

The Continent

with Mail & Guardian

Electricity for all. In eight years

An energy plan for Africa

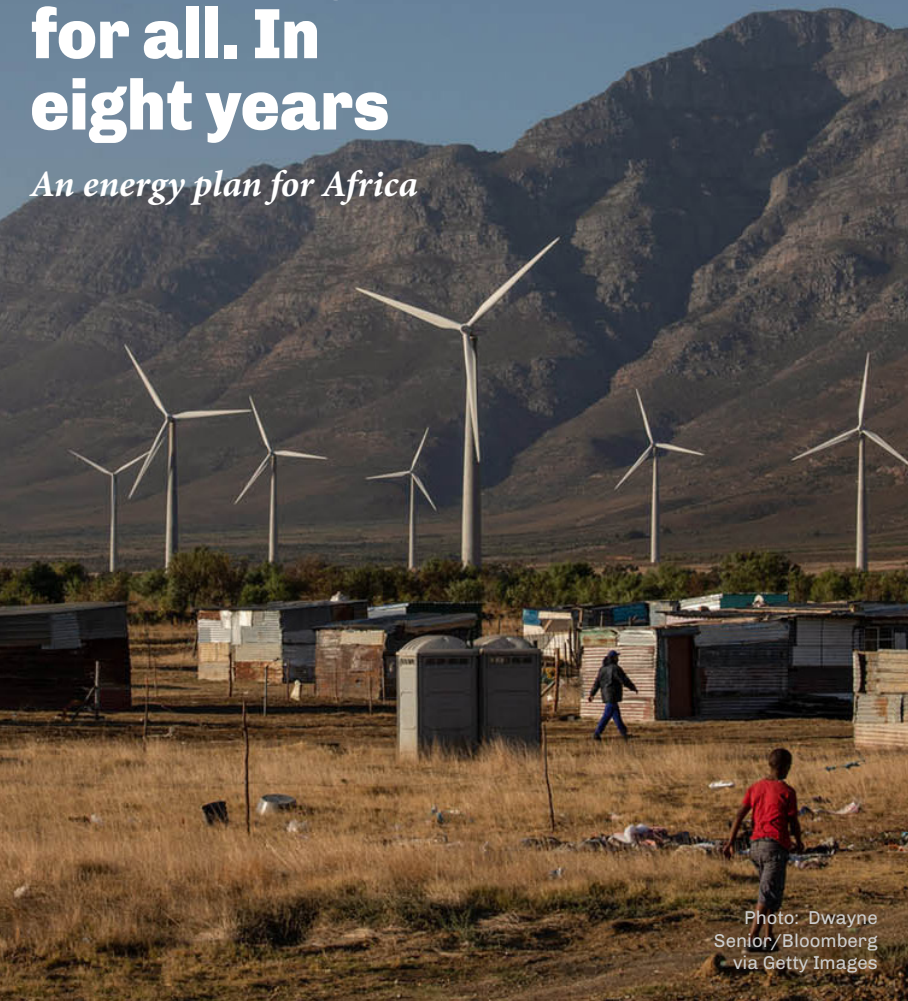


Photo: Dwayne
Senior/Bloomberg
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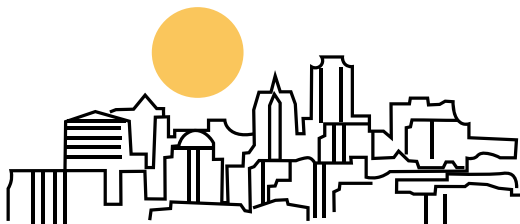
Inside:

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Cover: The new energy plan for Africa from the International Energy Agency makes for hopeful reading. Electricity in every home; 500,000 lives saved from air pollution; economic agency and growth; resilience to climate change. It's possible. It's cheap. It's insanely ambitious. But it's also a meticulously detailed plan that policymakers can actually use (p18). And Afrobarometer data shows it's urgently needed (p22).



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ETHIOPIA

Massacre in Oromia linked to old wounds

On Sunday, reports of a horrific attack in the Oromia region of Ethiopia surfaced, with survivors reporting that more than 200 people, most of them of Amhara ethnicity, were killed by attackers suspected to belong to the Oromo Liberation Army. Amhara families were settled in Oromia, home to another Oromo people, 30 years ago in government resettlement programmes, and some survivors linked the massacre to that same history. The OLA, a group outlawed by the Ethiopian government, has denied responsibility for the attack.

CAPE VERDE

Covid, drought, war spark national crisis

On Monday, Cape Verde's government announced that the archipelago is in an economic and social emergency. In May 2021 inflation in Cape Verde stood at 1.9%. It is now 8%, driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, drought and the war in Ukraine. The government hopes that announcing an emergency will help to secure support from the international community. Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva said his government's response to the situation will need over \$86-million this year.

INTERNATIONAL

Africans denied HIV drug they helped test

Viiv Healthcare, a joint venture mostly owned by GlaxoSmithKline and Pfizer, has priced an HIV prevention drug at \$22,000 for a year's supply, locking the poor out. This, despite the fact that 3,200 African women, most of them sex workers, helped prove the drug's effectiveness by enrolling in its clinical trials. The company said it would licence generic versions but has not yet done so, six months after it got permission to sell the drug in the United States.

NIGERIA

Anti-corruption effort swatted by London court

This week, a high court judge in London ruled in favour of international bank JP Morgan Chase, in a civil case in which the government of Nigeria accused it of facilitating corruption. Between 2011 and 2013, JP Morgan transferred \$875-million paid by Shell and Eni for control of a Nigerian oilfield to a company owned by Dan Etete, a disgraced former oil minister. In the court case, Nigeria argued that by making the payments and ignoring Etete's conflict of interest, JP Morgan was "grossly negligent".

SOUTH AFRICA

First monkeypox case confirmed

On Thursday, the South African National Institute for Communicable Diseases announced that the country had identified its first monkeypox patient – a 30-year-old man with no history of recent travel. Monkeypox is endemic in some countries of west and central Africa and is treatable with antibiotics. This year, about 3,000 cases of it have been reported in other parts of the world, including Europe, sparking panicked news headlines and racist photojournalism.



Hello good bicycle: Marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge is switching gears.

Photo: Twitter/EliudKipchoge

KENYA

Kipchoge adds biking to his road mastery

Olympic gold medalist and famed marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge has partnered with cycling team Ineos Grenadiers to create a cycling academy in Kenya, which will complement his running training centre. "I'm proud that we are expanding our Kaptagat based training camp from a purely athletics focussed training camp towards a wider kind of sports academy," said the double Olympic champion. He hopes that the Ineos Eliud Kipchoge Cycling Academy will spur young talented cyclists to push towards the top level of the sport.

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AFRICAN UNION

Continental system for academic credit transfer launched

At a meeting in Côte d'Ivoire, attended by over 400 institutions of higher learning, the African Union launched the Africa Credit Transfer system, which it hopes will enable and encourage student mobility between universities in different regions of the continent. The diversity of higher education systems across the continent sometimes means that even completed degrees are rendered useless when their holders move to another African country, and find there is no way to translate their academic achievements into local standards.

MOROCCO-US

Military drills near the border with Western Sahara

On Tuesday, Moroccan and United States soldiers conducted joint military drills in Greir Labouihi, 35km from the border with Western Sahara and 55km from the Algerian border. The location is also just over 100km from Tindouf in Algeria, where Polisario Front, the Sarwahi independence group, is based. The group, which enjoys Algerian support, is opposed to Morocco's claims that Western Sahara is part of its territory. In November 2020, its leader called off a decades-long ceasefire and tensions and diplomatic rows have been rising since.

CAMEROON

Football fraud: Do as I say, not as Eto'o

Cameroon's football association, now headed by Samuel Eto'o – who pleaded guilty to tax fraud in Spain this week, has summoned 44 players from eight clubs in its youth league to answer allegations that they are falsifying their ages and/or identities. Allegations that leagues meant for young athletes admit overage players to win games, are fairly common. "Parties concerned are invited to appear, assisted or not by counsel," a statement from the organisation reads.



Oops: Cameroon football boss Samuel Eto'o has pleaded guilty to tax fraud.

Photo: Twitter/FecafootOfficie

Vice-president 'suspended' in graft debacle

**Chakwera and his deputy
promised to 'clear the
rubble of corruption'.
But an investigation by the
country's anti-graft body
has shaken their table too**

Golden Matonga in Lilongwe

June is the coldest month in Malawi, but it just got colder for Vice-President Saulos Chilima. The political fortunes of this erstwhile rising star fell sharply on Tuesday night when his boss, President Lazarus Chakwera, announced he was stripping him of all delegated powers. This is effectively a euphemism for suspending a person who constitutionally cannot be suspended from office.

The president's move followed a report by the country's Anti-Corruption Bureau, linking Chilima and 14 other officials to the alleged patronage network of Zuneth Sattar. The Malawi-born British citizen has been dubbed "the Gupta of Malawi" in reference to a family of that name in South Africa who facilitated grand theft.

Sattar, who was arrested but not formally charged by the UK's National Crimes Agency in 2021, is accused

of creating a patronage network that extends the length and breadth of both government and private sector in Malawi. The corruption bureau's report says that between 2017 and 2021, five companies belonging to Sattar were given 16 government contracts worth \$150-million to supply mostly overpriced goods to the military and police. Sattar denies the allegations but investigating him has already reconfigured Malawi's politics.

Chakwera's presidency was only possible because he entered an alliance with Chilima. In the months prior, Malawians had staged unrelenting street protests against the 2019 re-election of Peter Mutharika, who was perceived as corrupt. Courts nullified the re-election.

Riding that euphoria and promising to "clear the rubble of corruption", Chakwera and Chilima's "Tonse Alliance" toppled Mutharika's Democratic Progressive Party in the rerun election. Now Chilima is out because of corruption allegations and despite this week's seemingly radical steps, even Chakwera's commitment to fighting graft, looks shaky.

The president has previously used his powerful podium to lambast Martha Chizuma, the head of the anti-corruption bureau, describing her as a "rookie" and her report as "substandard".

Watchers suspected he was laying ground for her dismissal and now believe Chizuma remains in the job only because she is more popular and trusted by the public – and Malawi's donors – than any other public official. ■

Nigeria

Basketball bounces back from the brink

After pushback from sporting figures at home and abroad, Nigeria's basketball teams are no longer banned from international competitions

Tolu Olosoji

The Nigerian government has rescinded its decision to suspend its national teams from all international competitions. The U-turn came after the government considered an appeal by the Nigerian Basketball Federation board led by Musa Kida, an “intervention” by stakeholders including former Nigerian international players, the sports ministry said at a press conference held in the country's capital Abuja on Thursday.

Last month, President Muhammadu Buhari withdrew the country from international competitions for a period of two years. This, he said, was mainly due to the national federation's leadership tussle, which had pushed the development

of basketball into the background. During the hiatus, the state aimed to achieve a revamp of the sport and appointed an Interim Management Committee to oversee this. This move was, however, in direct violation of international governing body Fiba's non-interference statutes.

D'Tigress, its women's national team, was first to be affected by the decision. Its participation at the 2022 World Cup in Australia was cancelled and Fiba named Mali as the replacement.

The decision to ban national teams for the administrators' woes drew strong criticisms internationally. Alongside ex-D'Tigress player and coach Mfon Udoka, Toronto Raptors president and vice-chairman Masai Ujiri and Boston Celtics head coach Ime Udoka have been vocal.

Ujiri penned an open letter, criticising the Nigerian federation for robbing the youth of “their present and future”, and called for a total revamp of the body.

While the possibilities of Fiba reinstating D'Tigress for a World Cup spot remain bleak, their male counterparts are hoping the rescinding will count for something.

Upon the announcement of the decision, D'Tigers said it was “scrambling” to see if the team could make it to Kigali, Rwanda in time to continue its 2023 World Cup qualifying run, which starts again on July 1. ■

South Sudan

Historic floods heap havoc upon devastation for people with disabilities

The world failed the hundreds of thousands of South Sudanese left disabled by violent conflict. Now they are paying a disproportionate price for climate change, too.

John Agok

James Kai lost his right leg in the violence of the conflict that erupted in the Jonglei State of South Sudan in 2013. Mary Nyatui, a mother of two, says her arms were amputated in 2012 following bombing in the same state.

According to NGO Light for the World, 1.2-million people live with disabilities in South Sudan, around a fifth of whom were impaired in violent conflict. Now, these people find themselves at yet another frontier: climate change.

Three states of South Sudan – Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei – are experiencing their worst flooding in 60 years, with the UN refugee agency blaming climate change. More than 220,000 people have been affected by the flooding in Unity State alone. The lives of vulnerable people like Kai and Nyatui have been made more difficult, even though they contribute little

to the causes of climate change.

Nyatui says she was stuck in her submerged house for a week with her two children when Koch county of Unity State flooded, until workers from the International Committee of the Red Cross sent a water barge to take them to the state capital, Bentiu, which sits on higher ground.

Andrew Harper, a special advisor on climate change for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, recently visited some of the flood-affected areas of the country. He said the 2021 flooding has been the worst on record in the country but warned that “such events are set to become the norm, not the exception”.

He called on the international community to “come together and work towards a South Sudan where people can return home in safety and dignity. Protected from persecution and conflict, but also from extreme weather”. ■

POEM

The darkness of night before the light of day

Ethiopia has been at war with itself for more than a year and a half, and peace still feels far away. Just last week, as many as 320 people are thought to have died in a massacre in western Oromia, and Reuters reported the existence of a network of concentration camps holding Tigrayan civilians in appalling conditions. But what does peace look like – and is it even possible? This poem was written by an influential Ethiopian writer, whose identity we are concealing for their safety.

*The war is the darkness of night before the light of day,
So they say.*

*As if, like a frightening terrible nightmare,
By the end of night – the raping, the death, the maiming, the
displacement, the wanton destruction, the famine, the hatred
will – all disappear.*

*They want the world to believe,
This is all the gloom, cold and despair of winter before the
bright, shine & hope of spring,
In their shameless act of playing God.*

But for who will the daylight come?

*Is it for the mother whose sons and daughters are killed, raped
and disappeared?*

Is it for the father or son brutally shot dead?

*Is it for the workers whose work places have been looted,
vandalised, and destroyed?*

*For who will the bright, shine and hope of spring come?
Is it for the farmer, whose animals are slaughtered, stolen or
killed, or whose seeds and farm inputs burnt and destroyed?*

*Is it for the women and girls scarred by the use of sexual
violence and rape as weapon of war?
Is it for the tens of thousands forced to flee their country as
refugees or the hundreds of thousands internally displaced?
It is for the hundreds of thousands condemned to suffer the
indignities and agony of hunger and starvation before their
organs shut down & die a horrifying death?
Is it for the hundreds of thousands of the poor conscripted by
the war machine to march into the fire of a brutal senseless
war to die a needless death or lose their limbs needlessly?
Is it for the millions of Ethiopians incited into hating their
fellow country men and women?
Is it for the youth of Ethiopia whose future is mortgaged for
prosecuting the ugliest of wars?
For who will the darkness of night never give way to daylight?
For who will the cold, gloom and despair of winter never end?*

*For who?
For who?
For who?*

*other than those intoxicated by their lust for power?
other than those who despise and deeply fear diversity,
difference, disagreement, opposition & dissent?
other than those blinded by their hatred & the desperation to
impose their will and their version and vision of a country,
other than those searching for the rewards of heaven in hell?*

*We know that it is a matter of time before
the night gives way to day and spring takes over from winter.
Also, the day does not last forever.*

*Nothing stops the night from coming
Nothing stops the seasons from changing
Winter from arriving.*

*Whose turn will it be to languish in the darkness of a never
ending night?
Whose turn will it be to suffer,
A never ending cold, gloom & despair of winter? ■*

JUNE 30, 1960, THE DRC GAINS INDEPENDENCE. KING BAUDOUIN I OF BELGIUM IS THE FIRST TO SPEAK. BUT SOMEONE TAKES THE FLOOR BY SURPRISE TO MAKE A SPEECH THAT WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY:

THIS INDEPENDENCE OF CONGO IS THE RESULT OF THE WORK CONCEIVED BY THE GENIUS OF KING LEOPOLD II



THIS INDEPENDENCE OF THE CONGO, (...) NO CONGOLESE WORTHY OF THE NAME WILL EVER FORGET THAT IT WAS WON THROUGH STRUGGLE!



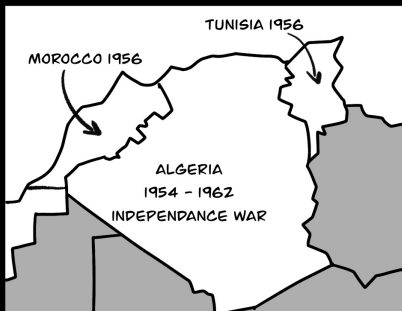
17 YEARS EARLIER, IN 1943, WHILE WORKING IN A MINING COMPANY, HE DISCOVERED THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS COUNTRY'S RAW MATERIALS.



HE STARTED STUDYING AT NIGHT, UNTIL HE GOT HIS DIPLOMA!



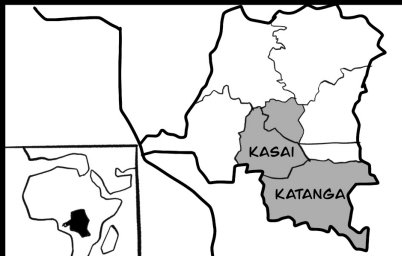
IN THE 1950S, THE WIND OF INDEPENDENCE BLEW OVER AFRICA. BELGIUM WANTS PROGRESSIVE DECOLONISATION.



ENGAGED IN POLITICS, LUMUMBA CLAIMS INDEPENDENCE NOW! AND HE GETS IT!



IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING INDEPENDENCE, THE RICH MINING PROVINCE OF KATANGA SECEDES WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE BELGIAN ARMY. ON JULY 11, KASAI DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT.

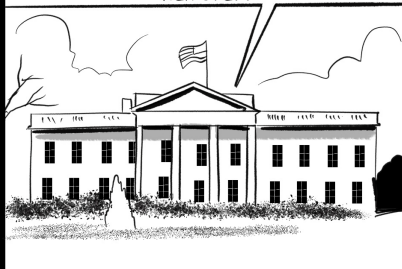


UNABLE TO COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF THE NATIONS OF THE WEST TO HELP HIM REGAIN THESE TERRITORIES, LUMUMBA CALLS ON THE USSR FOR HELP.



TO THE USA AND THE WESTERN BLOC, LUMUMBA IS A COMMUNIST!

LUMUMBA MUST LEAVE. IF HE CAN'T GO POLITICALLY, HE MUST BE PHYSICALLY REMOVED!



INFLUENCED BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, CLARK TIMBERLAKE, THE PRESIDENT OF CONGO REMOVES LUMUMBA ON THE RADIO.



SUPPORTED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THE PARLIAMENT, LUMUMBA IS MAINTAINED. HE DISMISSES THE PRESIDENT. NOW THE CONGO HAS TWO GOVERNMENTS.



ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1960, COLONEL MOBUTU, LUMUMBA'S TRUSTED MAN WHOM HE APPOINTED SECRETARY OF STATE AND THEN CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY, ANNOUNCED:



MOBUTU PLACES LUMUMBA UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN OCTOBER. BUT LUMUMBA ESCAPES. IN HIS FLIGHT, HE RALLIES THE VILLAGERS HE MEETS ON HIS WAY.



MOBUTU'S SOLDIERS, AIDED BY THE USA, HAVE NO TROUBLE SPOTTING HIM. IN DECEMBER 1960, HE IS ARRESTED.



JANUARY 13, 1961, A MUTINY BREAKS OUT IN THE ARMY. SOME IN THE MILITARY DEMAND A NEW GOVERNMENT AND THE RELEASE OF LUMUMBA.



KEEPING LUMUMBA BECOMES DANGEROUS. THE BELGIAN AUTHORITIES, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE AMERICANS, PROPOSE AN IDEA TO MOBUTU.



THIS IS HIS DEATH SENTENCE. MOISE TSHOMBÉ WHO LEADS KATANGA IS A SWORN ENEMY OF LUMUMBA!



ON THE PLANE THAT TAKES HIM TO KATANGA, LUMUMBA IS TORTURED. THE BELGIAN PILOTS COVER THEIR EARS SO AS NOT TO HEAR HIS CRIES.



LATER THAT EVENING, LUMUMBA AND TWO OF HIS COLLABORATORS ARE SHOT AND BURIED IN SHALLOW GRAVES.



OFFICIALS WANT TO HIDE THE KILLINGS. TWO BELGIAN POLICE MEN ARE PUT IN CHARGE OF DISAPPEARING THE CORPSES. THEY CUT THEM UP AND DESOLVE THEM IN ACID.

ONE OF THEM CARRIES AS A TROPHY: TWO GOLD TIPPED TEETH OF PATRICE LUMUMBA. IN 1999, HE BREAKS THE SECRET AND BRAGS ABOUT IT IN THE MEDIA.



AFTER HIS TRAGIC DEATH, LUMUMBA'S COURAGE INSPIRED MANY AFRICANS. MORE THAN AN EPHEMERAL PRIME MINISTER, HE HAS BECOME "THE INCARNATION OF AFRICA" AS THE PHILOSOPHER JEAN PAUL SARTRE WOULD SAY.



Illustration:
Roland Polman

Language of learning at odds with learning of language

Children learn to read and write more easily if they are first taught in their mother tongue. In Ghana, as in many African countries, that's easier said than done.

Delali Adogla-Bessa

When young Cornelius Kpateewiizi was assessed as deficient in literacy at third grade level, he was signed up for lessons in which he was taught to read and write in Vagla, his mother tongue.

“Our teachers always said that if you know how to read in Vagla, it will be easier for you to learn English,” he recalls. Now 17, Kpateewiizi believes that may have saved his education.

His opinion is consistent with the research that informed Ghana’s 2009 introduction of the National Literacy Acceleration Programme, a curriculum in which pupils learn to read in a Ghanaian language from kindergarten to grade three. At the time, an assessment showed that with English-first instruction, at grade six, just over a quarter of pupils had minimal literacy.

But the programme has been bedevilled with complexity. The government programme supports instruction in only 11 of Ghana’s 45 local languages. Kpateewiizi’s Vagla is not one of them.

The Vagla literacy classes Kpateewiizi was enrolled in were thanks to a

programme run by the Ghana Institute of Language, Linguistics and Bible Translation. This meant children in communities like Soma, Kpateewiizi’s hometown in northern Ghana, were burdened with learning Ghanaian languages that were nonetheless foreign to them.

Many communities worry that their languages might disappear and privileging a few of the local languages might actually make Ghana less multilingual.

Rose Anabiolia Adzuik, a 65-year-old retired educator who tried hard to champion mother-tongue literacy is worried that her own language, Buli, may not endure long enough in its pure form to become a language of instruction.

“Many children cannot even speak the Buli. They cannot even open the book and say a word out of it,” laments the retired teacher. “Our language is just dying off.”

In her view, it certainly does not help that modern parents seem to devalue the local languages altogether.

“They feel that if the child is rattling English, the teacher is teaching well. But what of your own language?”

But for many such parents English



Hometalk: Cornelius Kpateewiizi reads a Vagla book with children. Photo: Delali Adogla-Bessa

isn't a happy choice but a compromise, especially if they live in heterogeneous urban communities.

Kwabena Afrifa, a parent in the capital Accra who is now thinking of a school for his young daughter, calls mother tongue literacy “a perfect idea – on paper” but worries it may cause ethnic friction.

The average class in a basic school in Accra could have upwards of five ethnic groups represented but this would not be matched by the instruction languages on offer: Akan (Twi) and Ga, the language of Accra natives. “It is why I have come to accept that perhaps a more neutral language, which is English, is best,” says Afrifa, even though Twi, his mother tongue, is most widely spoken around Accra. “How do we implement a local language in our educational system

without making some people feel like they are being sidelined?”

Claudia Duedu, a research fellow with Africa Education Watch, a think-tank in Accra, agrees that the half-measure implementation is fraught. “We are so diverse as a people, and we cannot punish children by denying them the right to learn their own language while imposing other languages on them,” says Duedu.

Nonetheless, Duedu thinks the local language centric curriculum is still worth it and should not be abandoned. She stresses that more teachers should be incentivised to learn as many of the local languages as possible.

“No matter how well we frame a policy, without the trained professionals to handle it, we will still have a challenge with the implementation.” ■



Photo: Magnus
Hjalmarson
Neideman/SvD/TT
News Agency via AFP

Electricity for all – in eight years

A continent with electricity in every home, 500,000 lives saved from air pollution, industrialisation, more control over exports, more wealth and more resilience to climate change. This is the dream sketched out in meticulous detail this week by researchers. It's possible. It's relatively cheap. And it would completely transform Africa.

Sipho Kings

By 2030 nearly 600-million more Africans could have access to electricity. The number of homes with refrigerators would jump from 80-million to 200-million. A billion people would no longer cook with wood and charcoal,

using clean energy instead. Homes would have fewer toxic fumes. Four million more people would have jobs building a continent-wide energy grid. Trade would be stronger, and on fairer terms.

This is all feasible. It isn't that expensive. It would also change the fortunes of the continent's soon-to-be 1.7-billion people

while adding just half a percentage point to global carbon emissions.

That's the sales pitch of a new, comprehensive report by the International Energy Agency. *Africa Energy Outlook 2022* came out this week. It charts out how the continent can get electricity to everyone by 2030. It was produced with the African Union and the United Nations' Economic Commission for Africa. Policymakers are meant to use it as a guide.

The agency does admit, however, that the task would be "formidable".

Right now, 600-million Africans don't have access to electricity. Nearly 40% of people live in extreme poverty, with 10% of the population owning 70% of all wealth. Price hikes thanks to Covid-19's economic impact, and then Russia's war on Ukraine,

have made electricity unaffordable for 30-million Africans who had just gotten access. And a full 80% of people rely on wood, dung and charcoal to cook food, boil water and warm their homes. The pollution from that in homes kills half a million people a year.

This is in a continent with the best solar resources in the world. With 14% of all oil and 7% of gas reserves. And with 40% of crucial resources like cobalt, manganese and platinum.

But many of these resources get dug up and sent overseas. In the last decade, 70% of the investment in oil and gas was by multinational fossil fuel companies. These resources get sold back to Africa at higher cost. Cameroon's sole refinery burnt down in 2019 and hasn't been replaced, so the



Polluting power: A woman carries seeds next to a gas flare near Warri in Nigeria.

Photo: AFP

country has to pay a premium to ship in the fuel that powers its economy. Nigerians are short of diesel (where generators make up 40% of the national power supply) even though their country is a massive crude oil exporter.

A full 20% of Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) is spent on imports and a large chunk of that is on energy. This is money that builds up other parts of the world. That wealth, built on top of centuries of imperialism, allows them to lend money to this continent at ruinous rates – the debt repayment to build a renewable energy project in Africa is up to seven times higher than that of a similar project in Europe.

The energy outlook's vision sees energy, primarily in the form of electricity, changing many of these dynamics.

Getting there would see Africa's power capacity doubling by 2030, from 260 gigawatts to 510 gigawatts. Two thirds of this would be renewable, mostly from new hydroelectric projects and also wind and solar panels. Coal would almost vanish, replaced by gas, still a polluting fossil fuel but overall better than coal. This would flow to people in a mix of extending national grids and building small grids for communities far from cities (Africa is rapidly urbanising but the majority of people still live in rural areas).

Building that network comes with a huge investment and creates four million jobs. New energy investment would need to start at \$25-billion a year, or just over 6% of the continent's GDP. A further \$22-billion needs to be spent on the infrastructure to move energy around, particularly between



Well oil be damned: Oil workers at one of the onshore wells in operation near Muanda in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Photo: Alexis Huguier/AFP

countries. Kenya, for example, has excess potential energy thanks to its geothermal deposits, so could sell that to neighbours who would have that as a backup to their wind and solar plants. Replacing polluting cookers in homes with clean ones would need \$2.5-billion a year.

In global terms, this isn't much money. The \$25-billion annual new energy investment is about how much other regions spend on energy. It's also the price of just one of the liquefied natural gas terminals that Germany is building to escape its reliance on Russia. The total funding Africa needs for the eight-year plan is a fraction of what rich countries promised in 2009 to pay to countries being destroyed by their climate pollution. The money hasn't been delivered but African countries, and their peers, keep hammering the point home at global climate negotiations. The next round of these will be held in Egypt.

The energy outlook report sees this as a hook to force development and financing on African terms.

And there is a precedent for this scale of development. In the 1980s, some 15% of Ghanaians had access to electricity. That was 50% by 2005 and it's now 85%. Rwanda and Kenya are on similar trajectories. Over 90% of the residents of Algeria, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Gabon and Morocco have electricity. India, meanwhile, has already rolled out solar power and clean cooking systems at the rate needed in Africa. China plans to build 156 gigawatts of renewables this year. Across this continent, in the past decade, 160-million people have gained access to electricity.

More electricity would be a catalyst for much more development. Building energy infrastructure would grow all sorts of industries – by 40% by 2030. More roads would be built. More railways.

More electricity would mean more refrigeration, so less food would be lost (those losses run at 20% now).

More electricity would also mean more power for irrigation. With 80% of crops currently relying on rainfall, Africa is vulnerable to changing climate systems. Irrigation will mitigate against that.

And rapid urbanisation on the continent means 70-million homes have to be built. As access to electricity grows, so Africa's middle class will expand. More people would have savings and pensions, which would be invested back in infrastructure projects, in turn building more energy.

Under the plan, Africa's GDP would grow by 50% by 2030. That's a crucial buffer

when climate change is projected to reduce that GDP by 8% by 2050.

The scale and timeline are ambitious. But it is a plan. It would change the fortunes of a whole continent. If leaders wanted to. And if the NGOs, governments and companies overseas that benefit from African poverty acted in the continent's interest. ■

Gas exports

Russia's war on Ukraine has created a sudden opportunity for countries that export gas. Europe wants lots of it, so it doesn't give billions of dollars to a country at war with its neighbour. Countries with excess capacity, like Algeria, are already selling more. The high price of gas is also pouring more money into the national accounts of countries like Nigeria. That country is looking again at a long-delayed pipeline across the Sahara. Oil giant Eni has signed agreements with the Republic of Congo, Egypt and Algeria to develop gas exports. TotalEnergies wants to press ahead with its mega project in northern Mozambique, paused thanks to an insurgency driven by people's anger at unequal resource distribution in the area. Senegal and Tanzania also want to profit.

But the Africa Energy Outlook 2022 report warns that countries could be gambling on sales, considering that Europe plans to sharply decrease gas use from 2030. Rich countries burning fossil fuels is also the main driver of climate change.

Short on power: Electric grid vs other sources

For a kid, and for a community, having electricity can make the difference between getting ahead and forever lagging behind. Unfortunately, Afrobarometer survey findings from 34 African countries show little progress toward the Sustainable Development Goal of “affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy for all”.

On average, 68% of Africans live in areas served by an electric grid. But only 57% are actually connected to the grid, and even fewer (43%) have electricity that works “most” or “all” of the time.

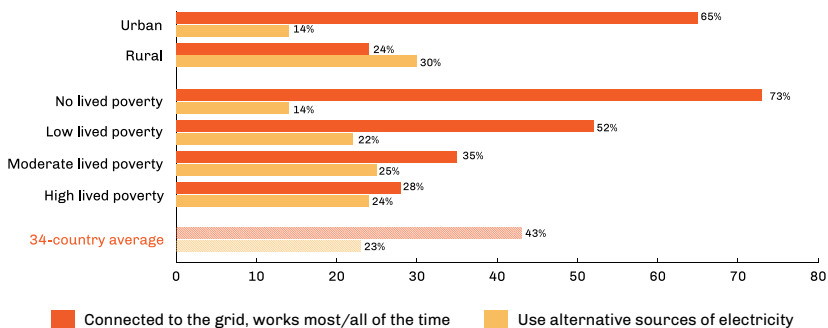
The range across countries is vast: Almost all Mauritians (98%) enjoy reliable electricity, but the same is true for just one

in 20 Malawians (5%).

Many Africans appear to be taking matters into their own hands: Almost one in four households rely on electricity sources other than the grid such as solar panels or generators, either as their only source (16%) or as a supplement to the national grid (6%).

In rural areas, where reliable service from the grid is less than half as common as in cities (24% vs 65%), alternative sources are twice as widely used (30% vs 14%). Similarly, poor people are far less likely than the rich to enjoy reliable grid power (28% vs 73%) and more likely to turn to other sources (24% vs 14%).

**Reliable electricity from the national grid vs use of other sources |
34 African countries | 2019/2021**



Source: Afrobarometer, a non-partisan African research network that conducts nationally representative surveys on democracy, governance, and quality of life. Face-to-face interviews with 1,200-2,400 people in each country yield results with a margin of error of +/- two to three percentage points.

The Maasai are not just ‘people in the way’

The Maasai have been looking after Ngorongoro for generations. We should be learning from them, not evicting them.

Ambreena Manji

Tanzania’s plan to evict and relocate at least 150,000 Maasai people living within the Ngorongoro conservation area has been widely condemned by African land specialists, UN special rapporteurs, Tanzanian scientists, and others.

Ngorongoro is a Unesco World Heritage Site in which wildlife and semi-nomadic Maasai pastoralists have long co-existed. But over time, the Maasai have become confined to an ever-shrinking area of land. Since independence, they have lost over 70% of their land to “conservation”. The government claims they pose a threat to wildebeest migration and that growth in human and cattle population sizes threatens the ecology of the area. Now the government plans to grant exclusive hunting rights in an area of 1,500 square kilometres to an investor

from the United Arab Emirates.

In fact, the Maasai have long taken responsibility for stewardship of the land. Their capacity for doing so has been radically reduced over time, however, as they are allowed access to ever shrinking amounts of land. The promulgation in 2021 of a land-use model that proposed to enlarge the territory from which the Maasai are banned reduced the space in which they could live, graze their cattle, or cultivate crops. Ecological degradation became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

This contraction of their land base and reduced access to grazing land and water for their animals is a direct attack on the Maasai way of life and has critically reduced their capacity to withstand sickness and hunger. This can be likened to the impact on the Maasai of the epidemics of the nineteenth century, when contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, rinderpest, and smallpox wiped out cattle and caused widespread sickness.

It will be familiar to many Maasai who have retained generational memory of this “Emutai” – or destruction.

A threatening environment

Ngorongoro is living under a neo-colonial conservation model that sees the Maasai as people in the way. This model is characterised by a strong security presence in which intimidation and the use of militias is common. There have been reports of Maasai being arrested and held incommunicado, and of hundreds of villagers and community leaders fleeing

**Belonging: Maasai
in Ngorongoro.**

Photo: Dalmasso
Monica/AFP

their homes for fear of being arrested. Media reporting has become dangerous, with threats issued to those speaking out.

These events chime with the worldwide rise in the killing of land defenders and those drawing attention to the threats facing indigenous peoples. Across the world indigenous people, forest-dwelling communities and others are defending land and standing up to extractivism – in the face of climate collapse.

The violence meted out to the Maasai is matched only by the suspicion and distrust with which they are treated. But the idea that the Maasai are a threat to the environment must be debunked. The outcry over the threatened evictions must lead to the immediate cessation of violence and displacement, as well as reparations for the harms already caused.

The threats that the Maasai have faced must lead us to reassess what we think we know about stewardship of the land. Given the manifest failures of mainstream property models with their emphasis on ownership, exploitation, and alienation, we need urgently to ask ourselves what

we might learn from indigenous peoples' ways of relating to land.

Nicole Graham and David Pittavino ask this question in their work on indigenous land rights in Australia. They argue we must study how indigenous models conceive of responsibility for land. In dominant land models, the idea of responsibility for land is disconnected from property law and resides in other laws such as planning or environmental legislation.

In the face of a climate emergency, we need to start to understand different models of property that compete with ours, that give rise to responsibilities and ties to the land which the poet Antje Krog describes as being “land owned” rather than land owning.

Having exploited the planet to the point of destruction, we have everything to gain by learning from the Maasai and how they conserve the land when given a chance. ■

Ambreena Manji is a Professor of Land Law and Development at Cardiff University

Elite sport brings the milk of human enterprise to Kalenjin women in Kenya

Elite athletes from East Africa are bringing mursik – a traditional milk-based ‘energy drink’ – to the world stage. And a group of enterprising Kalenjin women are setting up for a mursik rush.

Pierra Nyaruai in Baringo

If you follow long-distance athletics, you might have seen Kenyan athletes sipping on something from bead-adorned gourds. This fermented refreshment, which they say is an energy drink, springs from the traditions of their country’s nomadic pastoralists.

The Kalenjin nomadic pastoralists invented it to preserve milk for the dry season when it is in short supply. Today, the Tugen people, a sub-group of the Kalenjin, are some of the best mursik producers in Kenya.

To make mursik, cow or goat milk is boiled and cooled, before being fermented in gourds that have been pre-treated with smoke and soot from specific tree species, like the itet – African Senna. Athletes who love the drink say that the soot and smoke treatment takes the bloating quality out of the milk, making it safe to drink, even in active competition. Regular drinkers love the flavour and grey colour that the charcoal/soot add to the milk. In any event, the milk is left for a few days to ferment. Fresh blood from a cow may be added for extra flair.

Even off the elite track field, especially among the Tugen community, mursik is a ceremonial drink that graces courtship and wedding ceremonies, funerals and even exuberant visits with friends.

As demand for the drink began to grow beyond the communities that invented it, urban Kenyans have begun selling it commercially, albeit made using different methods from the traditional, which reduces its authenticity



Photos:
Pierra
Nyaruai

and taste profile. Ilchamus group, a women-only business club in Baringo county, is positioning itself to produce mursik both commercially and authentically. Baringo in northern Kenya is home to several nomadic groups whose traditions are associated with mursik – Tugen, Lembus, Pokot and others.

With the help of aid groups, the women of Ilchamus group are getting training in entrepreneurship – learning things like business models that might make their milk and honey business survive and thrive for the long haul. But the same tradition that gives them an authenticity edge in making mursik, also disempowers them in marketing and profiting from it. Even though the Kenyan Constitution gives women a legal right to own property, in the Kalenjin tradition, women are often denied this right. This is a problem for the women of Ilchamus group, who would need to own their means of production – cattle and milk.

Mary Chereno, a member of the Ilchamus group, explains that to preserve the quality of mursik that the intricate process passed down to them can make, they need to source their milk locally and carefully. Shop-bought milk is often adulterated with water and additives. She hopes the culture of locking women out of livestock ownership will change soon. “We would really like to partner with men and receive education on how we can add value. This way, we can create long lasting income channels,” she says.

After registering their group as a formal business, Chereno and the other women have constituted themselves into a savings coop – chama, as they are best known in Kenya. Their hope is that through the formal (non-gendered) entities, the women will be able to keep the money they make from their enterprising hours. ■

Nigeria

Picking up the pieces after fatal crashes

Road accidents are the third biggest cause of death in Nigeria. The state can't respond to all of them, so a group of volunteers is stepping up to help the victims.

Anthony Maliki

In the dead of the night, as the bustle in the streets of Makurdi quietens down, Gadafi Asemanya Junior's day is only getting started.

The roads in the main city in Nigeria's Benue State are frantic. Accidents are reportedly the third biggest cause of death in the country as a whole. And Benue, along with the other north-central states, had the highest numbers of car crashes and casualties in the last nine months, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. In the first three months of 2022, bureau statistics showed that 1,095 road accidents occurred in that region, leaving 3,582 casualties.

These figures, combined with many

other reasons, have left government-run medical services unable to promptly attend to those injured on the road.

That's where Asemanya has stepped in. He founded The 24-hours Road Accident Victims Support Initiative, or Travsi – a non-profit organisation based in Makurdi. Sleep is rare and he says “night emergencies are rife”.

The 52-year-old worked as a senior special assistant in the city governor's office between 2007 and 2015, in the public utility and critical infrastructure unit. This meant he kept arriving at crash sites to check the infrastructure destroyed in a collision, finding the victims still waiting for help.

He tells *The Continent* this got him thinking: “What about the people involved in the crash? I can't be talking about the property destroyed without also saving the lives involved.”

The road accident victims initiative started in 2017. Since then, it has attended to over 1,500 motorcycle crashes across the state. The team of 15 helps people with medical problems, emotional support and protects their belongings – theft around the chaos of an accident is common.

There are now two nurses and two doctors on the team, which he calls the “volunteer scouts”.

They are sent information about crashes by 50 people who have been given mobile phones by the initiative, allowing



Road champions:
Travsi founder Gadafi Asemanya Jr, centre, with fellow volunteers who report and respond to car crashes in Benue, and help those injured.
Photo: TRAVSI

them to respond quickly. Asemanya says they can respond in as little as five minutes.

In a Nigeria where people are afraid of the police, the initiative asks few questions at the scene of an accident. This means people reach out when they are in trouble. That's especially true if they might be in the wrong for an accident.

One of the volunteers, 26-year-old Agada Edoke Mathew, says many accidents are caused by people's carelessness. Based on accidents he has observed since joining the organisation, the 2021 chemistry graduate says "most drivers drink and drive at excessive speeds, and don't adhere to road signs and traffic rules".

Femi Bandele, a photographer, recalls how an accident in November left him badly injured in the head and face, knocking him unconscious for about six hours. The victim's initiative saved his life, he says. "They took me to hospital, ensured medics stabilised my condition and stopped the heavy bleeding."

Muhammadu Ibrahim, another road

accident survivor helped by the initiative, says he was knocked off his motorcycle by another vehicle in December, which dislocated his shoulder and gave him head injuries. He was taken to the hospital, where the initiative paid his initial bill – a requirement for admission. It also found his phone and dropped it off with his mother.

Local authorities are paying attention.

Chive Kaave, Nigeria's former ambassador to Argentina and former attorney-general and commissioner of justice in Benue State, says of the initiative: "Even at midnight, when you call Gadafi, he will respond."

Such recognition has brought much-needed donations to the initiative from individuals and organisations, to help cover costs of operation, and treatment expenses of aided people. But Asemanya says he still covers most of the costs.

He adds: "No life should be lost for any reason, including a lack of services." ■

This article was written in collaboration with Egab.

Deadly tension done to death



Wilfred Okiche

The dramatic interrogation of the contemporary South African socio-political milieu is virtually its own cinematic sub-genre at this point. These films, didactic readings of real and imagined events are serviceable at best and often packed with enough nihilism to sink an entire battleship.

But they remain immensely popular. This year alone, titles like Nerina de Jaeger's *Amandla* and Mandla Walter Dube's *Silverton Siege* arrived with big fanfare on Netflix.

Collision, directed by Fabien Martorell is the latest from this assembly line,

playing out over two nights, one breath away from descending into chaos. The air is thick with tension powered by the failure of the post-apartheid economy to deliver economic dividends.

While *Collision* isn't saying anything new, Martorell presents his ideas in a way that will keep viewers invested till the last, tragic moment. The first half takes its time introducing the players and connecting threads that will come to a full boil later. And there are fine sequences of night-time Johannesburg that demonstrate why the city remains a cinematic fascination.

A cynical Afrikaner businessman – Langley Kirkwood cutting the picture of a *Taken*-era Liam Neeson – is desperate to rescue his kidnapped daughter. Thanks to a failure in the city security apparatus overseen by his own company, Kirkwood must race against time and battle a crime boss and former business partner. Elsewhere, a young couple find that their wide-eyed romance might not be enough to withstand the deadly forces of xenophobia.

While *Collision* runs through several problems straining the South African system, it does not engage conclusively with any single one, thus coming off as a shallow recycling of attention-grabbing headlines. In this tinderbox that Martorell recreates with his co-writer Sean Cameron Michael state capture is a near-equal opportunity offender, and no one is truly isolated from the traumatic effects of a system on the brink.

But you knew that already. ■

THE QUIZ

0-3

"I think I need to start reading more newspapers."

4-7

"I can't wait to explore more of this continent."

8-10

"Knowing what calderas are is so hot right now."



Photo: Antoine Lorgnier/Only World/Only France via AFP

1_ What is the name of the world's largest intact caldera?

2_ Paul Pogba is a French footballer born to parents from which country?

3_ What is the demonym for people from Rwanda?

4_ Who was the first prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (then known as the Republic of the Congo)?

5_ Which island country is an archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean and has 10 volcanic islands? (Hint: its official language is Portuguese.)

6_ Which country's name

means "land of honest men"?

7_ True or false: South Africa is a Commonwealth member country.

8_ Which country's unit of currency is called the birr?

9_ Kano, Lokoja and Oyo are all cities in which country?

10_ True or false: Egypt is officially called the Arab Republic of Egypt.

HOW DID I DO?

WhatsApp 'ANSWERS' to +27 73 805 6068 and we'll send the answers to you!

Would you like to send us some quiz questions or even curate your own quiz? Let us know at **TheContinent@mg.co.za**

Spark joy, not conflict



Continental Drift

Samira Sawlani

Our favourite leaders may not subscribe to the concept of “out with the old, in with the new”, but we at Drift are very much keen on it, so this week we’ve been having a big clear out. Channelling our inner Marie Kondo we’ve been asking ourselves, “Does this spark joy?” If not, out it goes.

It’s been so satisfying that we’ve even taken to holding up pictures of a number of leaders and asked the same question!

Among the things we have thrown out include old clothes, make-up and our old 3310 Nokia mobile phone – which is so ancient that a delegation from Finland has appeared on our doorstep requesting that it be repatriated to a museum there.

Taking out the trash

Speaking of sending relics abroad, the United Kingdom government has been busy. Its attempts to send asylum-seekers and refugees to Rwanda have been constantly frustrated by protests and court rulings saying, “No! That’s crazy and wrong.”

But this week it finally managed to ship an undesirable off to Rwanda: Boris Johnson himself!



Uncommon wealth: Rwanda's President Paul Kagame takes custody of a political refugee transported from Britain.

Photo: Twitter/BorisJohnson

Britain’s prime minister arrived in Kigali to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, with neither a comb nor a conscience in sight. Ahead of his arrival, he accused critics of his government’s plan to deport refugees and asylum seekers to Rwanda as illustrating “condescending attitudes towards Rwanda”.

He’d know all about condescending attitudes, of course, considering his remarks in a 2002 article on Africa where he wrote: “The problem is not that we were once in charge, but that we are not in charge anymore”.

Or when he used a racial slur, stating: “It is said that the queen has come to love the Commonwealth, partly because it supplies her with regular cheering crowds of flag-waving piccaninnies ...”

Or when he commented on Tony Blair's trip to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where, he said, "the tribal warriors will all break out in watermelon smiles".

You'd think that after all that, even Rwanda would say: "Actually, no thanks, you can keep him," and have him sent back to Britain.

Sin and synecdoche

Repatriation is often long overdue. But authorities in Belgium have finally done the decent thing and returned the final remains of independence hero Patrice Lumumba to the Democratic Republic of Congo: a single gold-capped tooth. Sixty-one years after his murder, it was handed over to his family in a ceremony in Brussels. While an important move, it is not an apology – nor will it erase the horrors carried out by Belgium or any other colonial power. It also serves as a reminder of the need for greater education about colonialism, and for people to know that Belgium is not just about Tintin, waffles and beer.

Assets or ass-hats

One aspect of clear-outs involves deciding whether to give things away. For some it seems, that is just not a problem.

Take the British subsidiary of commodity training company Glencore, which this week pleaded guilty to seven counts of bribery. According to the UK Serious Fraud Office, the company paid bribes of over \$28-million for preferential access to oil in Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, South Sudan and Equatorial Guinea. It's a good reminder that the idea

that corruption is only a global south issue is an insulting fallacy: western countries have plenty of grubby hands rummaging around where they don't belong.

Meanwhile, it seems some members of the *Keeping Up With The Coupdashion* cast are not as keen on getting rid of old things as we are.

This week coup leader and current president Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba held a meeting with the man he removed from power, former president Roch Marc Christian Kaboré.

It serves as a reminder of the need for greater education about colonialism, for people to know that Belgium is not just about Tintin, waffles and beer.

Whatever was discussed, we hope the security situation improves as attacks on civilians and soldiers mount, the most recent being an attack in Seytenga, in which 86 people were killed, leading to 16,000 people fleeing the area.

It was a similarly devastating week in Mali – also currently in thrall to a new coup-led administration – where three days of national mourning were declared after attacks on Bankass in Mopti left 132 people dead. According to the government the attacks were carried out by the Katiba Macina group.

On reflection, perhaps "new" isn't better than "old" after all.

"Out with tyranny, in with peace"?

Now *that* would spark joy. ■

South Africa's youth crisis requires real liberty and real education

Ayanda Nxusani

During the 1980s, South Africa's schools became a battleground where young people waged war against the brutality of the apartheid state. The phrase "Liberation before Education" echoed throughout empty schools, symbolising the sacrifices young people made.

By the 1990s a "Back to School" campaign had been launched to encourage students to return to the classroom, but this was too late for those who had been left out of the classroom who continued to be marginalised. This was the "lost generation".

South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world as it continues to grapple with levelling the playing field after the divisions of apartheid, and nowhere is this clearer than the struggle to provide affordable and accessible education.

In 1976, Black students protested to break the barriers represented by the Bantu education system. Today we hear a similar cry from young people advocating

for quality and equality in the South African education system.

As the continent gets ever younger, with almost a billion people under 35, access to high quality education and employment is going to become an increasingly important issue. In South Africa, which has the second-largest GDP on the continent, 55% of young people remain jobless and with depleting opportunities for employment.

Building a better future requires including young people in decision-making processes and identifying new economic trends in which they can be leaders. Technology provides an opportunity to transform the employment landscape, creating jobs that require the digital awareness that the new generation is more likely to possess – but this will only work if the government puts these skills at the heart of its education program.

Unless these steps are taken, Africa's youth will continue to feel disconnected, breeding problems for the future. Now is the time to harness the energy and creativity that lies beneath the surface.

On National Youth Day on 16 June, South Africans remembered the battle cry "Liberation before Education", and look forward to the actualisation of liberation and education in our lifetime. ■



Ayanda Nxusani is a diversity, equity and inclusion consultant. This analysis was produced in collaboration with Democracy in Africa

The Big Picture

Photo: Seyllou/AFP

French bag it: 'The Plastic Man' – aka Senegalese activist Modou Fall – is president of the association Senegal Propre (Clean Senegal). He has embarked upon a walking tour of the country to remind his countryfolk of the harm that plastic bags cause the environment. The message emblazoned across his chest reads, "Non aux sachets plastiques," which in English means, "No to plastic bags".



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