, to deliberately foreground the gender institute as informed by feminist theories is to focus people on the theoretical and methodological anchors that will shape any discussion on gender. Let me offer an example. At SOAS, University of London, the economics department makes it very clear that its teaching and research is predominantly heterodox economics. It foregrounds the theoretical orientation of its programmes as a way of signalling to students what they will encounter in their classrooms. In effect, no students arriving at SOAS can argue that the department has not delivered neoclassical economics because that was never what it intended to do. I argue that the debate about gender and feminism in the CODESRIA gender institutes is the same. In boldly stating that the gender institutes are grounded in feminist thinking, we in effect clarify from the onset what people should expect in coming to a gender institute.

Feminisms are the container for the language and analytical tools that use gender as a framework for organising power across our societies. In essence, there is no gender as an analytical category with all its varied limitations without feminisms. There are two challenges for CODESRIA. The first is that in an environment characterised by a scarcity of academic resources, the institutes are read as 'opportunities', which are taken up whether the successful applicant believes they will learn anything or not. There are those who are invested in approaching the space with openness, whereas for others being confronted with feminist theories this only opens the door for pre-existing ghosts (stereotypes, misogyny) to show up. The second challenge, which may also be viewed as an opportunity, is the ability to hold very lightly while firmly the importance of maintaining a teaching space where debate does not reproduce harmful and violent power relations. In describing a gender institute as informed by feminisms, this situates power and how it travels through violence as a disciplinary and regulatory technology. It challenges the dismissal of feminist scholarship as a tactic of erasure and refusal. Finally, it rejects the reproduction of violence in the form of debate and intellectual engagement even when having difficult and complex conversations. Consequently, for a gender institute the task is not about how you define yourself but the theoretical tools we choose to engage with and why.

## Futures and Transnational Intellectual Imperatives

Over the years of their existence, the CODESRIA gender institutes have offered a methodological container in which to centre gender and advance what was contested in Engendering African Social Sciences[9] as missing in social sciences. I close with three observations about contemporary trends that require transdisciplinary, transnational work in future gender institutes.

### *Battle of Ideas*

The ongoing threats to gender and feminist studies across the globe point to the threat posed by scholarship that challenges how we understand and organise the world. At the heart of the challenge to feminist and gender studies is a counter-hegemonic battle of ideas. Shaping this battle of ideas is the notion of 'gender ideology' as a coalescing framework. Early use of the term 'gender ideology' can be traced to the Vatican. Elizabeth Corredor[10] notes:

> In 2001, Pope John Paul II declared that 'misleading concepts concerning sexuality and the dignity and mission of the woman' are driven by 'specific ideologies on "gender."' In 2002, the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family asserted that a 'feminist ideology . . . known as gender' has led to a misunderstanding of the complementary difference between man and woman and 'a growing confusion about sexual identity' that 'complicates the assumption of roles and the sharing of tasks in the home.'

The convergence between religious actors, such as the Catholic church, Christian fundamentalist groups and conservative secular actors, and political organising remains a critical concern for those interested in understanding how various actors mobilise to overturn hard-won freedoms. In addition, the use of formal political spaces—parliaments, political parties and legislation—as sites for this type of organising is equally critical. For example, US evangelical churches have supported anti-LGBTQI rhetoric through 'training' and financial resources. This strategy was evident in American evangelist Scott Lively's role in the 2009 Bahati Bill[11] and, more recently, the role of groups such as Family WatchInternational[12] in the anti-homosexuality law Museveni assented to. Brazilian scholar Sonia Correa observes[13] the transcontinental nature of what she terms as a hydra, actively mobilising across Africa, Latin America,[14] Europe and North America. Brazil's growing community of evangelical Christians[15] are now estimated to make up almost one-third of the country's population of 215 million. Bolsonaro, the former Brazilian president whose campaign and political messaging railed against abortion, drugs, 'gender ideology', anti-Black rhetoric and communism, was backed by Brazilian evangelicals, with seven in ten backing him four years ago.

There are varying degrees of political engagement and involvement among groups such as the Swedish Democrats, Danish People's Party, Freedom Party of Austria and Alternative für Deutschland that could be viewed as fundamentalist politics. These degrees of distinction reflect the differences between the radical right and extreme right. Radical right groups are often hostile to liberal democracy but accept popular sovereignty and the minimal procedural rules of parliamentary democracy. Their support base is derived from challenging pluralism and targeting minority rights, but they publicly condemn the use of violence[16] as an instrument of politics. Extreme right organisations are often inspired by fascism or national socialism, tend to reject democracy and party politics, oppose all forms of ethnic and cultural diversity within the nation-state and are open to the use of violence to achieve political goals.[17] It is in these distinctions in political mobilisation that distinct battlegrounds emerge.

### *Old Issues New Battles*

The place of citizenship defined broadly in the nation-state and globally, with gender, race and sexuality sitting at the heart of determining belonging, is a key feature of the battle of ideas. Most fundamentalist projects will opportunistically use anti-Western and anticolonial rhetoric as a basis for mobilisation. Within this mobilisation there are varying degrees of overlap between fundamentalism and ethnonationalism. A key feature of right-wing discourse is a return to a past and accompanying historical structures of dominance driven by the preservation of white supremacy and freedoms, which are perceived to be under threat from minorities. Within this narrative, historically marginalised groups are reimagined as powerful and a threat to white identity, thus necessitating a reaffirmation of what was historically dominant. The perceived threat from the imagined power of minorities allows the far right to mobilise a nationalist discourse to define difference and thereby exclusion. These discourses cut through the defence of the family, 'gender ideology', Islamophobia and homophobia, and the preservation of the 'pure' nation is often defined through an exclusion of those deemed as the 'other'.

By corralling moveable notions of 'African culture', 'Christianity' and 'family values', the spate of antihomosexuality laws across Africa mobilise very specific notions of heterosexuality designed to reconstitute a conservative interpretation of gender relations and roles. These laws respond to the unstable power that is attached to heterosexuality and vested in certain forms of dominant masculinities that are reliant on constructing womanhood in ways that sustain this. As Danai Mupotsa[18] argues:

> the success or failure of the project of 'national culture' (if we are to call it that) appears to be placed at the national family's ability to manage and control the mobility and sexuality of women's bodies, be it through mothers, fathers and brothers […]'

In addition, the accompanying ethnonationalist politics that shape political actors who mobilise a range of far-right ideologies is characterised by anti-Black and racist articulation of the 'other'. Donald Trump and Jair Bolsanaro's presidencies in the USA and Brazil, respectively, serve as examples of regimes that emboldened far-right groups, thus ramping up hate crimes associated with anti-immigrant and Islamophobic rhetoric, as seen in counter-movements such as White Lives Matter and the January 6th insurrection in the US capitol[19] by Trump supporters in 2021.

Responses by various political regimes to questions that sit at the intersection of race, gender, sexuality and religious identity highlight how 'panics' often facilitate increasingly authoritarian measures for minorities. These panics have also arrived in universities through 'academic freedom'. Across Africa, academics point to the constrained university environment within which they are to debate and teach complex contemporary issues.

The question of academic freedom is not isolated to Africa, even if the nature of institutional autonomy differs greatly. The UK government has proposed a new law[20] to protect free speech and academic freedom, including appointing an academic freedom czar. The law places a duty on not only the university but also student unions to prevent discrimination against student faculty, staff or visiting speakers on their premises who hold views that are regarded as offensive. The law specifically sought to address concerns that right-wing actors are victims of silencing by left-wing activists on campuses.

Saini notes[21] the recent growth in scientific racism framed as intellectual inquiry, which is seen in how this knowledge is rooted in science, repackaged as 'fact' and supported by data and peer-reviewed journals. By legitimising racist claims as 'scientific' they are then framed as indisputable and disseminated accordingly. Targeting counter-hegemonic scholarship is a deliberate strategy of curbing the growth of ideas that challenge systems of power. The increasing surveillance of universities by governments has the potential to severely paralyse institutional governance and threatens fields of study, such as feminist and gender studies, and the scholars invested in them.

## Transnational and Transdisciplinary Imperatives

If, as illustrated above, the stakes in protecting and sustaining gender studies are high, then the task of future CODESRIA gender institutes becomes even greater in three ways. The first task is in both elevating and strengthening the feminist underpinnings of the gender institutes, including insisting on adjacent institutes—such as the governance institute—taking feminist scholarship seriously as part of an inter- and transdisciplinary commitment. In elevating the feminist logics that shape how we understand the utility of gender in governing the world, the institutes must seriously consider the material realities of women in Africa while not retreating to an essentialist and instrumentalist understanding of women and gender. To focus solely on the victimhood of women and girls is to ignore what feminist scholarship demands of us, which is to explore how gender roles and relations came to be rather than a focus on what gender relations are.

The second task is the pedagogical expectations we place on the institute as a methodology for meaning- and change-making. If, as observed earlier on, the institutes play a critical role in building feminist epistemic communities, then the pedagogical demands on the institutes from those who resource them as teachers and those who attend the institutes becomes greater. The institute moves from being yet another 'opportunity' for training and potentially being published to a space that embraces its role in the development of counter-hegemonic knowledge[22].

The third task concerns the role of knowledge production, particularly the research outputs that emerge from the gender institutes. Here I return to the question of ethical citation practices and an accompanying demand for effective and productive engagement with African feminist scholarship specifically and feminist scholarship generally.

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# Beyond Tinkering: Changing Africa's Position in the Global Knowledge Production Ecosystem[1]

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Africa's position in the global knowledge production ecosystem needs to change significantly. African knowledge systems, languages, knowledge actors and institutions must take their rightful place in global thought processes. Even more critical is the central place that such repositioning is bound to have in upholding African dignity. In this essay, we argue that the current global ecosystem of knowledge production exhibits multiple layers of injustices and inequities entrenched in its orientations, institutions, policy and legal frameworks and practices. Over the past few decades, several initiatives in the name of 'equitable partnership' emerged to address aspects of unequal global knowledge production ecosystem challenges – as they manifest in the configurations of research collaborations between Africa (or the 'global South' broadly) and global North. Such efforts are commendable, but they have remained on the surface. They have mainly treated the visible symptoms of the problem, leaving the fundamental underlying layers of inequities in global research unaddressed.

Most of the existing equitable partnership frameworks focus on altering the unequal division of labour and resources between African knowledge actors and their Euro-American counterparts (particularly researchers, funders and international development actors); addressing gaps in capacities and capabilities; ensuring accessibility of research outputs; and crediting researchers in authorship, among other things.[2] While some of these initiatives have triggered tangible changes in policies, funding frames, practices, and consciousness,[3] inequalities remain largely unresolved.[4] Hence, developing new ways of identifying the problem and suggesting potential policies are necessary.

## Multiple layers of power imbalances

We depict the existing knowledge production ecosystem as a set of concentric circles representing multiple layers of asymmetrical power relations. The first layer at the core of the concentric circle constitutes various forms of *epistemic injustices and inequities*. This is the most fundamental aspect of power asymmetry. Africa was and continues to be constructed through the 'colonial library' (Mudimbe 2020) as a dark and savage continent and an epistemically void and intellectually empty space. The series of civilising missions and colonialist endeavours were justified as requirements to fill the epistemic void with universalist knowledge streaming from Europe's enlightenment and modernity. An enduring legacy of such an imagination of Africa through the lens of the colonial library is engraved in the 'extraverted' knowledge produc-

tion ecosystem of the continent. (Hountondji 1990) Hountondji observes that extraversion became an essential feature of Africa's research and scientific practices by assigning Europe as a source of theory and concepts and Africa as a field site for extracting raw data.

African epistemologies are considered non-existent or are provincialised as 'indigenous knowledges' to confine their relevance to a particular context, whilst Eurocentric knowledges run free as universal. As a result, Eurocentric epistemic orientation became the dominant, if not the only, framework for studying anything related to Africa or, indeed, the world. The other side of the hegemonic Eurocentric ontological and epistemic orientation is the invisibilisation, discrediting and otherisation of African ontologies, cosmologies and epistemologies. Undoing the effects of hegemonic orientation is critical to achieving meaningful change. One way of doing so is centring African epistemologies in global knowledge production.

The second layer of the concentric circle covers the vital role of *discourse and language*. At the discursive level, the dominant trend is depicting and problematising African realities as a 'lack of something', or the normalisation of 'deficiency' and 'misery'. The normalised 'deficit mentality' engraved in Africa-facing research initiatives also deploys powerful and metaphorical characterisations of complex African realities to keep the colonial depiction intact. For example, in the social science literature that studies African societies' socio-economic and political relations, African cultures are often described as the antithesis to anything considered 'good' and as a breeding ground for corruption, nepotism and greed by the political elites. Thandika Mkandawire calls this the 'neopatrimonial school', where narrow, ahistorical and stylised explanations of microlevel social relations within society are extrapolated to theorise the nature of African states. Such 'methodological communalism' (Mkandawire 2015) uses African communities as 'a foundational unit of analysis' to derive macro-level narratives that confirm the image of Africa in the 'colonial library'.

Such discursive presentation of Africa or the African is not unique to disciplines in sociology and politics. Other disciplines also have a similar characterisation of African realities, societies, cultures, etc. For example, the discipline of psychology has a long history of racist practices and theorising. The eugenics movement led to the

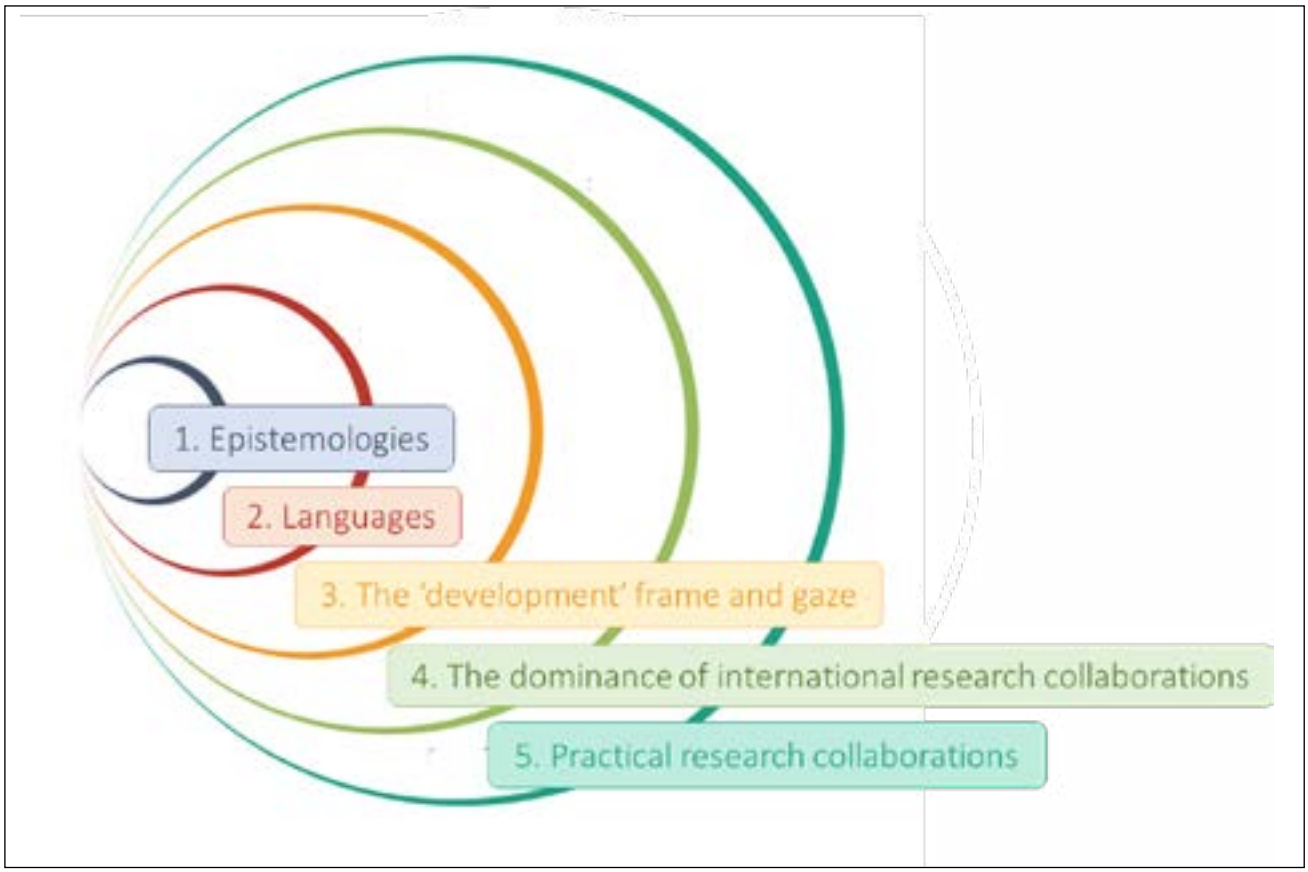


**Image:** The multiple layers of power imbalances in knowledge production in Africa
Source: Authors, 2023

brutal and inhumane treatment of African bodies to legitimise 'scientific truths' about the inferiority of African minds and cosmologies. These forms of racist theorising continue, as seen in a 2019 psychological study, now retracted by the publishing journal, concluding that South African coloured women have an increased risk of low cognitive functioning (Nieuwoudt, Dickie, Coetsee, Engelbrecht and Terblanche 2020).

In addition to the discursive construction of Africa, the second layer also captures the dominance of colonially imposed languages in education, research, and knowledge production. In almost all African countries, colonially imposed languages (mainly English, French, and Portuguese) serve as the primary, if not the only, mediums of instruction in higher education. One of the lasting legacies of colonial relations in the African context is rendering African languages epistemically irrelevant, particularly for research and education in higher education institutions. The epistemic violence of imposing European languages created a hierarchy of languages, cultures and identities. Kenyan scholar Ngũgĩ wa Thiang'o shared his experience of 1950s Kenya where English was imposed as a medium of instruction at the expense of local Kenyan languages. Ngũgĩ argues that after the legally sanctioned imposition, the English language became '… more than a language, it was *the language*: and all the other [languages] had to bow before it in deference' (wa Thiong'o 2005). As a result, despite their role as sources of knowledge and wisdom, African languages are rendered irrelevant to the development of scientific knowledge both within the continent and worldwide. Almost all African universities organise their higher education and research using colonially imposed languages. African languages are often confined to a particular department or institute to be studied as a subject area than serving as a medium of instruction and scientific research.

The third layer of power imbalance is the *unidirectional gaze of knowledge production* that inevitably locates Africa as an object of inquiry from the Western/Euro-American point of view. The unidirectional gaze has multiple lenses. It has a racialised lens where the 'white man' is almost always considered an expert and authoritative source of knowledge about African issues (Pailey 2020). The other lens is developmental and poverty-laden. The depiction of Africa in terms of what it lacks triggers research initiatives that for the most part try to fix the 'development gaps' in the continent. This gaze is premised on the idea of 'development' and the unquestioned rendering of Africa as developing or less developed. Development is often narrowly defined in terms of economic growth and 'poverty reduction'. Research initiatives in African countries that do not conform to this narrow definition are considered less important or irrelevant.

Currently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as a de facto confirmation framework to decide the research agenda in African countries. For example, health-related research dominates African countries' scientific publication outputs. On average, 49 per cent of scientific publications in 53 African countries (2017–2019) are in health sciences (UNESCO 2021). The Gambia has the highest proportion (89 per cent) of its scientific publications in health sciences. The dominance of health sciences has implications for the scope of inquiry into other relevant and timely issues, including in cross-cutting, strategic technology and engineering-related fields such as ICT, maths, statistics, physics, and astronomy (UNESCO 2021). The racialised, poverty-laden and unidirectional gaze of research is primarily designed to meet the interests and priorities of external actors. Its role in sustaining power asymmetries is inevitable.

The fourth layer is the *dominance of international research collaborations* in the African research ecosystem. The above-mentioned layers of inequities and power imbalances underpin the overreliance on international research collaborations in Africa. International research collaborations are vital aspects of knowledge generation and the transferring of knowledge, skills and technologies, which help new ideas and orientations to flourish. However, what happens when a region's research activities and outputs become excessively dependent on international collaborations? For example, in 2012, the ratio of scientific publications based on international collaborations in southern Africa, east Africa and central and western Africa was 79 per cent, 70 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively (Fonn, Ayiro, Cotton, Habib, Mbithi, Mtenje, and Ezeh 2018). Between 2017 and 2019, scientific publications based on international collaborations for central and eastern African countries rose to 88 per cent and 85 per cent for southern African countries. In contrast, for the 2017 to 2019 period, the ratio was 45.2 per cent, 34 per cent and 40 per cent for EU-28, OECD and Latin American countries, respectively (UNESCO 2021).

The *2021 UNESCO Science Report* shows that most African countries produce scientific publications in collaboration with authors from the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. The USA is the first collaborator for 19 African countries and the second for 18 African countries. Sixteen African countries have France as their first collaborator and three countries (Madagascar, Mali and Niger) have France as their second collaborator. Three African countries (Libya, Seychelles and The Gambia) have the UK as their first collaborator and 13 countries have the UK as their second collaborator.

The same report by UNESCO confirms that the volume of intra-African collaboration pales in comparison to research collaborations with Europe and North America. South Africa is the only African country that stands out as the first collaborator for other African countries – specifically for Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe in southern Africa and for Nigeria. While international research collaborations are critical for expanding the frontiers of knowledge production for the entire human race, the fundamental inequalities upon which they are built on need to be addressed. The epistemic inequalities, power asymmetries and the one-sided nature of international research collaborations make them complicit in the problems rather than sources of change.

The fifth layer of our concentric circle refers to *the practical arrangements in research collaborations*, including the unequal division of labour and unequal distribution of resources in research and knowledge production. Taken together, the preceding layers of inequities lead to a subordinate role for Africa-based knowledge actors both collectively and individually. Structural and institutional factors such as the demise of African universities during Structural Adjustment Programs (Obamba 2013) and the negligible financial commitment of African states to research capacity development contribute to the diminished role of African knowledge actors (Ezeh and Lu 2019). The subordinate role that most African knowledge actors assume in the practical arrangements within international collaborations is a major manifestation of the embedded power imbalances. Since this is the most visible aspect of inequalities, most equitable partnership frameworks aim to tackle it by proposing several remedies. Most of the remedies remain at project-level. Even if institutionalised, the remedies would fall short of addressing and challenging the core of the power imbalances.

## Tinkering with the Problem: Equitable Partnership Frameworks

Most existing equitable partnership frameworks offer technical solutions that are primarily focused on the fifth layer of the concentric circle. For example, the Global Code of Conduct[5] is concerned primarily with 'ethics dumping' and addressing the 'capacity gap' in research collaborations involving 'resource-poor settings'. Normative values such as fairness, respect, care and honesty are proposed as key principles addressing the problem. The Good Practice Document (UKCDR 2022) – produced by the UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR) and ESSENCE – in its turn aims to find 'a balance between flexibility and equity' and to provide 'practical recommendations' to overcome 'barriers of equity'. For others, such as the Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships[6] and Research Fairness Initiative,[7] the primary concerns are 'organising transboundary research collaboration in an effective manner' and 'improving fairness, efficiency and impact' of research collaborations. The most common solutions that existing equitable partnership frameworks propose include: fair distribution of resources and recognition in authorship, inclusion in research agenda-setting, research capacity building and strengthening of so-called 'global South networks'. Along with the various initiatives, a few terminologies, principles and ideas also emerge. Some of the common terminologies include: 'shared agenda setting', 'mutual learning', 'shared data and networks', 'clarified responsibilities', 'accountability to beneficiaries' and 'fair research contracting and co-financing'.

At face value, these notions express valuable intentions and approaches – but without reference to the more fundamental power imbalances, they remain less meaningful or serve to obscure the need for more profound change. The diagnosis of the problem that informs the existing equitable partnership frameworks, and the solutions they provide, fall significantly short of addressing the complex layers of power imbalances. Therefore, they cannot help towards repositioning Africa's role in the global science and research ecosystem. As we argued earlier, epistemic injustices and inequities are the fundamental problems. Addressing only the visible symptoms of the historically entrenched and epistemically installed problems can hardly take us forward. That is why we propose a new *Charter Framework* that will

allow us to address the problem in a more systematic and transformative manner by taking international research collaborations as an entry point.

## Towards a Charter Framework

The pursuit of change in the African knowledge production ecosystem can have multiple faces and trajectories. We believe radical change is necessary if we are to transform Africa's position in the global science and research ecosystem. At present, we are in the process of co-designing a *Charter Framework* that will serve as a guide to address the multi-layered power imbalances outlined earlier. The added value of the *Charter Framework* is the diagnosis of the problem centring epistemic inequities and injustices and the intertwined relations among the various layers of problems. In a nutshell, the proposed *Charter Framework* can have three interrelated faces:

i. ***A political framework*:** change is unthinkable without altering the relationship among actors and their relations towards resources. The existing system of knowledge production serves a set of interests that benefits several actors both within and outside the continent. These are financial, economic, political and ideological interests. Hence, if the *Charter Framework* is to become a useful input for radical change, it needs to serve as a political tool to reshape power relations, renegotiate partnerships, organise and contest normalised practices, and build the necessary institutional and collective muscle to reject practices that sustain any form of power imbalances.

ii. ***A policy initiative*:** the *Charter Framework* can also become an important policy initiative to alter normative practices, the values and missions of knowledge actors, and the consciousness and attitudes of individuals. As a policy initiative, the *Charter Framework* can also outline the necessary institutional arrangements, strategic orientations and practices of both organisations and individuals in the knowledge production ecosystem. Unless the political framework of altering power relations is transferred into the policy realm to shape practices, the ideals of the *Charter Framework* will remain empty slogans.

iii. ***An intellectual exercise*:** pursuing the *Charter Framework* both at the political and policy level needs a rigorous intellectual project of revisiting, analysing, and synthesising academic works by African and non-African scholars that called for a change in knowledge production. Such continuous debates, critical reflections, rethinking and unthinking will save us from reinventing the wheel and take relevant lessons from previous efforts with a similar mission.

In conclusion, we believe that it is time to go beyond tinkering on the edges of the global science and research ecosystem. Transformative research collaborations between African and global north knowledge actors can be achieved only if we are ready to adequately understand the multiple layers of power imbalances and the manifold manifestations at every stage of knowledge production. We are embarking on this mission by formulating and co-producing a new *Charter Framework* that builds on the successes of existing equitable partnership frameworks and adds substantive value to vital issues that remain hidden.

## Notes

1. This piece was initially drafted by Eyob Balcha Gebremariam and received substantive comments and inputs from all the other contributors. You can reach the authors at eyob.b.gebremariam@bristol.ac.uk; isabella.aboderin@bristol.ac.uk; divine.fuh@uct.ac.za; and segalpj@unisa.ac.za
2. National Institute for Health and Care Research, 2021, *Equitable Partnerships Guide,* (https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/equitable-partnerships-guide/21955), 19 May 2023.
3. Some examples include: UKCDR, 2022, *Equitable partnerships: Lessons from practitioners*. (https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/equitable-partnerships-lessons-from-practitioners/) 19 May 2023; Global Code of Conduct. (https://www.globalcodeofconduct.org/affiliated-codes/), 19 May 2023.
4. We argue that these equitable partnerships efforts have not even considered a need for addressing more fundamental inequalities i.e. a rebalancing of the global scientific knowledge production ecosystem as a whole. We put forward our argument on this issue in a separate piece.
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# Invisible Trillions: A Threat to Global Prosperity*

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I always like to start any discussion on the subject of illicit financial flows in Africa by recalling the story of how the fight gained momentum on the continent. In 2011, we were holding the annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in Lilongwe, Malawi. As ECA Chief of Staff I was part of a team directed by the Executive Secretary to find a small hall as a venue for a side event, with the discussions to be led by an elderly American gentleman. We looked for a hall that would take 20 to 30 people but this proved quite difficult because all the small halls had already been allocated to sub-committees and other events of the Conference. When all efforts failed, we eventually settled on using the main Plenary Hall, which would be empty because participants would be engaged in the sub-committees and other peripheral events.

*"Only radical improvements across the globe in financial transparency and in regulatory capacity and integrity can break this cycle of political decay and despair"*

The Plenary Hall was built to take at least 500 people, representing all 54 member states of the ECA, partner agencies, observer countries and organisations. We felt that it would be awkward to hold a meeting of 20 to 30 people in such a large room but agreed that since we did not have a choice we would encourage participants to seat themselves in the centre of the first few rows. When the event started, we were awestruck. The Plenary Hall was full to the brim, with people standing on all sides. This was how we learnt that there was a thirst, nay hunger, to know more about the phenomenon of illicit financial flows and their impact on Africa. The ministers passed a resolution following that event, and – as they say – the rest is now history.

The gentleman who sparked this huge interest in illicit financial flows in Africa was Raymond W. Baker, who had made great efforts to bring the dangers of illicit financial flows to the attention of African governments and civil society organisations and had been appointed to the AU/ECA High Level Panel (HLP) on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa. The work of the HLP showed clearly the scale of illicit financial flows from Africa and their negative impact on development.

Raymond Baker's new book, *Invisible Trillions*, has just been published and it throws more light on the work of the High Level Panel, including the fact that the impact of illicit financial flows on African economies goes beyond the financial losses occasioned by such outflows, having a negative effect also on governance and the opportunity cost of lost investments. One very interesting point made by Baker in this new offering, his second in this important area after *Capitalism's Achilles Heel* (2005), is that while base erosion and profit shifting may lie behind the desire of multinational corporations to move money out of developing countries, their primary motivation seems to be the conversion of soft to hard currencies, which is greatly enabled by a financial secrecy system.

In *Invisible Trillions*, Baker lays bare the workings of this fast-expanding global financial secrecy system and how it increases inequality and undermines the rule of law in a manner that imperils capitalism and its twin, liberal democracy. Although Baker's primary focus is the United States, it is clear that the concerns he is expressing apply to the whole world, which is not surprising given the leadership position of the United States in global affairs.

Through painstaking, rigorous and detailed research, Mr Baker lays bare the subterfuge that underpins the financial secrecy system and highlights the motives of various actors and enablers, whom he identifies using publicly available yet mostly obscure information, some from legal sources. He shows how multinational corporations, international banks, large legal and accounting firms, criminal networks and complicit governments have erected a system which is underpinned by tax havens and financial secrecy jurisdictions, to hide their wealth.

Baker's purpose, though, is to show that the financial secrecy system has now come to undermine capitalism, which in turn exacerbates inequality and the very foundations of liberal democracy. Quite refreshingly, despite amassing evidence of the scale and spread of commercial evasions, criminal behaviour and corrupt practices, Raymond Baker offers prescriptions about what can be done to stop this tidal wave. He strongly believes that political action can stop the financial secrecy system in its tracks, just as the US Patriot Act put an end to the existence of shell banks.

In short, Baker calls for actions to 'deconstruct secrecy', and while acknowledging some progress in this regard he calls for further action to tackle disguised corporations, opting for company-by-company reporting over country-by-country reporting and for strong action against trade falsification. It is no wonder that Larry Diamond (who wrote the Foreword) agrees with Baker that 'Only radical improvements across the globe in financial transparency and in regulatory capacity and integrity can break this cycle of political decay and despair.'

*Invisible Trillions* is a well-timed contribution to the current debate about the crisis of capitalism and the dangers it portends for democracy. The influential *FT* columnist, Martin Wolf, has also been writing on this topic, making essentially the same point as Baker, that the survival of democratic capitalism depends on widely shared prosperity. If global financial secrecy promotes greater inequality then indeed there is cause for concern about the health of democratic capitalism. *Invisible Trillions* is an invaluable contribution to this discourse and the world must heed Raymond Baker.

## Note

* First version published in https://www.thecable.ng/invisible-trillions-a-threat-to-global-prosperity

## Reference

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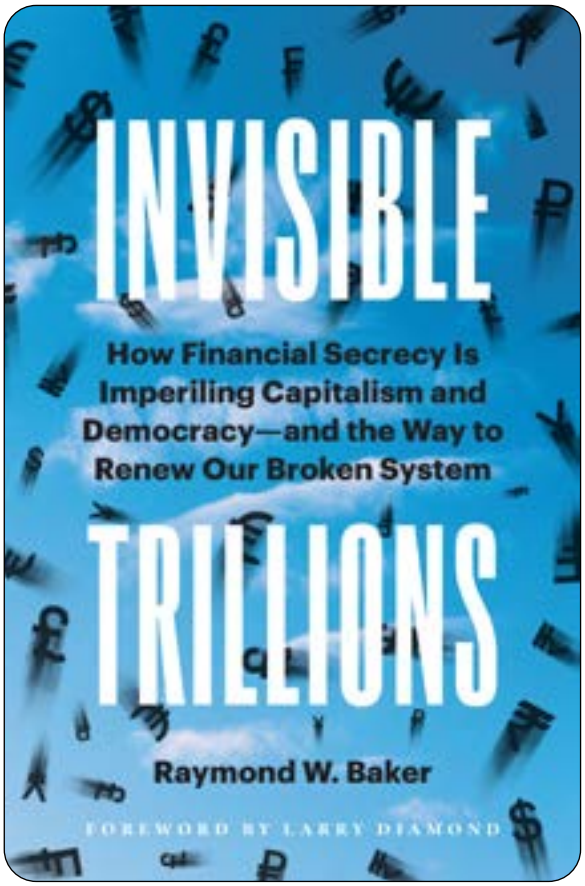


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# Development, Development Cooperation and Africa in the Twenty-First Century

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## Introduction

Despite many attempts and initiatives over the last six decades or so, the African continent continues to lag behind many regions of the world in the metrics that gauge humanity's progress. According to data from the World Bank,[1] Africa is the only region where the absolute number of the poor has risen since 1990. Today, some 400 million Africans live in poverty, up from 300 million in 1990.[2] Even more troubling is that the lion's share of the world's poor, some 60 per cent of the world's population, currently resides in Africa. In 1990, Africa's contribution to world poverty was only 13 per cent.[3] Further, even the much-vaunted African middle class would be categorised as poor were they to reside in a developed country. Using a higher poverty line of USD 6.15, which is the median poverty line in high-income countries, close to 90 per cent of Africa's population, virtually everyone, is poor. In sum, global poverty today is largely an African affair.

This has not always been the case. In the immediate post-independence period, lasting roughly from 1960 to 1980, many African countries registered respectable achievements in reducing poverty and more generally setting their countries on the path towards self-sustaining growth and development. In a series of studies, the distinguished Malawian economist, Thandika Mkandawire, showed empirically how many African countries, and the continent as a whole, registered rates of economic growth that rivalled peer countries and regions in the world during this period (for example, Mkandawire 2001). These growth rates, in turn, financed palpable improvements in the material lives of the continent's people. For example, much of the continent's health and education infrastructure, which continues to provide services today, was established during this period. Unsurprisingly, this early respectable performance was largely buttressed by industrialisation anchored on a developmental state.

Unfortunately, the arrival of the 1980s brought an end to this period of promise and opportunity. Many countries' industrial bases began to decline, followed by widescale economic contraction, which lasted close to three decades (and, by some accounts, continues today). The contraction was so deep and long-lasting that real incomes in some countries have yet to return to the levels of the mid-1970s (Rodrik 2016). This is a really vivid portrayal of what some African scholars have referred to as 'Africa's lost decades' (see the writings of Mkandawire; Anyang Nyong'o 1992).

This absence of growth and development in Africa has naturally spawned a veritable industry of research seeking to understand the causes of the continent's underperformance. The output of this work can be grouped roughly into two categories: scholarship that emphasises the role of factors internal to Africa as the cause, and scholarship that stresses the role of external factors. The analyses of the first camp, the 'internalists', have led to the conclusion that Africa's dismal record of economic growth and development stems from the continent's inability to implement 'good' policies (defined as those adopted by the now developed and industrialised countries, particularly those in the West). In other words, Africa's problem is that it has failed to 'copy and paste' from the developed world.

The work of the internalists, further, has sought to understand the fundamental reasons for this failure. And here their analyses have produced what one can only describe as a spaghetti bowl of reasons. Some have argued that it is a result of the ethnic 'fractionalisation' that one sees across many countries. Others have blamed corruption as the culprit that has trapped the continent in a bad policy equilibrium. Still others have alluded to the many civil and cross-border wars that break out in many parts of the African continent. Others have explained the situation by laying the blame on Africa's geography—that is to say, the continent's topology and ecological conditions have somehow impeded African elites' ability to implement correct policies. An example of this literature is Jeffrey Herbst's *States and Power in Africa* (2000), which elicited a most fitting rebuttal from the Kenyan political scientist, Michael Chege (2004).

As can be expected, the internalist literature engendered a reaction from scholars whose analysis had led them to conclude that the principal reasons for the continent's lacklustre performance lay outside it. These 'externalists' see, for example, the slave trade and the imperialism that it gave rise to as quintessential examples of extraneous factors, the legacy of which continues to influence the continent's economic performance today. Additionally, this second set of scholars considers that contemporary phenomena external to Africa negatively impact the continent's prospects for economic development. For example, dynamics in the international commodities markets, and the actions of the Federal Reserve Bank in the United States and the international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, are viewed as fundamental to Africa's poor economic performance. Thandika Mkandawire and Charles Soludo, scholars who can be said to be working in the externalist tradition, identified the oil price shocks of the 1970s and the IMF and World Bank's economic prescriptions of the 1980s and 1990s as key to understanding Africa's aforementioned 'lost decades' (Mkandawire and Soludo 1999).

What is fascinating from the standpoint of the politics of knowledge production is that the two intellectual camps fit neatly, with some exceptions, within a North–South dichotomy. Each camp has been dominated by scholars concentrated in either the global North or the global South. The scholars active in advancing an internalist perspective have been based largely at universities and research institutions in the global North. On the other hand, scholars who have emphasised an externalist analysis of Africa's problems are based either in Africa or the global South more broadly, or are originally from there. As many (again, Southern) scholars have pointed out, this intellectual division of labour is not coincidental but may be seen as intimately linked with the Cold War geopolitics that has dominated the world ever since the conclusion of the Second World War (for example, Olukoshi 2006). However, careful readers of this large body of work on the African malaise have concluded that the externalist perspective, at both conceptual and empirical levels, more closely reflects the African experience over the last six decades or so (see, for example, Mkandawire 2015). In other words, external factors predominate, but are not alone, in explaining the continent's laggard performance.

## What is Development?

Even though the internalist and externalist perspectives disagree on the causes of underdevelopment in Africa, they both agree that the continent has struggled with development. However, and crucially, the two perspectives have different interpretations of what constitutes the term 'development'.

For the internalist camp, development is seen simply as an improvement in the incomes of a country's population. In this sense, development is driven largely by economic growth that is sustained over long periods of time. Therefore, for the internalists, a rough-and-ready assessment of whether a country is developing can be done by observing trends in poverty over time. Reductions in poverty are seen as synonymous with development whereas increases in poverty, as are evident in Africa, signal a reversal of development.

For the externalists, the meaning of development is nuanced. To be sure, the externalists see rising incomes as important for the process of development. That is to say, they see higher per capita incomes, and therefore declining poverty levels, as one criterion for assessing whether development is taking place or not. However, even more important are the sources of economic growth, in addition to assessing whether the development taking place is emancipatory or further entrenches dependency.

On the sources of growth, the externalists emphasise the role of structural transformation in industry as important, which itself can drive rising incomes in a sustainable manner. Importantly, structural transformation is seen as a vehicle for self-reliant development, which gives full meaning to the

calls for self-determination that accompanied the struggle for political independence in Africa. Simply stated, for the externalists, a country may 'develop' and yet still find itself even more dependent on others to an extent that undermines its self-determination.

These two differing meanings of development, and their implications for policy, are worth keeping in mind as we deliberate on the prospects for development in Africa in the twenty-first century.

## Opportunities and Constraints of Development in Africa in the Twenty-First Century

As the above makes clear, one of the most important policy questions of the twenty-first century is how the African continent is to develop. The gravity of this question cannot be emphasised enough given that the livelihoods of more than a billion Africans will depend on whether and how it is answered. Further, what happens in Africa in the current century will have implications for the rest of the world, given that one out of every three people in the world will be African by the year 2100.[4] Therefore, resolving the 'African Question'—that is, the question of Africa's development—must animate each and every one of us.

In our consideration, we identify the following factors as opportunities and constraints that have a bearing on whether and how Africa will develop in the twenty-first century. These are by no means exhaustive.

### *The Role of Ideas and Learning from History*

As highlighted in the introductory section of this note, idea formation has played an important role in informing the interpretation of African economic phenomena and, consequently, in informing policy prescriptions. Therefore, in thinking through the potentialities of economic development in Africa in the twenty-first century, we have to pay particular attention to the processes of idea formation and diffusion in and about Africa. If the twentieth century was typified by an unproductive and, quite frankly, destructive cold war logic to idea formation, the twenty-first century will have to do things differently if the continent is to have a chance of success. Those who are genuinely committed to seeing Africa develop will have to adopt an approach to ideation that is anchored on what Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021) has referred to as epistemic justice—that is, a commitment to understanding Africa on its own terms. And, as many have pointed out, the notion of epistemic justice requires that this time around Africans play a role that is not marginal in the formation of ideas about the continent (Chelwa 2021; Mkandawire 2011).

The second aspect of relevance here is that, in thinking about the prospects of Africa's development today, we should not overlook the achievements that many African countries made in the immediate post-independence era. As alluded to earlier, many countries registered impressive achievements in the social and economic sphere and often under very challenging circumstances. Industrialisation anchored on a developmental state was key in this period of short-lived transformation. Therefore, the relevance and potential of this model for today's Africa will have to be an important matter of discussion and debate.

### *The Role of Development Cooperation*

As the adage goes, 'no one is an island'. In this respect, the development of Africa will require the cooperation of partners across the world. And, as so eloquently argued by Adebayo Olukoshi, the turn of phraseology from 'development aid' to 'development cooperation' is not to be papered over as we think about Africa's development in the twenty-first century (Olukoshi 2006). Development aid is a child of colonial development—it was born out of strategic calculations in the late colonial period and given life during the early period of the Cold War. For example, US president Harry Truman's Point Four Program, even though couched in the language of altruism, was conceived of as a bulwark against the spread of Soviet-sponsored communism in the Third World. Unsurprisingly, the patterns of aid came to reflect the realities of whether or not the recipients were considered allies of the United States (and the West in general). Additionally, an element of condescension and racism was built into this model of development aid. Recipients were seen as backward countries needing the tutelage of the more civilised. This language grew and became more evident as colonial developmentalism after World War II gave way to new ways of thinking about the agenda for development studies in the 1960s and 1970s.

However, more recently the language of development cooperation has emerged and replaced that of development aid. The intent in this phraseological turn is to signal that partnerships around development must proceed on a basis of mutual respect, learning and cooperation.

Whether this has been implemented remains a major issue of debate. But in its presentation, it has increasingly been acknowledged that no longer is the monopoly on wisdom the preserve of the West, but it belongs, too, to the rest. In this new articulation, the imparting of knowledge is bi-directional: the more developed partners have much to learn from the developing world, and vice versa.

Finally, development cooperation is beset by an internal epistemological trap: development aid ought naturally to 'commit suicide' if its mission of facilitating development is to be realised. For this mission to bear fruit, it needs to articulate an idea of development that is consistent with the total emancipation of the developing world as opposed to entrenching a regime of subjugation and dependency. What the persisting phraseology suggests, however, is a mission for development aid and cooperation without end in sight, one in which the changing phraseology reflects a desire for paradigm maintenance rather than for rethinking the parameters within which development aid was framed. The agenda to rethink aid, as more recently advanced by the NORAD,[5] is one that invites us to question the phraseology and make proposals that truly ensure that the potential for development cooperation to deliver on its promise is realistically weighed.

## *The Role of Geopolitics*

In the twentieth century, Cold War geopolitics influenced and constrained Africa's development aspirations. The East-West dichotomy that dominated the latter half of that century, a period which coincided with the political decolonisation of Africa, did not give the continent a fighting chance to chart its own way. A rejection of the West was simplistically viewed as accepting the East and vice versa. In the same way, there is a risk that geopolitics could stand in the way of the continent's development aspirations in the twenty-first century.

All the available evidence strongly suggests that presently we are undergoing a reconfiguration of power politics at the global level on a scale that has not been witnessed for a while. Many astute analysts of international relations and international power politics forecast the arrival of a multipolar world dominated by a handful of countries. This is a departure from the unipolarity that has prevailed over the last three decades or so. China and Russia appear to have emerged as strong contenders to rival the United States in world influence. In some ways, this move towards multipolarity seems to have been hastened by the ongoing Russia–Ukraine war, which has betrayed the world's fault lines. That war has been tragic in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives. Further, it has led to disruptions in the supply of vital raw materials in many parts of the world, including the African continent, with widescale implications for the welfare of poor people there and elsewhere.

Additionally, enhanced attempts at South–South cooperation also signal the arrival of this new era of geopolitics. For example, the BRICS group of countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have recently expanded their membership to include Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The expanded BRICS (BRICS Plus, as it is now known) will have command over 30 per cent of global GDP and just under half the world's population. Further, the appointment of former Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff to head the 'BRICS Bank', officially known as the New Development Bank, highlights the group's ambition to rival traditional international financial institutions in the supply of development finance. And then there are the opportunities for the recapitalisation of the BRICS Bank presented by the addition of new members with sufficient resources, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE. All this suggests that BRICS Plus will be a serious rival for the dominance of older blocs, such as the Group of Seven countries (the G7), in setting the global agenda in the remainder of the twenty-first century.

In all this geopolitical reconfiguration that is underway, it is necessary for the African continent to find elbow room to chart its own destiny. Doing so does not mean simplistically picking one geopolitical bloc over the other but rather navigating this new terrain in a way that maximises the continent's benefits. Similarly, the old powers and their blocs (and the new ones for that matter) should allow the African continent the space and latitude to devise strategies of international cooperation that advantage the continent and its people. And if the recent speeches of African and black leaders and government officials in international forums, including those from the CARICOM group, are anything to go by, a new push for a different language of engagement with the international system has already arrived. The demands for a fair, global financial and political system are growing every day, not just from Africa, but from all over the world, including the global North. The effectiveness of the CARICOM Community in mobilising an argument for reparations, restitution and repair, which

finally has found resonance with the adoption of an African Union resolution mandating the government of the Republic of Ghana to lead the reparations and restitutions agenda, all suggest that a different global system is in the offing. It is a matter of when, and not if.

### *The Role of Climate Change and 'Green Capitalism'*

The threats from climate change will present significant headwinds to the African continent's aspirations for economic development. The assessments from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and others continue to highlight that the continent will bear the biggest brunt even though its contribution to climate change historically has been negligible. Perennial floods, droughts and historically high temperatures continue to disrupt the livelihoods of millions of Africans who derive a living from agriculture, which relies on favourable weather. Droughts have also affected electric power generation in those African countries that rely on hydropower, with knock-on effects on industry and other parts of the economy. All this goes to show that the best-laid plans for Africa's growth and development will be laid to waste if adequate strategies to cope with climate change are not addressed. Further, a serious conversation on climate reparations will have to take place given Africa's limited role in greenhouse gas emissions but maximal burden of the costs of climate change.

A final note to make here is the role that so-called 'green capitalism' is likely to have on the African continent's fortunes. The world is currently in a rush to transition away from fossil fuels towards renewables in a race to mitigate climate change. This 'green transition' will require a retooling of the world's energy infrastructure in ways that will impact the demand for the types of raw materials that are abundant in Africa. For example, the increased production of electric cars will require millions of additional tons of cobalt and copper, minerals that are widely available on the continent. This increased demand for the types of minerals necessary to aid the green transition has the potential to spark a new scramble for Africa, with possibly dire consequences for the economic, social and political life of the continent. Therefore, the international community and governments across the African continent will have to work together in developing a regulatory infrastructure that protects the continent from the extraction and exploitation that has occurred in the past. Such a framework is already proposed in the Africa Mining Vision[6] but the broad framework of addressing more recent climate change-related concerns must remain on the agenda.

### *The Promise of Digital Technology*

The African continent has one of the youngest populations in the world, with a median age estimated at about 19 years.[7] This population is much more technologically linked with one another and with the outside world than any before it. But, unlike those before it, it also faces bleak prospects for employment opportunities given the continent's economic challenges. However, the fact that this generation is technologically savvy presents opportunities for the design of the kind of public policies that complement and augment the skills they have already demonstrated. Many are already using technology to solve problems that are unique to their contexts. Many have established online entrepreneurial activities that, for example, connect buyers and sellers of services as well as reporting service delivery delays. Some are using technology to facilitate the deepening of democratic tenets in their countries. They are a cohort that is aware of the dilemmas of living a life of poverty and want in a context where development aid is only a fraction of illicit financial flows. Many of their initiatives cannot be scaled up in an effective and sustainable way because of the absence of public support. Technological innovation promises to be one of the main drivers of economic recovery in the twenty-first century and Africa can share in the gains only if we make the necessary investments in its young people.

### *The Important Role of Policy Autonomy*

One of Africa's big challenges historically has been the inability of its policy elites to determine and implement economic and public policies in an autonomous and independent manner. Whereas in the developed world, questions of economic policy are determined on the basis of how they are likely to influence the country and the welfare of citizens, in the African case, policy considerations have often involved the considerations of external actors such as the IMF, World Bank and the donor community. African policy-makers often have no choice but to make this kind of calculation because of the fear of losing external financial support if they disregard the policy 'advice' of external actors. The classic and most egregious case study is the era of policy-making during the structural adjustment years, when virtually all aspects of policy-making were outsourced to the Bretton Woods institutions.

Many ministries of finance across the continent were staffed by foreign policy-makers who occupied crucial and important positions. Some of them were seconded from either from the World Bank or IMF. In Kenya, for instance, 'dream team' of technocrats recruited from international organisations was appointed headed by Dr. Richard Leakey. Many other countries like Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Tanzania, etc., were forced to accept seconded officials. In Liberia, the USAID sent personnel to take control of the budget office. However, Cote d'Ivoire was the highlight where in April 1994, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny appointed Mr. Alassane Ouattara as the Chairman of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Coordination of the Stabilization Program and Economic recovery. This launched his political career to becoming Prime Minister and later President but it remains unclear if Cote d'Ivoire has enjoyed any sustainable growth or stability. That this experiment risks being repeated in Africa is a sign of how little we learned from the adjustment years. Zambia's recent experience in trying to resolve its debt problems with the help of the IMF is evidence that external preoccupations continue to act as constraints on domestic policy-making (Chelwa 2022).

Therefore, granting African governments the autonomy to devise policies as they see fit will be a crucial matter of consideration in the twenty-first century.

## Conclusion

This note set out to assess the prospects of development in Africa in the twenty-first century. In so doing, it recapped the continent's unfortunate experience with development in the preceding hundred years and the different intellectual traditions that sought to understand this experience. Further, the note considered the factors that may constrain or aid Africa's development in the twenty-first century.

## Editor's Acknowledgement

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## Notes

1. The statistics presented on poverty in Africa are from the World Bank's Poverty and Inequality Platform, https://pip.worldbank.org/home
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See population projection here: https://ourworldindata.org/region-population-2100#:~:text=The%20striking%20change%20between%20now,reach%20just%20under%204%20billion.
5. See the forthcoming Report titled "Old Problems and New Realities in Africa – and the role of development cooperation" to be launched on 1st November 2023.
6. https://au.int/en/ti/amv/about
7. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/africas-median-age-about-19-median-age-its-leaders-about-63#:~:text=The%20Median%20Age%20of%20Its%20Leaders%20Is%20about%2063.,-By%20Ambassador%20Mark&text=Africa%20has%20the%20world's%20youngest,median%20age%20are%

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# Tribe and Tribalism in Kenya's Politics

*I already realised the problem was not just one of disagreement between political leaders over an election result: the countrywide violence meant the problem was more fundamental, arising from the makeup of the Kenyan political system and its relationship with society. We needed a process that would address the root causes of Kenya's problems, otherwise any agreement would constitute nothing more than a delay before the next violent crisis … Our mediation needed to be the beginning of a true process of political reform.*

– **Kofi Annan, former Secretary General, UN**

**Peter Anyang' Nyong'o**
Governor of Kisumu County, Kenya

**Caroline Karugu**
Finance and Investments Expert
Nairobi, Kenya

Following the violence that took an ethnic form after the controversial outcome of the December 2007 presidential elections in Kenya, Kofi Annan, the mediator among the conflicting parties, in his pursuit for a peaceful settlement made the above point emphasising the key political problem in Kenya: that of creating a nation out of diverse tribes.

The concept 'tribe' is itself a problem; what it connotes presents an even more complex phenomenon in understanding and dealing with a postcolonial situation. In the case of colonial Africa, the European colonialists used the word 'tribe' to define the conglomeration of the local communities they found in Africa, who they defined as *primitive, backward, uncivilised and in need of salvation.* The colonists therefore tended to herd the 'natives' together in homelands and deny them all the modern benefits of 'European civilisation', such as education. Such homelands were called 'districts' in the case of Kenya. South Africa was the extreme where racial segregation, called apartheid*,* lasted much longer than elsewhere in Africa. What put an end to this ugly phase of imperialism called colonialism was not the good nature or free will of the imperialists but the *struggle for independence and self determination* by the Africans themselves.

Since 'tribe' had been used to divide Africans so as to politically oppress and economically exploit them, tribe also an enemy of nationalism and the struggle for independence. According to Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC), the whole idea of the struggle for independence was *to die a tribe and be born a nation* in the post-independence situation. But the expression of tribe in terms of *political exclusion based on tribe* has made the birth of politically cohesive nations almost a permanent work in progress, quite often degenerating into the kind of conflict that Kofi Annan was mediating in Kenya. The conflict became a tribal conflict since the parties to the conflict were grouped into political parties with generally *tribal boundaries.* Need this have been the case?

Not really, since Amilcar Cabral pointed out that the independence struggle should itself be a process of nation-building, of dying as tribes and being born as nations. But it is what happened in Africa. Or it happened in various degrees and with diverse outcomes from one post-independence situation to the other. In Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), subsequently transformed into Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) after the union with Zanzibar, actually became reasonably successful in creating a conscious process of

nation-building by substantially reducing tribal political and economic competition. Kenya, on the other hand, since independence, has seen the continuous formation of political parties that obey the boundaries of tribe: hence Kofi Annan's observation. What, then, needs to be done in the case of Kenya? Or, to put the question in a more active way: what *have Kenyans done, or what do they intend to do, to overcome these boundaries?*

By the time Kofi Annan was mediating in the post-election conflict of 2007–2008, it was quite clear that whatever had been done had failed to produce the political fabric for *dying a tribe and being born a nation.* The result was the recommendation by Kofi Annan's team for radical constitutional changes that would widen the frontiers of democratic politics in Kenya so that political struggles for scarce resources would rise above ethnic conflicts under *new rules of the game that would promote nationhood.* The 2010 Constitution tried to do exactly this, both in its preamble and in proposed legislation for creating national cohesion through political, economic and social institutions and processes.

The problem in Kenya, however, continues to be the makeup of the Kenyan political system and its relationship with society, which is due to two interconnected but different phenomena: tribe and tribalism. Tribe can be broadly defined as an association of people who share linguistic, kinship or other similar ties, whereas tribalism is the political mobilisation of 'tribe' to secure or maintain state resources to the exclusion of other tribes. This distinction is important because it helps us shed the impression that tribe is inferior to race and primordial or atavistic: it simply refers to dynamic, ever-changing identities.

Tribalism, on the other hand, is nowhere near as benign or benevolent. Tribalism leads to neglect, marginalisation, exclusion and, in Kenya, violent conflict. In Rwanda, it led to genocide.

The struggle for ethnic inclusion in Kenya is as old as the country: scholar Professor Karuti Kanyinga has argued that 'In Kenya … the colonial administration created native reserves by force. The state did not allow interaction between groups. This alone firmed up ethnic identities. The state imposed restrictions on movement of these groups from one area to another.'

Consequently, the different communities became 'ethnicised' … [and] isolated.

Kanyinga has shown with dexterity how, in post-independence Kenya, critical state positions have been controlled and/or dominated by the tribe from which the president hailed. There is no need for me, at this juncture, to argue against this point because the figures and data that support his view are granite-solid. Indeed, it is because of this that the failure of the NARC coalition to hold together after its devastating electoral victory over the then-ruling Moi–Kanu regime in 2002 spiralled into the 2007–2008 post-election crisis and led to Kenya's worst existential nightmare.

I would, instead, like to pose the question: 'So what are we to do to slay this monster called tribalism?' Arend Lijphart and Will Kymlicka, who have both studied ethnically fragmented/divided/fractious societies extensively and made clear cases on how these societies should manage these fissures, have made useful contributions to this debate.

Lijphart's proposed solution to the problem of tribalism in Kenya's body politic revolves around the theory of 'consensus democracy', or consociationalism, which goes beyond mere majoritarian democracy. Consensus democracies have multiparty systems, parliamentary systems with oversized (and therefore inclusive) cabinet coalitions, proportional electoral systems, corporatist (hierarchical) interest group structures, federal/devolved structures, bicameralism, rigid Constitutions protected by judicial review, and independent central banks. These are all elements that currently feature in the Kenyan constitution. But 'presidentialism' quite often undercuts them in the public sector and state structures, thereby superimposing tribalism in constitutional practice.

On the other hand, Kymlicka talks of 'pluralism'. Pluralism is defined by The Global Centre for Pluralism as an 'ethic of respect that values human diversity'. Pluralism is a deliberate choice that is made to ensure and enhance inclusion and participation within societies that are characterised by the diversity that results from differences in, for example, culture, language and religion. In pluralism, such diversity does not need to lead to division and conflict. Instead, it quite often softens the edges of potential conflicts by democratically promoting unity in diversity.

Pluralism is not accidental; instead, it results from considered decision-making and thoughtful public investment. Moreover, it is characterised by good governance,

strong civic institutions and sound public policy choices. Thus, the state plays a central role in whether a society enjoys pluralism or not.

Kymlicka has characterised pluralism as incorporating both 'hardware' and 'software'. 'Hardware' features items such as Constitutions and institutions, including legislatures, courts, schools and the media. 'Software' involves cultural habits and public mindsets, which include conceptions of national identity and historical narratives. Kymlicka notes that these habits and mindsets shape our perceptions of who belongs and who contributes, and they influence how we interact with others on an everyday basis.

It is important to note that both the hardware and software dimensions of pluralism are equally important; they are interdependent and constantly interact, affect and condition each other.

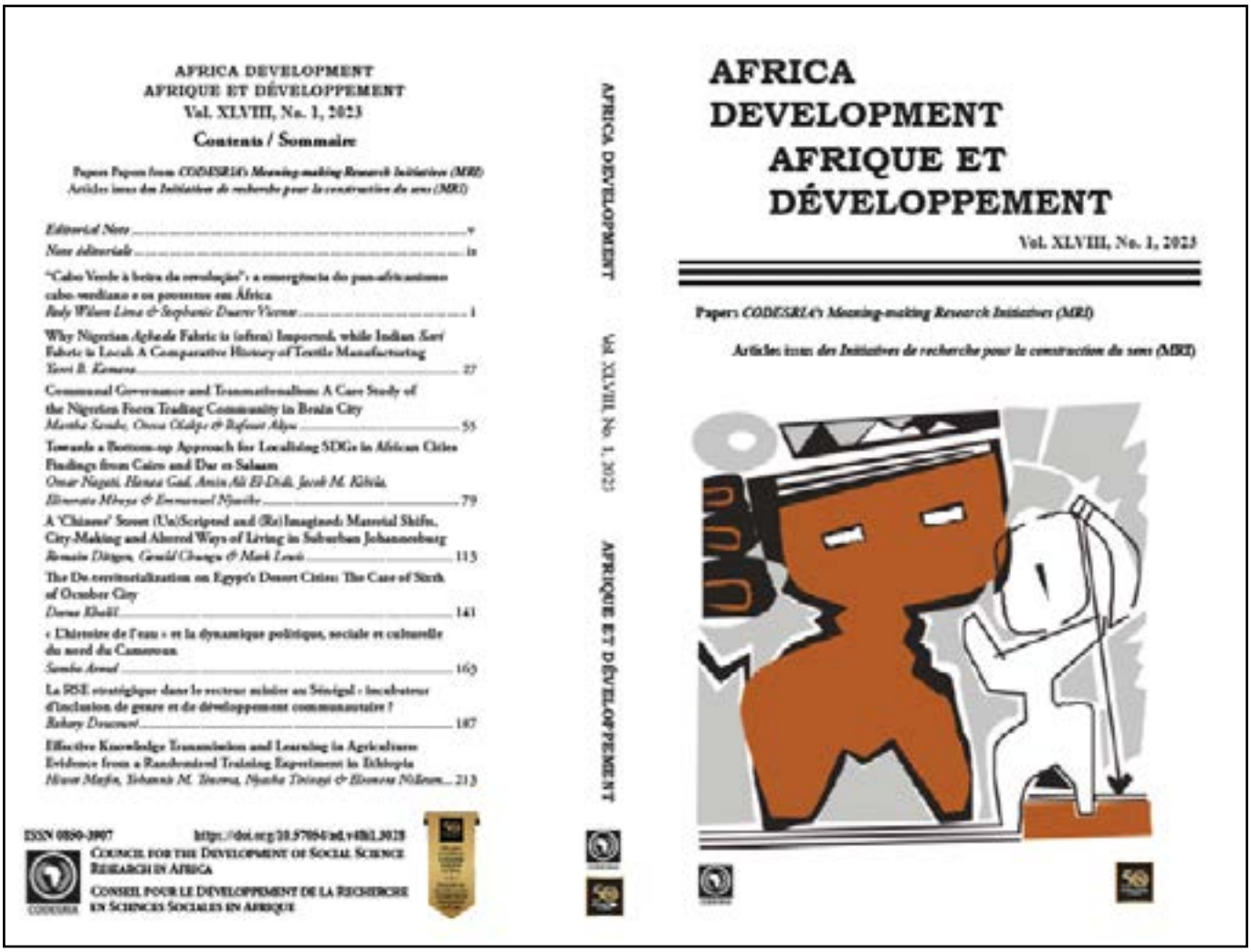
Kymlicka observes that, at their best, these dynamics produce virtuous circles: the emergence of pluralistic narratives and identities makes inclusive institutional reforms possible, which in turn serve to strengthen habits and mindsets of respect for diversity.

But the dynamics can equally go in the opposite direction, as exclusionary mindsets lead to discriminatory institutional reforms, which in turn serve to further polarise attitudes and exacerbate feelings of distrust or enmity.

The jury is still out as to whether the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) would have been a catalyst to deeper consociational democracy in Kenya were it to have been implemented. Notwithstanding the resistance against it, the issues it raised and tried to resolve are still pertinent. In postponing their resolution Kenya sacrifices greater national cohesion as tribalism continues to feed the interests of the political elites.

The struggle, as it were, continues.

**– END –**



# Sierra Leone's Voter Registration Data Discredits the Midterm Census Data: What are Implications for the Presidential Election of June 2023?

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Statistics Sierra Leone carried out a midterm population and housing census in December 2021. The declared purpose of the census was to review the country's development status since the 2015 census and update the base maps and enumeration areas. Opposition parties challenged the procedures by which the census was conducted, and argued that its real purpose was to redraw the constituency boundaries for the June 2023 general elections. They urged their supporters to boycott it. Donor agencies, such as the World Bank and the European Union, were also critical of the exercise. The World Bank even withdrew financial support from the project, citing 'insufficient time ... to satisfactorily address all pending actions' (Reuters 2021) and deliver a credible outcome.

## Questionable Population Figures

The statistics agency ignored the criticisms and boycott and went ahead at full throttle. However, the data it released to the public in May 2022 was met with widespread disbelief and condemnation. It showed high levels of depopulation in some regions or districts and overpopulation in others when compared with previous censuses and datasets.

There were four main criticisms. First, the census data overturned the lopsided population distribution recorded in previous censuses between the two ethnoregional voting blocs—the North-West and the South-East—by making them almost equal. In the 2015 census, the population distribution or ratio was 56.2:43.8 in favour of the North-West. The 2021 census recorded instead a ratio of 50.01:49.99 between the two blocs. This new ratio is also at odds with the lopsided distribution of 54.1:45.9 recorded by the 2004 census carried out by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) government of Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah (Bangura 2022a, 2022b).

Second, the 2021 census massively reduced the population of Freetown, the capital city, which has experienced high levels of inward migration over the years. It recorded a figure of 606,701 as the city's population whereas the 2015 census recorded 1,055,964 people. The 2021 census figure for Freetown is even lower than the figure of 772,873 recorded in the 2004 census. Other datasets, such as those for primary and secondary school enrolment, assessable properties (formal houses) recorded by the Freetown City Council, and slum settlements, also cast the accuracy of the 2021 census data in doubt. For instance, there were 413,407 students aged between six and eighteen years enrolled in Freetown's primary and secondary schools in 2020 (Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, 2021). But the majority population is constituted by children below six years and those aged eighteen and above.

In her letter to the Statistician General, Osman Sankoh, challenging the census results, the Mayor of Freetown, Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, highlighted the number of assessable properties in the Council's database, which in 2022 was 107,526 (*The Sierra Leone Telegraph*, 10 June 2022). With a recorded average of 9.2 people per household, she concluded that 989,239 people could be living in formal, assess-

able properties in the city. The data for 56 slum communities in Freetown show that there were 344,147 slum dwellers in 2022. The combined figures for people living in formal housing and those in slum dwellings produce a population of 1,333,386 for Freetown (*The Sierra Leone Telegraph*, 10 June 2022).

Third, the 2021 census reported that there are more people in Western Area Rural district (662,056) than in Western Area Urban (606,701), hereafter Freetown. Anyone familiar with the settlement patterns in the two districts would agree that the data does not make sense. There were 1,055,964 people in Freetown and 444,270 people in Western Area Rural in the 2015 census. In other words, Freetown had two and half times more people than Western Area Rural.

The fourth point concerns the elevated population numbers of Kenema District in the 2021 census, which make it the most populated district in the country—even more populated than Freetown, which in the 1985, 2004 and 2015 censuses had more people than any other district. In the 2021 census, Kenema is allocated 772,472 people and Freetown 606,701. Indeed, three districts in the East and South (Kenema, Kono and Bo) each recorded more people than Freetown. As we have seen, in the 2015 census the population of Freetown was 1,055,964; that of Kenema was 526,379. In the 2004 census, Freetown accounted for 15.76 per cent of the country's population, and Kenema 10 per cent.

These anomalies indicate that there were strong grounds for the rejection of the 2021 midterm census by large sections of the informed public. When confronted with these irregularities, the head of the statistics agency made the laughable claim that people migrated from Freetown on the night of the census and were counted in their hometowns and villages (Hashim 2021). A migration of 449,263 people, or 42.5 per cent of the population, in one night must be the biggest migration in per capita terms in the world outside conflict zones. It is doubtful whether Sierra Leone even has the logistics or required number of commercial vehicles to perform such a feat.

The voter registration figures for the 2023 elections released in December 2022 should settle the controversy over the accuracy of the midterm census data. The distribution of registered voters for the two regional voting blocs (North-West and South-East) mirrors those of the 2018 and 2012 voter registers and gives the lie to the recorded parity of the 2021 census. The North-West accounts for 59.19 per cent of the registered voters for the 2023 elections, and the South-East 40.81 per cent. Amazingly, this 59.19:40.81 ratio is almost the same as the 59.35:40.65 ratio between the two voting blocs in the 2012 biometric voter register, which I described as lopsided bipolarity when analysing the relative voter inflexibility in the two regions (Bangura 2015). The ratio in the 2018 voter register was 60.46:39.54.

So, we now have registered voter data for three elections generated under two different governments producing similar outcomes. The parity in population distribution between the two regional voting blocs recorded by the 2021 census data therefore should be seen as spurious unless we assume that many people in the South-East refused to be registered for the elections. However, non-registration cannot be a strong argument since the South and East are the putative strongholds of the ruling party, which would have been highly incentivised to get people in those regions to register.

We encounter a more serious problem when we compare the number of registered voters in Freetown and the recorded population of the city in the 2021 census. Figure 1 compares the census data and voter

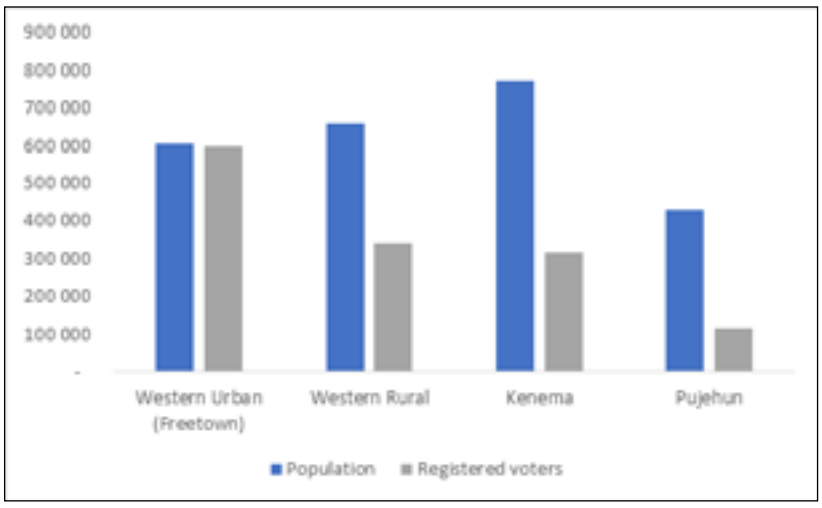


**Figure 1:** A comparison of the 2021 population census data and the 2023 voter registration data for Western Urban (Freetown), Western Rural, Kenema and Pujehun

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone (2022) and Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (2022)

registration data for Western Area Urban (Freetown), Western Area Rural, Kenema and Pujehun.

The number of registered voters for the 2023 elections in Freetown is 598,022, and the recorded population in the census data is 606,701. This means that almost everyone (98.56 per cent) in Freetown—including babies—registered to vote, if we are to believe the census data. About 50 per cent of Sierra Leoneans are below the voting age of 18. A registered voter population of 598,022 should equate to a population of about 1,200,000 in the city—almost the same number as Aki-Sawyerr's estimates.

The 2023 voter register shows also that there are more voters in Western Urban than in Western Rural. The number of registered voters in Freetown is 598,022 compared to Western Rural's voter population of 341,764. These figures are at odds with those of the 2021 census, which rank Western Rural as the more populated district. There is no reason to believe that people in Western Urban were more keen than those in Western Rural to register for the elections. The registration data for all previous elections reveals that more people registered and voted in Freetown than in Western Rural.

A similar problem is encountered when we compare the registered voters in Kenema District and Freetown. Despite the higher number of people recorded for Kenema in the census data (772,472 for Kenema and 606,701 for Freetown), a lot more people registered to vote in the 2023 elections in Freetown (598,022) than in Kenema (317,978). Indeed, as in previous voter registers, there are more voters in Freetown than any other district. Only 41.16 per cent of the 2021 census population of Kenema registered to vote. If we assume that the number of people in Kenema below the age of 18 (who are not qualified to vote) does not deviate much from the national average of about 50 per cent, and the ruling party is highly incentivised to mobilise voters in Kenema to register, we should have a much higher percentage of voters per population (about 50 per cent) than the 41.16 per cent who were registered.

The ratio of registered voters to recorded population in the census data seems bizarre in a number of districts in the South-East and North. Pujehun stands out in this regard in recording the lowest ratio in all sixteen electoral districts. According to the 2021 census, Pujehun has a population of 429,574 but only 115,789 registered voters for the 2023 elections. This means only 26.95 per cent of the people in Pujehun registered to vote. It is doubtful that 73.05 per cent of the people in Pujehun are below the age of 18. Either the census data is terribly wrong or many people refused to register. Again, this is a stronghold of the ruling party, which should be highly incentivised to get people in that district to register. It is clear from this four-case comparison that the 2021 mid-term census was money down the drain. Its data is woefully unusable.

## Implications for the 2023 Presidential Election

The lopsided ratio of registered voters between the two regional voting blocs has implications for the presidential election scheduled for 24 June. Apart from the presidential election of 2002, in which the Sierra Leone People's Party's (SLPP) Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah won 70 per cent of the votes, a bipolar ethnoregional cleavage has defined Sierra Leone's electoral politics since the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1996. In the run-off presidential election of 2018, 67.3 per cent of Maada Bio's SLPP votes were from the South and East and 89.2 per cent of Samura Kamara's All People's Congress (APC) votes were from the North and Western Area. This ethnoregional bifurcation explains why census and registered voter data are always closely watched as they give some indication of how parties are likely to fare in presidential elections.

If the ratio of 50.01:49.99 recorded in the 2021 census was repeated in the voter register, this would massively boost the chances of the incumbent president, Maada Bio, to win the 2023 presidential election. But, the registered voter ratio of 59.19:40.81 between the two voting blocs sends a negative signal to Bio and his ruling party and elevates the main opposition APC's chances of returning to power.

However, a favourable voter register does not necessarily guarantee electoral success, as can be seen from the defeat of the APC in 2018. In that election, the APC lost ground in all sixteen electoral districts. Significantly, its vote share declined in the Western Area, from 72 per cent in 2012 to 60.5 per cent in 2018, and in the North, from 88 per cent in 2012 to 82 per cent in 2018. The National Grand Coalition (NGC), which drew 60 per cent of its support from the North (88 per cent of its votes were from the North-West), contributed to the six per cent decline of the APC's share of votes in that region. The APC's vote share in Kono in the East also declined, from 58 per cent in 2012 to 27.4 per cent in 2018.

In 'The Humbling of the All People's Congress: Understanding Sierra Leone's March 2018 Presidential Run-off Election' (Bangura 2018, 2021), I characterised the APC's failure to retain power in 2018 as a protest vote against the party. I traced it to the party's two-region strategy (fielding its standard-bearer and running-mate from the same voting bloc—North and Western Area) and poor record in office, especially during its second term when the key economic indicators sharply deteriorated and its leader, Ernest Koroma, became an all-powerful and unaccountable president.

Bio, on the other hand, won the 2018 presidential election on the strength of a four-region strategy. In the South and East he maximised his vote share in the six Mende-speaking districts of Bo, Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, Kenema and Kailahun to stratospheric levels (securing an average of 89 per cent of the votes in those districts). He flipped Kono in the East (which was facilitated by the APC's expulsion of Sam Sumana, who hails from that district, from the party and as vice president of the country). He made substantial inroads in the Western Area, where he increased his vote share from 25 per cent in 2012 to 39.5 per cent in 2018. And he almost tripled his vote share in the North, albeit from a low base—from six per cent in 2012 to 17.8 per cent in 2018.

The two alternations in power that Sierra Leone experienced after the reintroduction of multiparty rule—in 2007 and 2018—occurred after an incumbent party had served two terms in office. However, this should be seen as largely fortuitous rather than ordained. Tejan-Kabbah secured a second term in 2002 with a 70 per cent majority because of the postwar dividend (the economy rebounded strongly, recording the highest-ever post-civil-war growth in 2002 after the regression of the war years) and his commendable effort in reaching out to the other half of the ethnoregional divide, including in his ministerial appointments. He even secured one-third of the votes in the North during the 2002 presidential election. Similarly, Ernest Koroma's first tenure as president (2007–2012) coincided with a global raw materials boom, which boosted the country's GDP, helped in the construction of roads and electricity supply, and gave the impression of progress. He was rewarded with a 57.8 per cent majority in the first round of the 2012 election.

Bio, we should recall, won the 2018 election by a margin of only 3.6 per cent, or 92,235 votes. A vote swing of only 1.8 per cent or 46,118 votes will cause him to lose the 2023 election. In the forthcoming election, he is confronted with serious headwinds, chief among which is the poor state of the economy. Inflation currently stands at 26.81 per cent (compared to 16.03 per cent in 2018), and food inflation is at a record post-civil-war high—registering an astonishing 43 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2022. The national currency has depreciated against the dollar almost threefold, from SLE 7,664 in 2018 to SLE 21,632 in 2023, and the GDP has grown at an average rate of only 2.8 per cent between 2018 and 2022—not enough to generate meaningful jobs for the large number of unemployed or underemployed youths trapped in poverty. We do not have poverty data for the period 2018–2023 (the World Bank's most recent value for poverty in Sierra Leone is for 2018). However, a study conducted jointly by the World Food Programme and Sierra Leone's Ministry of Agriculture in August 2022 found that 81 per cent of households were food insecure and 14.9 per cent were extremely food insecure (World Food Programme, 2022).

A popular refrain in Freetown on the high cost of living during Bio's first two years in office was '*di gron dry*' (literally 'the ground is dry'—or times are hard). The new words on the streets are '*sufferness*' and '*sufferation*' (or suffering). On the plus side, the government has spent substantial sums of money on its flagship Free Quality School Education programme (accounting for 22 per cent of the budget), which has raised enrolment levels tremendously across the country. However, parents are still responsible for about 25 per cent of the resources or finances received by schools, in the form of levies. Non-fee expenditure, such as for non-basic textbooks, uniforms, bags, food and transportation, is still a burden on households, and many parents prefer to send their children to private schools as they do not consider state-funded, free-tuition schools good enough.

Bio's anti-corruption drive has also run out of steam as there does not seem to be much difference between his government and the APC's, whose corrupt officials he has hounded and tried to discredit. Corruption continues to be the bane of development. Sierra Leone gained three points in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index during the first year of Bio's administration, moving from 30 points in 2017 and 2018 to 33 points in 2019. However, performance has stalled at 34 points since 2021. A score of 34 out of 100 is still very low.

To compound the problem, the well-respected and diligent Auditor General, Lara Taylor-Pearce, was arbitrarily suspended in November 2021, a few weeks before the release of the annual audit report for 2020. The report contained damning revelations of fraudulent practices, questionable use of public funds, and systematic failure to comply with established rules and procedures in financial transactions across government ministries and agencies. The Office of the President was implicated in these wrongdoings, which included the falsification of hotel receipts during the president's travel to Lebanon, double-dipping by staff on the president's travel team, inaccurate retirement receipts totalling USD 110,000 racked up by the State Chief of Protocol and the Personal Assistant to the First Lady (both of whom were asked to refund the money) stemming from the president's overseas trips, and direct cash payments of USD 170,489 (which may expose holders of such a large amount of cash to charges of money laundering) to settle medical bills (Audit Service Sierra Leone, 2021).

Like his predecessor, Ernest Koroma, whose cabinet largely consisted of people from the North-West (81.8 per cent in 2007 and 75 per cent in 2010), Bio's appointments to top government jobs have been highly ethnoregional, which has alienated those who do not trace their origins to the South-East. Even though he campaigned on a four-region strategy in 2018, he has governed in the last five years on a two-region ethnocratic platform. According to an Institute for Governance Reform report in 2018, *Beyond Business as Usual: Looking inward to change our story*, 58.6 per cent of ministerial appointments were held by individuals from the South-East, which accounts for markedly less than 50 per cent of the population.

The ethnoregional bias worsened over the next two years. A new book by Umu Tejan-Jalloh (2023), *The Early Policies of President Maada Bio: My Thoughts and Analysis*, shows that by 2021 the South-East accounted for 64 per cent of cabinet appointments. Shockingly, twenty-eight (or 90.3 per cent) of the thirty-one heads of parastatals and core government agencies were people from the South-East. Only one Northerner and two Westerners headed a parastatal or core government agency.

The totality of these economic problems and ethnic biases suggests that all is not well in the polity. A survey by Afrobarometer and the Institute for Governance Reform in 2020 (Afrobarometer and IGR 2020) found that only 32 per cent of Sierra Leoneans believed the country was 'going in the right direction'—a 13-point drop from 45 per cent in 2018. Disturbingly, there was a stark divide in opinion in the two ethnoregional blocs: only 14 per cent of respondents in the North and 16 per cent of those in the West believed that the country was moving in the right direction—against 57 per cent of respondents in the South and 53 per cent of those in the East who believed the country was on the right track.

Given Bio's small margin of victory in 2018 and the current unfavourable voter registration ratio between the two regional blocs, one would have expected a more inclusive policy in top-level appointments, similar to that of Tejan-Kabbah, in order to improve his prospects of re-election in June 2023. As I showed in my article (Bangura 2018, 2021), Bio would not have won the 2018 election without support from voters in the North. Let me quote that section of the article to illustrate the point:

> Relying on the South and East would have given him only 34.85 per cent of the votes; and including the Western Area would have raised his vote share to 46.32 per cent. It is only when his votes in the North are added that he is able to get to the 50 per cent+1 mark. The interesting point about Bio's Northern votes is that reliance on only his votes in the districts with strong minority presence (Kambia, Koinadugu, Falaba and Karene) would have given him only 2.92 extra per centage points, which would have raised his overall vote share to 49.24 per cent. He needed his votes in the predominantly Themneh-speaking districts of Port Loko, Tonkolili and Bombali (which gave him 2.57 extra per centage points) to get him across the victory line.

Bio's governance record also is not very different from Koroma's in terms of how key state institutions, such as the police and judiciary, serve the interests of the party in government. In 2018, just a few months after the elections, the judiciary upheld the SLPP's petitions against some APC parliamentarians and created 10 SLPP members of parliament, who lost the election to those APC parliamentarians in constituencies that were strongly pro-APC. This produced a spurious parity in parliamentary representation between the two parties. The judiciary has also played an activist role in the affairs of the APC: slamming the party with several injunctions, dissolving its national executive, constituting an interim transitional governing committee and dictating the category of people that should be nominated into

it. The most bizarre injunction was the one granted to an aggrieved member of the party on the eve of the party's convention to elect its standard-bearer on 17 February 2023, after the court had previously given the greenlight for the convention. There were fears that the APC would not be allowed to field a candidate for the presidential election. Western donors met the judiciary, the electoral commission and representatives of the government in an Election Steering Committee meeting on 17 February (EU in Sierra Leone, 2023). The judge reversed her decision on the same day after the Election Steering Committee meeting and the convention was held on 18 February.

Basic freedoms, such as the rights of free speech, assembly and movement are still fairly respected. Bio's government repealed the obnoxious criminal libel and seditious law (Part V of the Public Order Act of 1965) in 2020, which improved the country's scores on the World Press Freedom Index from 69.72 in 2020 to 70.39 in 2021 and 71.03 in 2022 and moved it up the global ranking from 85 to 75 and 46 respectively, out of 180 countries. However, like many countries that are experiencing democratic backsliding or incomplete democratisation, these freedoms are not well protected and are periodically abused. Police high-handedness and targeted harassment or assault of journalists continue—such as against *Standard Times* journalist, Fayia Amara Fayia (who was beaten up by soldiers in Kenema); Salieu Tejan Jalloh, editor of *The Times* newspaper (who was forced to flee the country after being charged with defamation for an unpublished story); and the editor of the US-based *Africanist Press*, Chernoh Alpha Bah, who has received death threats (CPJ, 2022) for his hard-hitting investigative work on corruption by government officials in Sierra Leone.

The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA 2022), a press freedom watchdog, recently concluded that 'the state of press freedom remains an admixture of the good, the bad and the ugly'. Arbitrary arrests, refusal of permits for public demonstrations, detentions, unlawful killings, and use of excessive force against civilians and those considered to be anti-government activists persist. Many of these infractions and abuses are documented in the US State Department's 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (US State Department 2022) and Amnesty International's 2023 report on excessive use of force by Sierra Leone's security forces in 2022.

These shortcomings in human rights or freedoms may explain why Sierra Leone and other countries with similar experiences are not listed as democracies in The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (EIU 2022). These countries are classified instead as 'hybrid regimes'—one level above the category of 'authoritarian regimes' but two levels below the categories of 'full democracies' and 'flawed democracies'. Sierra Leone is also listed as 'partly free' in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index (Freedom House 2022). Of course, these global indexes are not perfect because many of the issues they measure and the categories for ranking countries require subjective evaluation. However, they are widely consulted by the general public and exert pressure on states to improve governance practices.

A worrying development is the use of violence by the two main parties in pursuing political objectives. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED 2020) shows that the number of violent incidents has risen dramatically—from an average of two events a month before 2017 to twenty in the election year of 2018, and has stayed at a very high level. The spike in violence was expected to dip after the election, as happens in many countries. However, between September 2018 and 2020, there were ten events of political violence every month, with occasional peaks of almost thirty events. Clashes between parties, internal party violence, and targeted violence against civilians or political party agents and supporters have all increased in recent years. It is not surprising that Sierra Leone dropped fifteen places in the Global Peace Index, from thirty-five in 2018 to fifty in 2022. Fears of an upsurge in electoral violence have been cited by the Political Parties Regulation Commission (2023) as the reason for its controversial decision on 3 April 2023 to ban political rallies during the election campaign period.

## Conclusion

Sierra Leoneans seem to be stuck with the SLPP and APC, which have governed the country since independence in 1961, even though neither of these parties has been able to move the needle on development and improve the lives of citizens in any substantive way. Unfortunately for voters, the party that promised an alternative, the NGC, is in its death throes after its leader, Kandeh Yumkella, called for a 'strategic partnership' with the ruling party and struck a so-called 'progressive alliance' with it on 14 April 2023. Even well before its

fracture in January 2023, the NGC had become a poor shadow of its 2018 version that secured 6.86 per cent of the national vote and four parliamentary seats in Kambia. It may well end up as a small ethnic minority party if it contests the June elections separately or in alliance with the SLPP.

The merger or alliance of the NGC and SLPP reminds me of the joke during the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, that 'socialism is the longest route to capitalism'. It is now clear that for all its talk about offering Sierra Leoneans an alternative governance and development path, the NGC is, essentially, the longest route to membership of the SLPP.

The demise of the NGC as an electoral force will make it easier for one of the two main parties to win the June presidential election in the first round of voting. The other minor parties, such as the Coalition for Change, the Alliance Democratic Party, the People's Movement for Democratic Change, the Revolutionary United Front Party, the United National People's Party, the Citizens Democratic Party, the United Democratic Movement and the Unity Party, which accounted for 7.2 per cent of the votes in the 2018 presidential election, seem to have fizzled out or lack traction. If the APC wins the election, it will not be because it has put up a robust opposition in the last five years or advanced credible policies that will transform the economy or improve the governance regime. The 2023 presidential election is instead likely to be a referendum on Bio's economic development and governance record—just as Bio's victory in 2018 was a referendum on Koroma's record.

The instinct for winner-takes-all outcomes and lack of a civic culture in terms of how parties behave in and out of office are likely to make the forthcoming elections perilous. Leaders and supporters of the incumbent party, who talk about an existential threat if they lose the election, may seek to cling to power; those of the main opposition party, who are equally determined to win back power, complain about targeted harassment and raise the spectre of revenge if they get back into office. This kind of atmosphere is unlikely to guarantee free and fair elections. There is a real danger of voter suppression, targeted violence and falsification of results. When will Sierra Leone get its act together and rise above the politics of '*yu du mi, ar du yu*', or tit for tat?

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