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PAN AFRICAN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH REPORT

Supported by:

WINGS
ELEVATING PHILANTHROPY

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About the report

This report is the outcome of a study commissioned by the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA) and executed by Development Dynamics (DD) from April 2025 to June 2025, with funding from WINGS conducted by the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA). It summarises key insights on philanthropy support ecosystems, with a particular focus on multi-stakeholder partnerships spanning Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal.

Disclaimer

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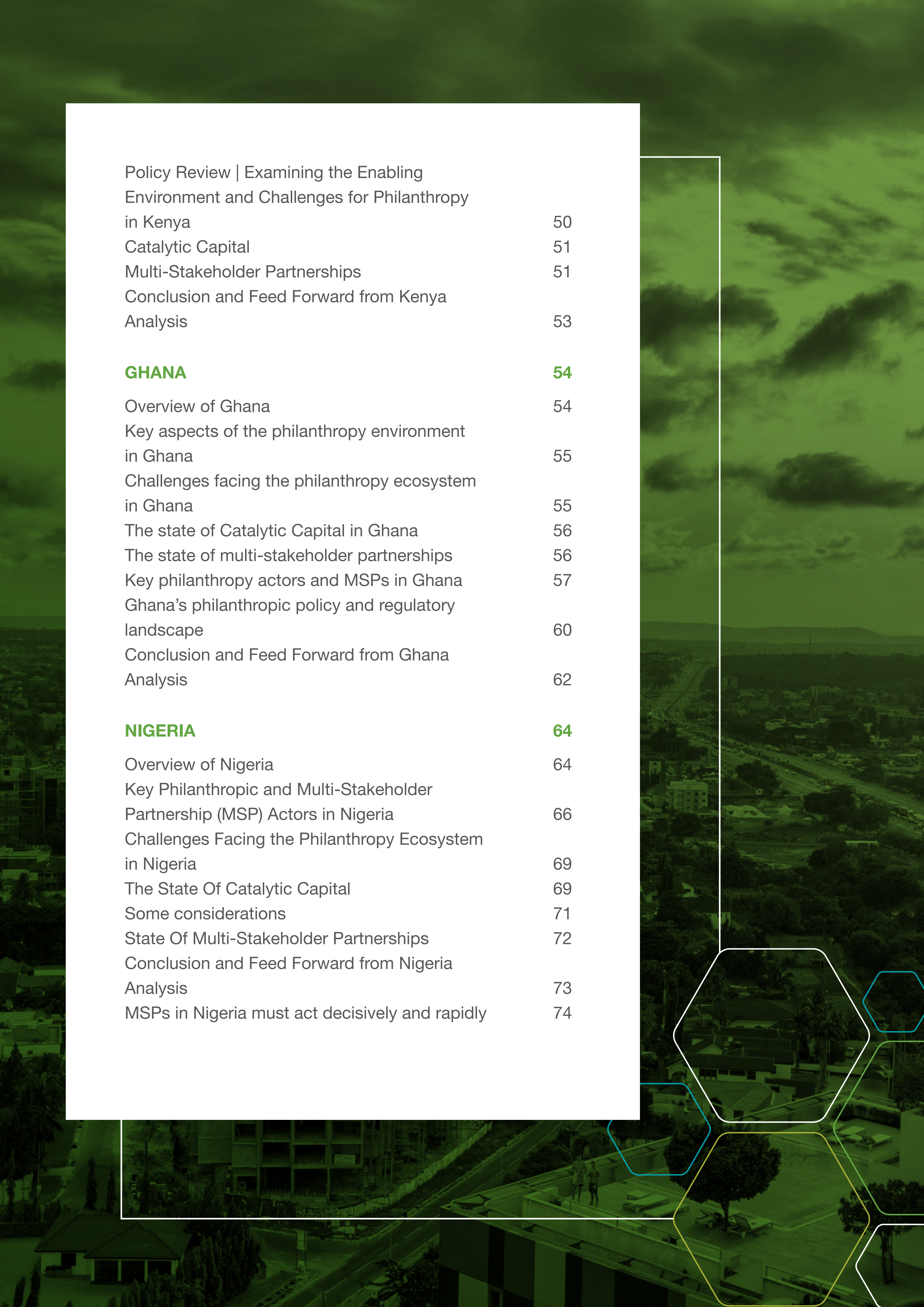

Acronyms & Abbreviations

AVPA:	African Venture Philanthropy Alliance
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFIs:	Development Finance Institutions
EAC:	East African Community
EAPN:	East African Philanthropy Network
ECOSOC:	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
HNWIs:	High Net Worth Individuals
ICRC:	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC:	International Federation of Red Cross
IMM:	Impact Measurement and Management
INGOs:	International NGOs
IYF:	International Youth Fund
JETP:	Just Energy Transition Partnership
KDA:	Kenya Diaspora Alliance
KIIs:	Key Informant Interviews
MOUs:	Memorandums of Understanding
MSPs:	Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
ODI:	Overseas Development Institute
PBOs:	Public Benefit Organizations
PPPs:	Public-Private Partnerships
PNS:	Partner National Societies
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SDSN:	UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SMEs:	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
OCHA:	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Glossary Of Terms

To ensure clarity and consistent understanding throughout this report, the following key concepts are defined, alphabetically, as below:

Catalytic Capital	This is capital that is patient, risk-tolerant and flexible, that seeks to enable impact where traditional investment capital is unwilling to go. It is typically deployed by investors with a primary intent to generate positive social or environmental impact, even if it means accepting a lower financial return or taking on greater risk. This type of capital is catalytic because it can unlock or crowd-in additional, larger flows of conventional capital by derisking opportunities, demonstrating viability or bridging funding gaps for innovative solutions, particularly in budding markets or for underfunded sectors
CSOs (Civil Society Organisations)	These are non-state, non-profit and voluntary groups that represent the interests and values of their members or others based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. They operate independently from the government and market, playing an important role in advocating for public welfare, delivering services, influencing policy and promoting social cohesion. CSOs encompass a wide range of entities including NGOs, community-based organizations, trade unions, professional associations and religious groups.
CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)	Refers to a business approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders. It is a self-regulating model where companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR goes beyond compliance, reflecting a company's commitment to operating ethically and contributing to economic development while improving the quality of life of its workforce, their families and the local community at large.

DFIs Development Finance Institutions)	These are specialized financial institutions, typically government-owned or controlled that provide capital for private sector development in developing countries. Their primary mandate is to support sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction by investing in projects that are termed too risky or sufficiently profitable by commercial banks, but which have significant developmental impact. DFIs offer a range of financial products, including loans, equity investments, guarantees and technical assistance, often focusing on sectors like infrastructure, renewable energy and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)
HNWI (High Net Worth Individuals)	These are individuals who possess a significant amount of investable financial assets, typically exceeding a certain threshold (e.g., $1 million excluding their primary residence). This demographic is characterized by substantial wealth that allows for considerable philanthropic giving, impact investing and other forms of social finance.
Hybrid Organizational Models	Entities that blend traditional grant-dependent philanthropic approaches with market-based mechanisms such as social enterprises and earned income streams, to achieve financial resilience and sustained social impact.
IMM (Impact Measurement and Management)	This is the practice of systematically identifying, collecting, analysing and reporting on the social and environmental outcomes and effects of investments, programs, or activities. It involves defining what impact means, setting clear objectives, collecting relevant data, analysing the results against predetermined metrics and using this information to inform decision making, improve performance and ensure accountability.
JETP (Just Energy Transition Partnership)	This is a financing and mechanism designed to support developing countries in their transition away from fossil fuels towards clean energy, while ensuring the transition is “just” for affected workers and communities. These partnerships involve international support from developed nations to help recipient countries decommission coal plants, invest in renewables and create new green jobs, aiming to achieve both climate goals and sustainable development in an equitable manner.

KIIs (Key Informant Interviews)	This is a qualitative research method involving in-depth discussions with individuals who have unique knowledge or insights into a particular topic or community due to their professional role, expertise or experience. These interviews are typically semi-structured or unstructured, allowing for rich, detailed data collection on perceptions, opinions, challenges and opportunities.
MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding)	These are formal agreements between two or more parties that outline the terms and details of an understanding or intended common line of action. While not legally binding in the same way as a contract, MOUs signify a serious commitment and mutual intent to work together towards specific objectives.
MSPs (Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships)	These are collaborative arrangements involving actors from different sectors such as governments, civil society, the private sector, academia and international organizations, who come together to address complex challenges that no single actor can solve alone. MSPs are characterised by shared goals, joint decision making, and collective resource mobilization, aiming to leverage diverse expertise and resources to achieve sustainable development outcomes, especially within the framework of the SDGs. MSPs vary in their degree of institutionalisation, can take various forms, and can operate at different geographic scales – from local to regional, national, and transboundary.
PBOs (Public Benefit Organizations)	Sometimes referred to as NGOs, these are non-profit entities whose primary purpose is to serve the public good. The definition and legal framework for PBOs vary by jurisdiction, but generally, they are organizations that qualify for tax-exempt status due to their charitable, educational, religious, scientific or literary activities. PBOs are distinct from other non-profits by virtue of their explicit commitment to public benefit, often making them eligible for certain government grants or philanthropic funding.
Philanthropy Support Ecosystem	This encompasses the interconnected network of organizations, policies, funding mechanisms, and cultural practices that enable and influence philanthropic activities. It includes foundations, NGOs, CBOs, government bodies, academic institutions, and individuals engaged in giving, all working within a specific regulatory and socio-cultural context.

PPPs (Public-Private Partnerships)	These are long term contractual agreements between a public entity (like a government agency) and a private entity (like a government agency) and a private entity, for the provision of public assets and/or public services. In a PPP, risks and rewards are shared between the public and private partners, with the private sector typically beginning efficiency, innovation and capital while the public sector ensures public interest and regulatory oversight. PPPs are commonly used for infrastructure projects like public service delivery, especially in developing contexts.
SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)	These are businesses whose size falls below certain thresholds, typically defined by the number of employees, annual turnover, or balance sheet total. The specific criteria vary by country and economic context. SMEs are widely recognized as important drivers of economic growth, innovation and employment particularly in developing countries.

Image credit: Anthony Mogaka on Midjourney v7.0

Acknowledgements

This research, an in-depth exploration into the Pan African multi-stakeholder partnership ecosystem spanning Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal, would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of several key organizations and individuals. Their dedication, support, intellectual rigor, and pan-Africanism has been instrumental in shaping the findings and the analytical framework in this report.

First and foremost, we are profoundly grateful to WINGS for their generous financial support through the funding of the European Union, without which this extensive undertaking would not have been feasible. Their unwavering belief and dedication to unearthing the importance of understanding the enabling environment for philanthropy, aligning with the broader discourse highlighted by the Global Philanthropy Index, highlights their commitment to advancing impactful development initiatives across Africa.

We are deeply appreciative of AVPA, which not only commissioned this research but also provided the strategic vision that upholds its very existence. Sincere appreciation goes to Nasri Adam, Tafadzwa Nyagano, Samuel Mutisya, Sharon Lwane, Dr. Shadrack Opon, Susan Ngatia, and Frederick Ndege.

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Finally, we acknowledge the stakeholders, practitioners, and thought leaders across Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal who generously shared their insights, time, and expertise. Their lived experiences and perspectives have truly enriched this research and report, providing much-needed context and grounding for the analytical framework.

Photo credit: Annie Spratt on Unsplash

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Photo Credit: imagesofempowerment.com

Executive Summary

1

Study Overview and Objectives

This preliminary report presents the initial findings and analytical framework for research into the multi-stakeholder partnership (MSP) ecosystem across Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal. This study, commissioned by the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA) and executed by Development Dynamics (DD), with funding from WINGS, seeks to understand the dynamics of philanthropic engagement in the region. The research further aligns with the broader efforts to understand the role of philanthropy in development, as highlighted by the Global Philanthropy Environment Index [1], which provides a comparative assessment of the enabling environment for philanthropy worldwide.

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[1] *2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index.* Washington, DC: Hudson Institute.

Mission Critical Research

This research directly supports AVPA's mission to effectively bridge the divide between philanthropic models and market-oriented business approaches. As such, the findings are anticipated to be critical in shaping AVPA's strategic initiatives and informing regional policy dialogues throughout and beyond 2025. This research aligns with the growing global focus on locally led solutions, ownership, capacity development and the cultivation of strong collaborations. These are key to lasting change, replacing fragmented 'projectizations' with integrated and long-term strategies. This repositioning is reflected in the discourse around "shifting power to local actors" within the international development sector.

Research Methodology

This research involved a thorough **literature review** and **key informant interviews** with key leaders across Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal. This initial work allowed for **mapping of current multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs), identification of strategic investment opportunities**, pinpointing critical weaknesses in the philanthropic ecosystem, and analyzing the persistent challenges shaping philanthropy in these four countries and across the broader East and West African regions. The research process was completed by presenting and validating preliminary findings with 87 leaders and practitioners from across Africa's philanthropy, private, public and development sectors on May 22nd 2025 in a joint AVPA & DD Pan-African Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) Webinar.

Focus on Catalytic Capital and Key Stakeholders

A core tenet of this study focuses on how to use 'catalytic capital'[2]— capital that "goes first" to de-risk projects or markets, attracting subsequent investments from more mainstream sources. The concept of "catalytic capital" has gained prominence in impact investing, with organizations like the MacArthur Foundation defining it as "patient, risk-tolerant, concessionary capital that fills funding gaps and enables other capital to follow". The Rockefeller Foundation amplifies that addressing the world's most critical problems will cost trillions of dollars which far exceeds the individual reach of traditional philanthropies or most governments. Catalytic capital thus allows a range of stakeholders to partner better together to address these funding gaps.

At the outset of this research, we are seeing just how complicated things are: power shifts and many players working together (like big foundations, new investment groups, individual donors, governments, and social entrepreneurs). It is also clear that each country's history and current politics profoundly shape how their charitable space works.

Methodological Approach and Initial Findings

We used a mixed-methods approach, primarily focusing on detailed qualitative analysis to understand the complexities of the ecosystem. Our research included in-depth situational analyses for each country, key informant interviews (KIIs) drawn from a sample list of AVPA members and partners, and quantitative data from a survey to gain a preliminary yet nuanced grasp of the MSPs' core structure and intricate workings. Early results reveal several shared challenges across the region: complicated regulations, significant data gaps, persistent power imbalances between funders and implementers, rigid funding models, and a clear need for better coordination and stronger trust among stakeholders. These challenges are not unique to this region. They are often cited in broader discussions of NGO sustainability, as seen in various reports, which we will reference across this report.

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[2] Catalytic Capital Consortium. *Why Catalytic Capital.* **https://catalyticcapitalconsortium.org/**

Key Recommendations and Expected Outcomes

Preliminary findings from the study highlight key recommendations and priorities. We urgently need more flexibility in funding modalities, improved governance mechanisms within partnerships, targeted policy advocacy to create an enabling environment, and investment in building the ecosystems, like facilitating cross-sector convenings and establishing robust knowledge sharing and learning platforms. This aligns with the global call for the '**better aid**[3]' principle which emphasizes harmonisation, alignment, and mutual accountability. The insights gathered will equip AVPA and its partners to make more informed strategic decisions, design and implement effective interventions and achieve demonstrably greater social impact across Africa.

Ultimately, the final research findings serve as a critical evidence base to shape regional policy dialogues and contribute significantly to the development of a more resilient, sustainable and effective funding mechanism tailored to the specific context across each of the regions and by extension Africa.

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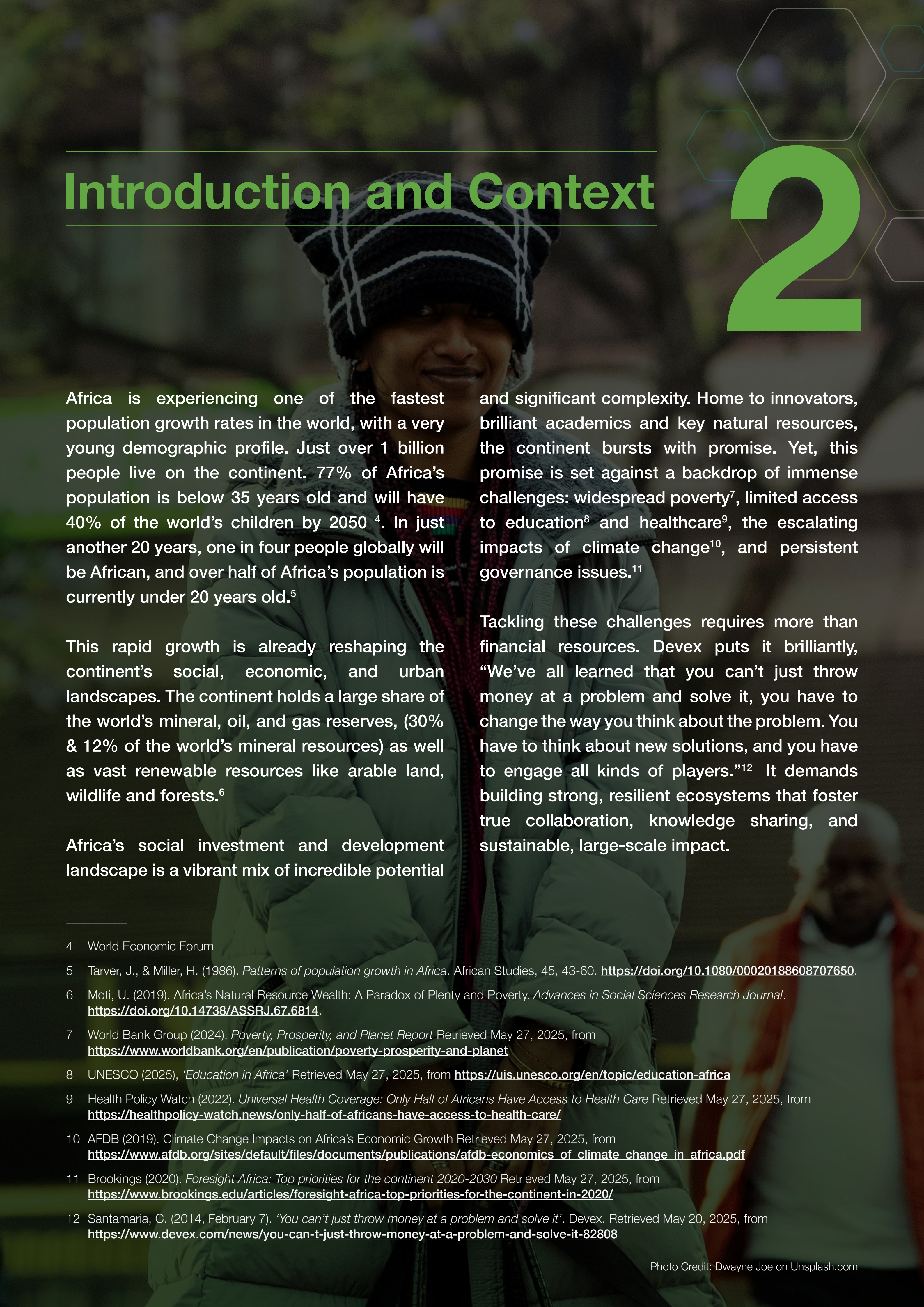
[3] Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. (2005): *Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability* **https://law.app.unimelb.edu.au/bibliography/results.php?bib=ALO&o=c&p=973**

Photo Credit: freepik.com



Introduction and Context

2

Africa is experiencing one of the fastest population growth rates in the world, with a very young demographic profile. Just over 1 billion people live on the continent. 77% of Africa's population is below 35 years old and will have 40% of the world's children by 2050 [4]. In just another 20 years, one in four people globally will be African, and over half of Africa's population is currently under 20 years old.[5]

This rapid growth is already reshaping the continent's social, economic, and urban landscapes. The continent holds a large share of the world's mineral, oil, and gas reserves, (30% & 12% of the world's mineral resources) as well as vast renewable resources like arable land, wildlife and forests.[6]

Africa's social investment and development landscape is a vibrant mix of incredible potential and significant complexity. Home to innovators, brilliant academics and key natural resources, the continent bursts with promise. Yet, this promise is set against a backdrop of immense challenges: widespread poverty[7], limited access to education[8] and healthcare[9], the escalating impacts of climate change[10], and persistent governance issues.[11]

Tackling these challenges requires more than financial resources. Devex puts it brilliantly, "We've all learned that you can't just throw money at a problem and solve it, you have to change the way you think about the problem. You have to think about new solutions, and you have to engage all kinds of players."[12] It demands building strong, resilient ecosystems that foster true collaboration, knowledge sharing, and sustainable, large-scale impact.

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[4] World Economic Forum

[5] Tarver, J., & Miller, H. (1986). *Patterns of population growth in Africa*. African Studies, 45, 43-60. https://doi.org/10.1080/00020188608707650.

[6] Moti, U. (2019). Africa's Natural Resource Wealth: A Paradox of Plenty and Poverty. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. https://doi.org/10.14738/ASSRJ.67.6814.

[7] World Bank Group (2024). *Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report* Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-prosperity-and-planet

[8] UNESCO (2025), *'Education in Africa'* Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/education-africa

[9] Health Policy Watch (2022). *Universal Health Coverage: Only Half of Africans Have Access to Health Care* Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://healthpolicy-watch.news/only-half-of-africans-have-access-to-health-care/

[10] AFDB (2019). Climate Change Impacts on Africa's Economic Growth Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/afdb-economics_of_climate_change_in_africa.pdf

[11] Brookings (2020). *Foresight Africa: Top priorities for the continent 2020-2030* Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://www.brookings.edu/articles/foresight-africa-top-priorities-for-the-continent-in-2020/

[12] Santamaria, C. (2014, February 7). *'You can't just throw money at a problem and solve it'*. Devex. Retrieved May 20, 2025, from https://www.devex.com/news/you-can-t-just-throw-money-at-a-problem-and-solve-it-82808

Photo Credit: Dwayne Joe on Unsplash.com

Africa's Dual Reality | Potential and Challenges

Historically, African societies are deeply rooted in rich traditions of communal support and indigenous forms of philanthropy[13] and before the widespread introduction of formal development aid structures, local communities relied on open, intricate informal networks, established rotating savings and credit associations and customary practices of reciprocal giving[14] address collective social needs and vulnerabilities.

The concept of rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs[15]), such as the Nigerian *"esusu,"* has been extensively studied and documented as a key form of financial and social capital mobilization within communities.

This enduring legacy of collective action and mutual support remains a profoundly significant element of the social fabric in numerous African communities. While often not labelled 'philanthropy' in the Western sense, these practices represent a deep-seated cultural norm of mutual aid and collective responsibility that continues to influence contemporary giving patterns across Africa.

Africans continue to give and at scale in spite of the structure legal or otherwise that is prevalent in western societies - Africans are intrinsically philanthropic. *'Philanthropy in Africa is not about money transfer. There is lots of batter-trade and giving of goods, services and ideas that equates more value than what money can'* — Janet Mawiyoo, Retired Executive Director of the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF).

Traditional Roots of African Philanthropy

The introduction of Western-style philanthropic models and developed aid, particularly during the colonial era and subsequent post-independence period, has undeniably played a significant role in shaping the contemporary landscape of social investment in Africa. While these external interventions have injected much-needed resources into various sectors, they have frequently operated within a top-down paradigm, inadvertently sidelining local efforts and traditional knowledge.

Scholars,[16] [17] have critiqued the historical dynamics of development aid, arguing that 'colonial legacies have shaped power dynamics in aid relations and often undermined local agency.' Now, there is a growing push for development and giving models that are truly African-led, building on existing strengths and skills. Understanding this history is key to grasping today's situation: the perception that philanthropy is sometimes foreign-driven and the difficulties of combining traditional practices with formal structures.

The Move Towards African-Led Philanthropy

We now see a powerful rise in African-led charitable groups, innovative social businesses, and impact investors. This shows a strong desire for Africans to take charge of their own development and use local resources to drive real change. The African Venture Philanthropy Alliance and African Philanthropy Network have played a key role in promoting African-led philanthropy and highlighting the potential of local resources.

Yet, these growing organizations face significant challenges. They struggle to get enough flexible funding, often lack strong organizational capacity, and need more supportive government policies. Trailblazing social enterprises like LEAP Africa are showing ways of finding new solutions, blending social impact with sustainable business models.

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[13] TrustAfrica (2015). *Africa's Wealthy Give Back: A perspective on philanthropic giving by wealthy Africans in sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa*

[14] Bouman, F. J. A. (1995). *Rotating and accumulating savings and credit associations:* Conceptual and empirical foundations. Westview Press

[15] Ardener, S. (1964). The comparative study of rotating credit associations. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/96308/ (2), 201-229

[16] Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*.

[17] Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa. Tanzania Publishing House*

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) as a Transformative Approach

In this dynamic and challenging environment, multi-stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) have emerged as a promising route to tackle complex problems. Multi-stakeholder Partnership (MSP) as a policy instrument is institutionalised in SDG 17 as a participatory mechanism which aims to realize participation of diverse stakeholders in the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the underlying 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This is noting that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is indivisible in that it must be implemented as an integrated whole, and must especially recognize that the 17 goals and 169 targets are closely interlinked. The 'means of implementation' of the 2030 Agenda therefore ought to be carried out through shared responsibility, mutual accountability, and engagement by all. In line with the calls for 2030 Agenda implementation processes to be participatory and inclusive, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires a wide range of sectors and actors to work together to engage and leverage their resources, knowledge and capacities.

Through Sustainable Development Goal 17, the 2030 Agenda specifically recognizes the importance of multi- stakeholder partnerships and sets out to encourage effective partnerships among the public sector, civil society, the private sector, knowledge institutes and the like by building on previous experience, in order to respond to current and future sustainable development challenges. These multi-stakeholder partnerships are expected to complement national governments' efforts, supported by overseas development assistance, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the African Union's Agenda 2063, Multi-stakeholder partnerships are recognised as a key implementation mechanism, enabling inclusive and participatory engagement of governments, private sector, civil society, and development partners in advancing the continent's developmental aspirations. These partnerships mirror the participatory intent of SDG 17, adapted to the AU's Pan-African vision for integrated, people-centered development.

When diverse players—governments, NGOs, businesses, and communities—MSPs come together, they can leverage a wide range of expertise, resources, and networks. This enables a far greater impact than any one group could achieve alone. These partnerships have the potential to create development outcomes that are truly inclusive and lasting. However, building and maintaining strong MSPs in Africa means carefully navigating power imbalances, reconciling different interests, and supporting organizations with varying capacities. Stakeholder participation in multi-stakeholder partnerships[18] on the continent is driven by overlapping interests and values, highlighting the need for further research on stakeholder participation and inclusiveness in sub-Saharan Africa.

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> When diverse players—governments, NGOs, businesses, and communities—MSPs come together, they can leverage a wide range of expertise, resources, and networks.

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[18] Enechi, O., & Pattberg, P. (2025). Stakeholder motivations for participation in partnerships for the SDGS: the case of Nigeria. International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10784-025-09663-3.

We Are At A Critical Juncture, and Delay is Not An Option!

AVPA is rising to seize this moment. Guided by its vital 'continuum of capital' vision and as a Pan-African force for impactful investment, AVPA understands that we must urgently fortify the ecosystem supporting these projects. This will mean different things at different times. Still, for now, quickly uniting diverse investors and spearheading innovative finance, AVPA is ready to close the perilous gap between traditional philanthropy and sustainable, market-driven solutions.

In 2024, international aid from official donors saw a notable decline, with preliminary OECD data showing a 7.1% drop in real terms compared to the previous year. This marks the first decrease in official development assistance (ODA) after five consecutive years of growth. The downturn is attributed to multiple factors, including reduced funding for international organizations, scaled-back aid to Ukraine, lower humanitarian aid allocations, and decreased spending on refugee hosting costs in donor nations. Overall, ODA from OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member states amounted to $212.1 billion, representing 0.33% of their combined gross national income—a slight retreat from recent trends in global development funding (OECD, 2024).

This contraction signals a potential shift in donor priorities amid evolving geopolitical and economic pressures, raising questions about its impact on long-term development goals. This sharp decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) underscores the urgency of mobilizing alternative and domestic financing sources. The cost of inaction is immense: lost opportunities, deepened inequalities, and further delays in Africa's development. **Now is the time to act.**

Development Dynamics (DD), an African-rooted think tank and advisory group partnered with AVPA to undertake this crucial research to unveil the real-time dynamics of multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) in Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal. This study is focused on immediate solutions: *how to turbocharge collaboration and maximize impact through the strategic use of 'catalytic capital'*. Acknowledging Africa's enduring legacy of giving and partnership, this work is a bridge between the past and the future, essential today to drive lasting and systemic change, and prevent further setbacks tomorrow.

Rationale for Country Selection

There was careful consideration which informed the selection of Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal to showcase the breadth of African expertise and experience in philanthropy. These four countries offer a unique look into how philanthropic ecosystems develop, what partnerships work, and the real-world challenges and opportunities of using 'catalytic capital'. Purposefully diving deep into each context, we aimed to gain a nuanced understanding of the broader Pan-African landscape for multi-stakeholder partnerships, including the Francophone Africa element, which is often left behind in these studies.

Kenya is a tech and innovation hub[19], providing a fascinating example of how entrepreneurship and technology are reshaping the world. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation with a large economy, illustrates the sheer scale and complexity of making social investments at a national level. Ghana, known for its stability and rising middle class, shows the potential for sustainable, locally-driven development. With its rich cultural history, Senegal offers insights into how traditional giving merges with modern approaches, especially in a French-speaking context.

Collectively, our research endeavours to provide a complete and multi-dimensional view of the Pan African MSP ecosystem. It seeks to answer vital interconnected questions concerning capital flows, power dynamics, coordination mechanisms and the impact of catalytic interventions–all within the unique and complex context of the African continent.

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[19] Global Innovation Index (GII)

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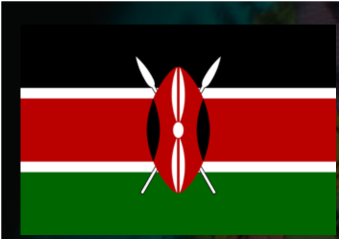
Comparative Analysis of the Philanthropic Ecosystem In Africa


Kenya


Ghana


Nigeria


Senengal

The philanthropic landscape across the four focus countries: Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal, while sharing common historical underpinnings in indigenous giving practices and the undeniable influence of external development aid, exhibits distinct characteristics shaped by each country's unique socio political and economic trajectory. A comparative analysis reveals shared patterns and notable divergences, providing a richer understanding of the Pan African context.

Photo Credit: freepik.com

Forms of Philanthropy

At the heart of philanthropy in Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal lies a strong foundation of community giving. The bedrock of the philanthropic ecosystem is firmly rooted in traditional community-based giving[20], exemplified by practices such as Kenya's enduring "*harambee*" spirit and Nigeria's historical "*esusu*," a rotating savings and credit system. Chamas—informal rotating savings and credit groups—represent a powerful form of grassroots philanthropy across Africa, especially among women, fostering mutual aid, financial resilience, and community-driven development. These groups not only provide economic security but also enable women to collectively fund education, healthcare, and small businesses.[21] While often informal, these practices represent significant resources and social capital flows.

Religious giving is also huge, reflecting deep faith across the continent. For example, 94% of Ghanaians practice a religion and support social welfare through their churches and mosques. Individual and family giving, flowing through both formal and informal channels, further contributes to this foundational layer. Religious giving remains a central pillar of philanthropy across Africa. A 2023 study by the Charities Aid Foundation revealed that in countries like Kenya and Uganda, approximately 48% and 54% of individuals, respectively, have supported faith-based organizations within the past year, underscoring the significant role of religious institutions in mobilizing charitable contributions[22].

But we are also seeing a clear shift toward more formal philanthropy—a noticeable trend across the region is the rise in the number of companies setting up structured Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and launching foundations. In Kenya[23] and Nigeria[24], with their larger economies, businesses are major players, especially in sectors like tech, banking, and finance, where contributions can easily surpass Kshs. 1 million (approx. $7,500).

Diaspora contributions are another big piece of the giving jigsaw puzzle[25]. The money sent home by those living abroad is substantial, reaching an estimated $2.5 billion in Senegal in 2024, nearly 10% of its GDP and also significant in Kenya and Nigeria. However, much of this remains informal, making it difficult to track and use strategically within the wider philanthropic picture.

Organizations like the Kenya Diaspora Alliance are working to formalise these flows and maximize their impact[26]. Moreover, the growing social enterprise sector adds a unique dynamic, blending social goals with sustainable business models.

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>
> Religious giving is also huge, reflecting deep faith across the continent. For example, 94% of Ghanaians practice a religion and support social welfare through their churches and mosques.

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[20] African Traditions of Giving" by the African Philanthropy Forum, which discusses various forms of community-based giving across the continent, www.africanphilanthropyforum.org

[21] Hodgson, J., Knight, B., & Mathie, A. (2012). "A Different Kind of Wealth: Mapping a Baseline of African Philanthropy". Southern Africa Trust.)

[22] Moyo, B. (2011). "Religious Giving and Philanthropy in Africa". TrustAfrica.

[23] Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) on CSR spending trends, www.kepsa.or.ke

[24] Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) on corporate philanthropy, www.nesgroup.org

[25] The World Bank. (2023). Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)]. Retrieved from data.worldbank.org

[26] 2024 Kenya Diaspora Alliance, www.kenyadiasporaalliance.org

Enabling Environment

The Global Philanthropy Index gives us insight into how readily philanthropy can flourish across Africa.

In 2022, Kenya scored 3.5 out of 5, while Ghana followed closely at 3.51[27]. These scores collectively suggest a generally conducive operating environment for philanthropic activities, underpinned by factors such as relative political stability, particularly in Ghana, sustained economic growth trajectories and the strength of existing socio-cultural norms that encourage giving.[28]

However, a consistent challenge articulated across all four countries pertains to the regulatory framework governing the sector. This framework is frequently perceived as complex, overly bureaucratic and lacking accessibility and clarity. For example, Ghana struggles with unclear definitions of NGOs, CSOs, trusts, and foundations. Kenya has a complicated multi-agency registration process.[29,30]

Hybrid organizations in Senegal, like MyAgro, get caught in the middle, facing tax penalties for reinvesting money, since laws are geared towards either pure non-profits or for-profits. Tax breaks for giving exist, but few know about them or how to use them. In Kenya, only about 23% of organizations actually use these exemptions.[31]

Plus, political interference is a problem, especially for groups working on advocacy and human rights, leading to tension between the government and some NGOs. Kenyan stakeholders favor self-regulation, while Senegalese call for more government regulations to combat misinformation, with educational approaches being more sustainable.[32]

Who's Driving the Change? A Dynamic Network in Motion

A vibrant ecosystem is at work across Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal, but it needs to be stronger and more connected. This ecosystem is a patchwork of vital players, from grassroots community groups and local NGOs to major corporate and family foundations, government bodies, private businesses, and international organizations. Social enterprises are also rapidly becoming influential drivers of change. According to the Global Philanthropy Environment Index, engaging diverse actors is key to a healthy philanthropic landscape.[33,34]

Photo Credit: freepik.com

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[27] 2022 Global *Philanthropy Environment Index*. Washington, DC: Hudson Institute, www.hudson.org

[28] Tijani, 2022; State Of Philanthropy Report 2024

[29] SDG's Philanthropy Platform

[30] Kenya Philanthropy Network (2023) Report

[31] State Of Philanthropy Report, 2024

[32] Mudavadi, K., Matanji, F., Diop, L., Tully, M., & Madrid-Morales, D. (2024). Stakeholder perceptions of regulatory responses to misinformation in Kenya and Senegal. Journalism. https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849241255935.

[33] 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index

[34] IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. (2022). The Global Philanthropy Environment Index 2022.

Building Bridges. Support Networks Are Critical

Philanthropy support networks and convening organizations play a special role in fostering collaboration and strengthening the sector for more substantial impact. Networks like the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA), the African Diaspora Network, Africa Philanthropy Network (APN), East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN), Philanthropy Ghana, African Private Capital Association (AVCA), Impact Investors Foundation (IIF) in Nigeria, Impact Investing Ghana, Impact Investing Kenya, The Africa Impact Investing Group the African Philanthropy Forum (APF) act as crucial hubs for advocacy, knowledge sharing, and forging connections between different groups. Besides these, East Africa Private Equity & Venture Capital Association (EAVCA) with over 100 members manages close to USD 3 billion in funds under management, while serving as the interlinking platform for public stakeholders, local businesses, and private investors. Convenings like the Africa Impact Summit, the AVPA Conference and the AfricaXchange serve as a platform for dialogue between leaders and experts from various sectors influencing impact investing across the continent, including policymakers, early-stage businesses and enterprises, fund managers, institutional investors, development finance institutions, and international organisations.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) confirm these spaces are vital for building trust, aligning goals, and enabling collective action. We cannot afford to lose this critical connective tissue. As reported by the State of Philanthropy Report, "*Network-building and coordination are fundamental to addressing systemic issues.*"[35]

Examples of Key Players in Action

The **Kenya Red Cross Society**, with its unique position working alongside the government while maintaining independence, exemplifies the power of national organizations to actively engage MSPs. Their core partners include Partners National Societies (PNS) (e.g., British, Norwegian, American Red Cross), the IFRC and the ICRC. They also partner extensively with the UN movement, especially on health, USAID (historically significant, particularly in refugee camps), foreign governments (through embassies like the Finnish embassy), the private sector (though to a lesser extent due to companies having their own foundations), and the Kenyan government (auxiliary support, legal/non-financial support, and recently some direct funding).

The Kenya Red Cross reports[36] reaching over 3 million beneficiaries annually through its various programs and partnerships. Their most effective partnerships are often with PNS due to aligned goals. Challenges exist in partnering with the local private sector, which usually prefers implementing its own initiatives and typically engages only during national disasters.

LEAP Africa, a pioneering social enterprise, empowers youth and youth-focused organizations, offering leadership development and advocating for youth issues. The organization has trained over 10,000 young leaders and supported more than 500 social enterprises across Africa partnering with corporate entities (Mastercard Foundation, Sahara Group), international foundations such as International Youth Fund (IYF), government in Sokoto State and other NGOs (Junior Achievement Nigeria) as a capacity builder, thought leader and advocate within these partnerships.

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[35] State Of Philanthropy Report 2024

[36] Kenya Red Cross Society. (2024). *Annual Report 2023.*

[37] LEAP Africa. (2024). *Impact Report 2023.* p.15

[38] Trust Africa. (2023). *Annual Review 2022.*

Trust Africa operates as a pan-African force, mobilizing resources, building capacity, and advocating for change across the continent and beyond. The organization collaborates with pan-African networks such as African Philanthropy Networks (APN) and WINGS, international bodies such as the AU, UN, Oxfam, Filia and other foundations, primarily in a convening and knowledge-sharing role. Trust Africa supports numerous initiatives focusing on governance and democracy across the continent, having funded over 200 projects in the past decade.[38]

The Africa Impact Investing Group is an active and vibrant community of actors working on the ground with policy makers, investors, entrepreneurs, and civil society to drive capital to where it can have the most impact, while delivering financing returns. This approach is part of an approach known as impact investing. It brings together a network of GSG National Partners in Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, and Zambia for GSG Impact to build a stronger ecosystem for Impact Investing across the continent.

MyAgro, a hybrid social enterprise in agriculture, partners with governments, foundations, and farmers, highlighting the increasing role of business in social impact. The organization has reported increasing agricultural output by 30% in targeted communities through its partnerships with the government (Ministry of Agriculture), NGOs (Catholic Relief Services, Stromme Foundation and Aga Khan Foundation), development agencies (AFD, KFW, NORAD), banks and individual donors, operating within a hybrid social enterprise model.[39] Each of these examples demonstrates the breadth and depth of engagement needed for effective collaboration.

Each of these actors contributes uniquely, and these four examples demonstrate the breadth and depth of engagement needed for effective collaboration.

We must act swiftly to strengthen these networks, eliminate silos, and leverage each player's strengths to achieve urgent social progress. The future of impactful change hinges on a robust, connected ecosystem.

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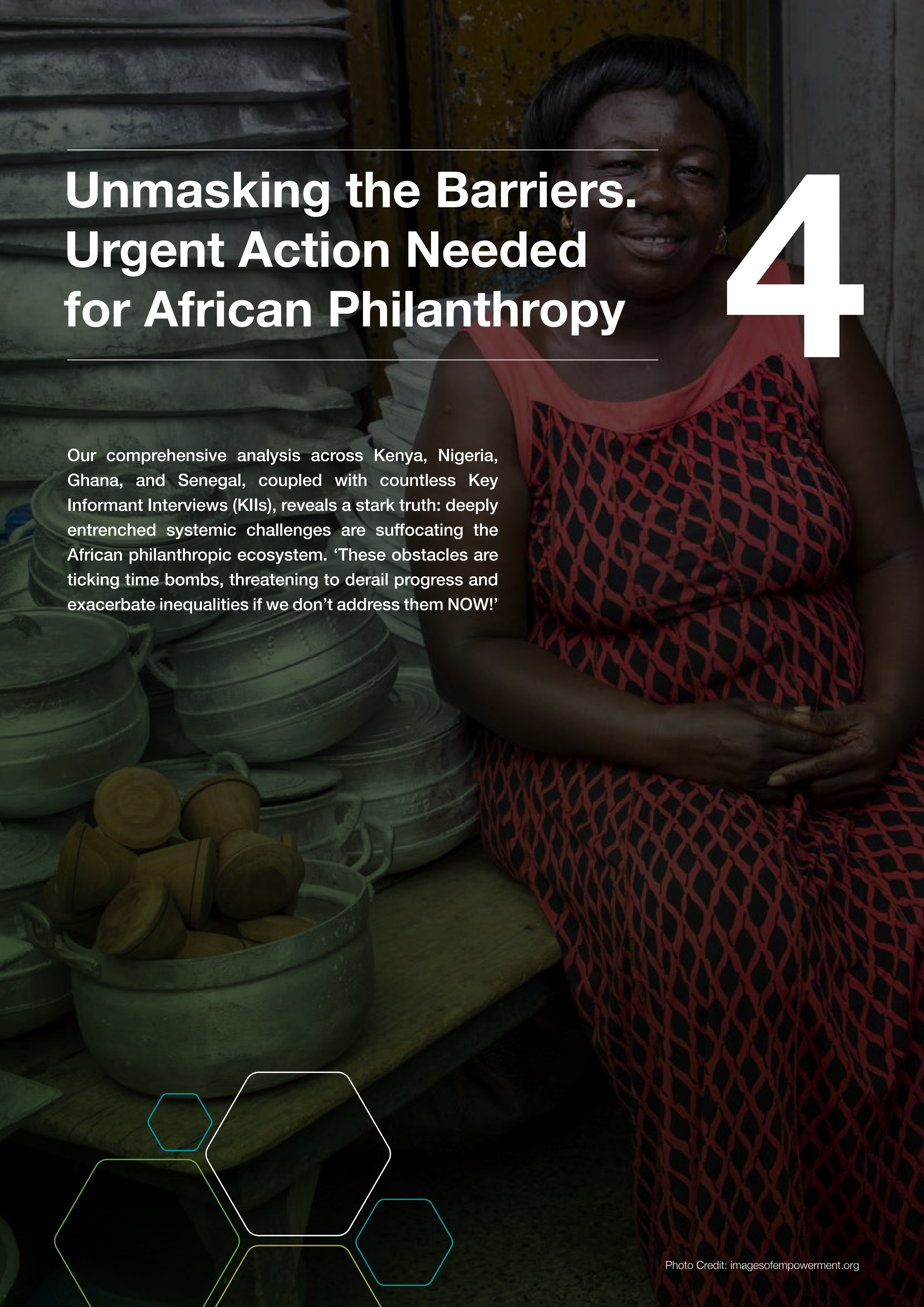
> Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) confirm these spaces are vital for building trust, aligning goals, and enabling collective action. We cannot afford to lose this critical connective tissue.



4

Unmasking the Barriers. Urgent Action Needed for African Philanthropy

Our comprehensive analysis across Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal, coupled with countless Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), reveals a stark truth: deeply entrenched systemic challenges are suffocating the African philanthropic ecosystem. ‘These obstacles are ticking time bombs, threatening to derail progress and exacerbate inequalities if we don’t address them NOW!’

Photo Credit: imagesofempowerment.org

1. A Data Desert. Blinded by the Lack of Information

A critical challenge echoing across all regions is a severe lack of comprehensive, reliable, and accessible data. We are talking about data on philanthropic flows building up to the volume and type of capital deployed, the number and types of active organizations, and the actual impact of interventions. According to the 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index, data availability and transparency are vital for sector growth.[40] The absence of a central database of partners in Kenya, specifically highlighted, demonstrates this problem acutely. *"How can we strategically drive change without knowing where we stand?"*

2. Regulatory Maze. Tangled in Red Tape

Complex, bureaucratic, and often unclear legal and fiscal regulations create significant inefficiencies and stifle the work of organizations. As the State of Philanthropy Report 2024 notes, *"Streamlined regulatory frameworks are essential for enabling effective philanthropic action."*[41] Even well-established entities like the Kenya Red Cross Society face restrictions, despite legal exemptions, showing how convoluted the landscape is. Hybrid organizations face even steeper hurdles, navigating structures designed for either pure NGOs or for-profit. *"These bureaucratic nightmares cost time, resources, and precious opportunities."*

3. Dependency Dilemma. Holding Charity Hostage

Over-reliance on international funding makes organizations vulnerable to external shifts, cuts, and global economic turbulence. The Kenya Red Cross, with over 90% foreign funding and nearly 50% from Partner National Societies, is a prime example. As USAID funding[42] cuts demonstrate, international priorities can change abruptly. This also risks misaligning funding with local needs. *"Are we building sustainable local solutions or simply dancing to the tune of international donors?"*

4. Silos Instead of Synergy. The Missing Link

Despite numerous players, there's a glaring lack of effective coordination. Duplication, inefficiency, and missed opportunities abound. Kenya's lack of a central NGO coordination body leads to resource competition, not collaboration. Siloed working practices prevail, hindering collective impact. *"We're scattering seeds when we need to plant a forest."*

5. Erosion of Trust. A Foundation Cracking

Concerns over transparency and accountability within some philanthropic endeavors are fueling mistrust among stakeholders, potentially impacting willingness to collaborate and continue to provide resources. This challenge is acknowledged through the emphasis on shifting priorities to demonstrate impact and reduce wastage to boost donor confidence. *"Without trust, our efforts are built on shaky ground.'*

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[40] 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index

[41] State of Philanthropy Report 2024

[42] East Africa Philanthropy Network & Development Dynamics. (2025). *Impact and Adaptations of Funding Disruptions: Post-aid effects, needs & opportunities for investors, investees & intermediaries for development work in Africa.*

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> How can we strategically drive change without knowing where we stand?
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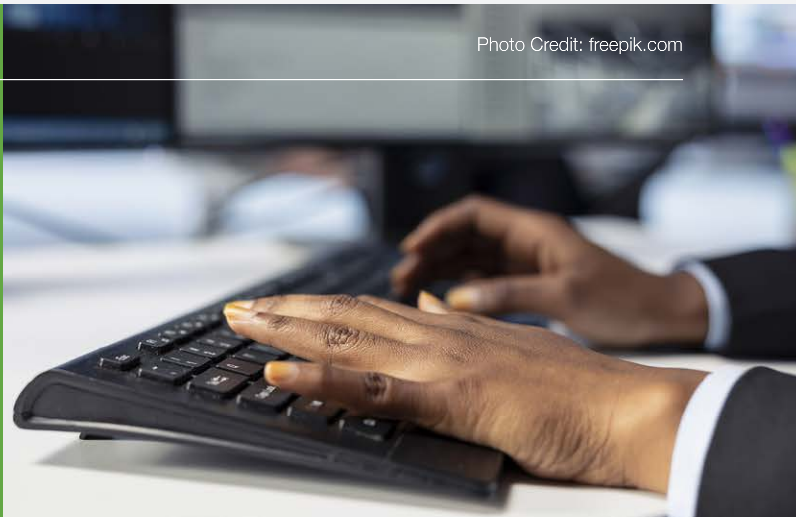
Photo Credit: freepik.com

6. Political Minefield. Instability, Interference & Perception

Political factors, including direct and indirect interference, significantly impact the operational freedom of philanthropic organizations. This is especially true for those engaged in advocacy and working on sensitive social issues. Negative perceptions held by certain government entities can undermine relationships and create obstacles. Effectively navigating political transitions, engaging with government bodies, and building trust are critical for ensuring political dynamics do not impede vital social progress. *"Operating within the political sphere often feels like navigating a minefield, where one wrong step can trigger lasting damage."*

7. Scramble for Scraps. Unhealthy Competition for Resources

The humanitarian and development sector is often marked by intense competition among organizations vying for the same limited funding resources. This unhealthy competition obstructs collaboration and the formation of strong consortia. *"We're left fighting for scraps when we should be working together to bake a much bigger pie for everyone."*

8. Shifting Global Winds. Losing Focus on Africa.

Donors deprioritizing funding to other global crises impacts resource availability for African countries, which may be perceived as less urgent in terms of disaster or conflict. Global crises like the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, and potential changes in US funding priorities like the "America First Opportunity Fund", are diverting funding from Africa, even as its needs persist. Bills such as "One Big Beautiful Bill," introduced by President Donald Trump in 2025, have significant implications for philanthropy in Africa. This legislation includes a 5% tax on international remittances, which could reduce the funds available for charitable activities and development projects on the continent. Additionally, Executive Order 14169, signed on January 20, 2025, instituted a 90-day pause on all U.S. foreign development assistance programs, excluding emergency food assistance and military aid to Egypt and Israel. This suspension has disrupted funding for critical health initiatives, such as PEPFAR, which supports HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention in Africa. The withdrawal of U.S. aid has created a funding gap that may be challenging for other donors to fill, potentially impacting millions who rely on these programs.

Moreover, proposals to halt the financing of institutions like the African Development Bank Group (AfDB), The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and others signal potential long-term challenges to concessional finance. *"We cannot afford to be swayed by fleeting global attention—Africa's challenges are ongoing, and vulnerable to sudden shifts in international policy."*

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> We're left fighting for scraps when we should be working together to bake a much bigger pie for everyone.
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> *Scramble for Scraps. Unhealthy Competition for Resources*

Photo Credit: freepik.com

9. Funding Fetters. Restricted and Inflexible

The prevalence of short-term, highly restricted and project-based grant funding models significantly limits the flexibility and adaptability required to drive long-term, complex systemic change. Core support and general opening grants are rare but considered highly impactful. *"We need flexible funding that empowers, not funding that confines."* Echoing insights from the *"Adapting to the New Landscape"* report, leadership resilience and adaptive capacity are vital to navigate these funding fluctuations.[43]

10. Capacity gaps

While some organizations are technically strong, many lack the capacity to meet donor requirements, manage complex projects, or demonstrate impact. AVPA has been at the forefront of leading discussions on localization of global impact management and measurement frameworks to fit local contexts. These include the UNDP's SDG Impact Standards, Impact Principles and Impact Reporting Norms which can serve as an overarching practice framework, which investors can use to measure and manage their impact at Pan African level.

Specifically, the Impact Performance Reporting Norms pilot program, co-led by Impact Frontiers and AVPA, aims to enhance the clarity, consistency, and decision-usefulness of impact reporting practices. The program engages fund managers, asset owners, and capital allocators through webinars and collaborative sessions, with a focus on the practical application of the Reporting Norms. The program is specifically designed to support learning and adaptation of the Reporting Norms within African markets, helping to contextualize global guidance to better align with local needs, practices, and priorities.

We need to invest in skills development as urgently as we invest in programs. As discussed in the Development Dynamics April 2025 "Last Thursdays" ecosystem convening, **impact measurement and management (IMM)** should be seen as a "dynamic compass" for planning, managing, adaptive learning and course correction, rather than just an audit tool.

These are not theoretical problems; they are the daily realities of organizations working tirelessly to improve lives. Addressing these challenges with urgency, data-driven strategies, and collaborative action is imperative to unlock the full potential of African philanthropy and drive lasting, sustainable development.

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[43] East Africa Philanthropy Network & Development Dynamics. (2025). *Impact and Adaptations of Funding Disruptions: Post-aid effects, needs & opportunities for investors, investees & intermediaries for development work in Africa.*

> We need flexible funding that empowers, not funding that confines.
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Photo Credit: freepik.com

5

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) – The Power of Collaboration in Action

When it comes to tackling Africa's most pressing challenges, **MSPs are not just helpful. They are absolutely essential.** They are powerful mechanisms for pooling diverse resources, expertise and networks of multiple actors to collectively achieve complex development goals that no single entity can handle alone. Their importance is pronounced in the context of advancing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063. We're witnessing various types of MSPs emerging and prevalent across the focus countries, each reflecting different approaches to collaboration.

Globally, research indicates that multi-stakeholder initiatives are more effective than single-actor interventions in addressing complex challenges and achieving sustainable development outcomes. According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), *"partnerships are crucial for achieving the SDGs and strengthening global cooperation."*[44]

Photo Credit: pexels.com

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[44] United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). (2015). *A World in Transition: Pathways to Sustainable Development.* p.12

Models of MSPs Across the Region

In Kenya, we see three primary frameworks for MSPs: **Advisory Councils**, where the private sector often chairs policy committees; Sector-wide approaches, characterized by joint funds managed by government entities; and **Co-design platforms**, where philanthropic organizations and academic institutions collaboratively design initiatives.[45] **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** are a common form of MSP, especially in sectors such as infrastructure, energy and agriculture.

The World Bank highlights the growing trend of PPPs in Sub-Saharan Africa as a key to infrastructure development.[46] The $2.7 billion **Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP)** in Senegal stands out as a significant example of a large-scale MSP involving international partners.[47] Ghana's participation in the SDG Philanthropy platform since 2015 also signifies the recognition of MSPs as a key approach for financing and achieving the SDGs.[48]

Real-World Examples. MSPs in Action

In Kenya, the SDG Partnerships Platform exemplifies a comprehensive national MSP, convening government, UN, development partners, the private sector, philanthropy, civil society, and academia to catalyze SDG-aligned partnerships and financing.[49] It was launched in November 2014 as the first in a series of global platforms (pioneered by UNDP, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Ford Foundation, and MasterCard Foundation), the Platform now supports coordination in Kenya's philanthropy sector and helps create common pathways for philanthropy to engage with mainstream development through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). This platform addresses issues raised in the research about lack of coordination and alignment by fostering multi-stakeholder dialogue from the outset. It also aims to address the issue from the Webinar Breakout Room 2[50] where *"Money moves where power sits, so not always where impact lives."* By engaging all stakeholders at the start, resources allocation can be better managed for improved outcomes.

In Ghana, the Enterprise Support Organisation Collaborative exists to collaborate to; build an ecosystem where ESOs; thrive, increase investments into businesses, develop businesses that are sustainable, innovative, well-governed, cooperative, and profitable, and develop a sustainable business environment in Ghana.

In Senegal, the $2.7 billion **Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP)** is a landmark example of a large-scale MSP. Involving international partners, it highlights the potential for significant resource mobilization for transformative change, aligning with webinar discussions about aligning interventions with current market needs and building effective business models. JETP addresses market failures, especially lack of early stage funding by bringing in large scale funding from global northern partners.

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[45] Sajjad, S. (2020). Partnerships for Development: *A Case Study of Kenya. Journal of African Studies, 3(2),* 45-62

[46] World Bank. (2023). *Public-Private Partnerships Reference Guide Version 4.0.*

[47] African Climate Foundation. (2023). *Senegal JETP Progress Report.*

[48] Kumi, E. Y. (2019). *Financing the SDGs in Ghana: The Role of Philanthropy.* Ghana Journal of Development Studies, 6(1), 78-95.

[49] Unlocking SDG financing: Findings from early adopters Kenya's quest to achieve healthcare for all. http://ke.one.un.org/content/unct/kenya/en/home/presscenter/news/sdgspartnership-for-health.html/

[50] Pan-African Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) Webinar. AVPA & DD. May 22nd 2025

Founded in 2010, the African Diaspora Network (ADN) is a Silicon Valley-based nonprofit that promotes entrepreneurship and economic development on the African continent and in the communities where the African diaspora lives. ADN brings together Africans on the continent, in the diaspora, and friends of Africa to actualize their full potential, activate their entrepreneurial spirit, and strategically mobilize financial and intellectual resources to ensure a brighter future for the African continent.

Across the region, initiatives like ACELI Africa work to bridge the gap between capital supply and demand for agricultural SMEs, showcasing the importance of targeted support. This aligns with the webinar's emphasis on upskilling grantees and financial collaboration among ventures to standardize first-loss guarantees. ACELI operates in multiple countries, showcasing regional efforts. This organization works well in relation to the feedback about *"Africa is treated as implementers but not co-creators; lack of long term commitment beyond funding."* It will provide support beyond finance and allow for more creative, local based innovations.

From the PPPPs Library, the Cameroon Cataract Bond, a Development Impact Bond (DIB), showcases a unique financing mechanism bringing together public and private investors with health donors and eye care experts. This DIB exemplifies blended financing, where first-loss guarantees from social investors derisk private funders. Furthermore, it targets becoming self-sufficient to avoid donor funding dependency, which was highlighted in the Webinar's Breakout Room 1.[51] This bond offers an example where *"Employing blended financing"* leads to an outcome, and that *"providing technical assistance through venture building"* allows for sustainability.

Webinar discussions also highlighted the challenges of power dynamics between investors and investees. The END Fund's approach, viewing grantees as mission-aligned partners and using anonymous surveys for unbiased feedback, is a notable strategy to address this. END Fund's[52] approach aligns with the webinar insight that intentional shifts in language, structure, and resource flows can foster genuine interdependence, addressing power imbalances. Using their model would also help to avoid the problem where *"Local NGOs sometimes become "service providers" to funders' strategies, rather than co-owners."* from the Webinar Breakout Room 2.

Each of these examples goes beyond listing organizational achievements, instead highlighting systemic approaches, financing models, and strategies to address power imbalances and promote more equitable partnerships. They show a cross-border focus and demonstrate real world practices.

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Why Do Actors Engage in MSPs? It's Complex

The motivations are varied and often reflect distinct organizational mandates and strategic objectives. **CSOs and governmental bodies** frequently engage in MSPs primarily to access crucial financial resources and in-kind support for their initiatives. Conversely, **private sector entities** are often motivated by reputation building, market access, recognition, societal legitimacy, expertise acquisition, and influence on policy and regulatory frameworks. Successful partnerships require aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision and measurable goals. In a nutshell, MSPs are complex but critical. They demand flexibility, trust, clear communication, and a willingness to navigate diverse agendas. If we get MSPs right, they can be the catalyst for lasting and significant change in Africa, faster and more effectively than any other approach.

Photo Credit: pexels.com

Effectiveness and Challenges in MSPs

While Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships are generally perceived as effective avenues for advancing organizations goals and achieving broader impact, as indicated in one of our **KIIs**, their full potential is often constrained by significant and recurring challenges. These challenges are systemic, and they require deliberate and intersectional strategies to overcome.

Power imbalance

Power imbalance is a significant stumbling block, particularly in MSPs involving large funders. Funders often hold disproportionate decision-making power, which can subtly or overtly undermine genuine co-creation processes. This can limit the sense of ownership among implementing partners, leading to rigid funding models and misalignment of priorities. Research by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) highlights that *"unequal power relations within partnerships can hinder effectiveness and sustainability."*

Lack of coordination and synergy

Despite the intention to collaborate, MSPs frequently suffer from a lack of effective coordination. Siloed ways of working among participating organizations lead to duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources and missed opportunities for synergistic impact. The absence of a central coordination body for NGO (now Public Benefit Organizations or PBOs) in Kenya exacerbate this, leading to competition rather than collaboration for resources. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) emphasized the importance of coordination in achieving sustainable development, stating that 'enhanced coordination among all actors is crucial for effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.[55]

Vision dissonance and misalignment

Differences in organizational priorities, strategic objectives and even fundamental interpretations of what constitutes "success "can lead to significant misalignment and friction within partnerships. This is particularly challenging when organizations are under pressure due to funding cuts. Studies on partnership effectiveness suggest the need for 'clear and shared objectives for successful collaboration.'[56]

Lack of defined roles and governance structures

The absence of clearly defined roles, responsibilities and robust governance structures within MSPs can lead to confusion, conflict and reduced effectiveness. While formal agreements like MOUs are used and seen as beneficial for formalizing engagement and ensuring accountability, the underlying dynamics of trust and relationship are also critical. A report by the Collaboration for Development emphasizes that 'well-defined roles and responsibilities, along with clear communication, are vital for successful partnerships.'[57]

Political influence and instability

Government priorities, bureaucratic complexities and political transitions can significantly disrupt the functioning of MSPs and constrain their operational space. Navigating these dynamics requires dedicated effort and strong relationships. Governments' perception of NGOs can also hinder collaboration. Research on the political economy of aid highlights how political factors can affect partnership effectiveness.[58]

Effectively overcoming these multifaceted challenges calls for intentional strategies focused on building mutual trust, ensuring equitable representation and shared leadership, promoting flexible and adaptable funding modalities, and cultivating a genuinely shared understanding of long-term objectives among all participating stakeholders.

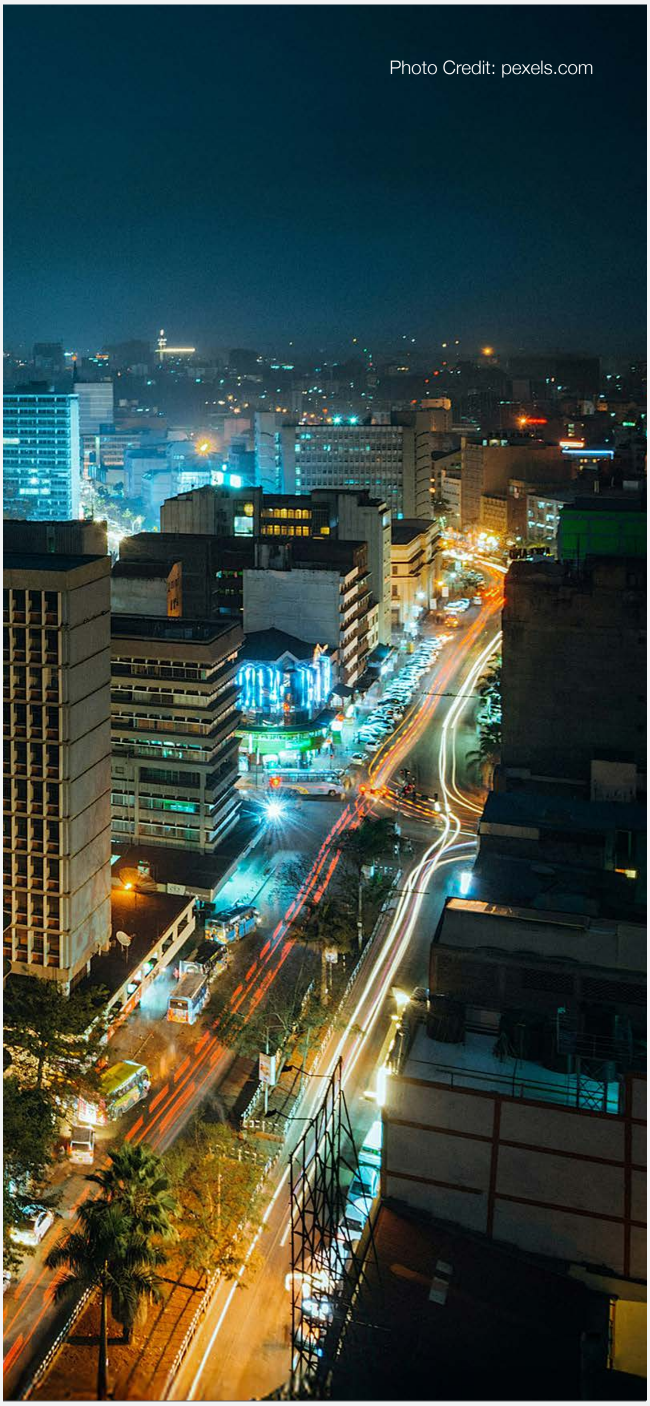

Photo Credit: pexels.com

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[56] Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Bloomberg, L. (2014). *Public value governance: Moving beyond traditional public administration and the new public management.* Public Administration Review.

[57] Collaboration for Development. (2019). *Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration.* p. 20

[58] Leftwich, A. (2000). *States of development: From tribal league to the modern state.*

Fortifying the Foundation. Building Resilience in The Face Of Funding Disruptions

6

The long-term viability of social projects and the broader philanthropic ecosystem across Africa hinges on its ability to weather various funding disruptions. Proactive development and implementation of robust strategies to enhance resilience are not optional; they are imperative for sustained impact.

Photo Credit: Seth Doyle on unsplash.com

Impact of Funding Shocks. A Harsh Reality

A major and recurring vulnerability across the focus countries is the high degree of reliance on external donors. "Over-reliance on external funding streams makes organizations and programs vulnerable to shifts in donor priorities and economic conditions." Changes in the strategic priorities of these donors or direct funding cuts resulting from global economic fluctuations or shifts in donor country policies (i.e., changes in USAID or EU funding explicitly mentioned in the context of Ghana and Senegal) can have immediate and lasting impacts on social projects. These impacts can range from forcing implementing organizations to drastically adapt their operational frameworks to the outright reduction or cessation of critical activities.

The experience of MyAgro in Senegal and Mali provides a stark illustration: facing a funding cut in US funding, the organization was compelled to rapidly mobilize resources from other partners, successfully securing support from entities like KFW and NORAD. This case underscores the importance of having a diversified funding base as a buffer against the volatility of individual funding streams. In Nigeria, the ecosystem's overreliance on a limited number of funding sources exacerbates its vulnerability to disruptions. This challenge is further compounded by corruption issues, which can divert resources and undermine the effectiveness of philanthropic efforts.

The shifting priorities of donors towards other crises further exacerbate the challenge for implementing an intermediary organization in our countries of focus and the region at large. This demonstrates that African organizations must develop stronger resource mobilization strategies to reduce dependency on external funding.

Photo Credit: pexels.com

Strategies For Resilience

In response to these vulnerabilities, organizations across the region are actively employing a range of strategies to build resilience and enhance the sustainability of their work.

Building Local Resource Mobilisation Capacity

Increasing emphasis is being placed on tapping domestic philanthropic potential. This involves engaging high net worth individuals (HNWIs) and leveraging the significant financial contributions from diaspora communities. The African Diaspora Network has energized collaboration among Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and African diasporans to uplift Africa and the communities they live in. ADN provides virtual and physical forums to accelerate access to resources that foster partnership, knowledge sharing, and advance investment opportunities.African Philanthropy Forum (APF) emphasizes that "domestic resource mobilization is critical for long-term sustainability and ownership of development initiatives," noting that local ownership fosters greater accountability and ensures alignment with community needs.[61] AVPA also speaks to unclaimed assets /pension funds and other forms of dormant capital as untapped and needing to be leveraged and de-risked. Additionally, research by the Brookings Institution highlights the growing role of African diaspora communities in development, asserting that remittances, while primarily for family support, are increasingly accompanied by philanthropic efforts aimed at community development in countries of origin.[62] Furthermore, organizations like the East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN) are actively working to build local giving infrastructure and promote a culture of philanthropy within the region.[63] This collective effort seeks to move beyond dependence on external funding and cultivate self-reliance.

Flexible Funding & Rapid Response Mechanisms

The availability of flexible funding modalities and rapid response mechanisms from certain funders or intermediary organizations is crucial for the resilience of social impact initiatives. This is exemplified by Trust Africa's ability to provide rapid support assistance to the Defenders Coalition during protests in Kenya, enabling the organization to address immediate needs and protect human rights defenders. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), flexible funding allows for a more agile response to unexpected crises and can enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian and development interventions.[64]

Performance-Based Subgranting

Innovative mechanisms like LEAP Africa's practice of providing subgrants based on the performance and demonstrated excellence of smaller organizations can serve as an effective strategy. It not only incentivises impactful work but also contributes to building the capacity of local implementing partners in areas such as monitoring and evaluation, and financial management, enhancing their overall sustainability. Pay-for-performance is like saying, *"If you do good work, you get more support!"* This not only makes organizations want to do better, but it also helps them learn important things like how to track their progress (monitoring and evaluation) and manage money well. This makes them stronger in the long run. (We talk about LEAP Africa and their way of doing things in the *"Move Towards African-Led Philanthropy"* section.

Despite these good strategies and ideas, the reality of a diminishing space for traditional grant-based fundraising still stares at us. Plus, the world economy has never been more volatile than it is now, which is why continuous innovation in funding models isn't an option any longer. There is a clear imperative for a greater emphasis on mobilising domestic resources and developing sustainable, earned income streams to ensure the long term resilience and sustainability of social impact initiatives in Africa. This requires a systemic shift in how African social purpose organizations are funded and how they operate.

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[61] African Philanthropy Forum. (2022). State of African Philanthropy Report. Johannesburg. APF

[62] The Brookings Institution | Africa Growth Initiative | Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the continent in 2013. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/philanthropy-plays-a-vital-role-in-meeting-development-challenges-and-mitigating-crises-in-sub-saharan-africa/

[63] Impact Philanthropy Africa. 'Building Back Better: Growing Philanthropy through Corporate Social Investing (CSI) in Kenya, https://impactphilanthropyafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EAPN-Enabling-Env.pdf

[64] Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) 2025 | Strengthening Global Solidarity and Empowering Local Communities https://www.unocha.org/events/global-humanitarian-overview-2025

7

Catalytic Capital: An emerging accelerator for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

If we're committed about achieving meaningful and lasting social impact in Africa **catalytic capital** is emerging as an accelerator to **strong multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs).** Catalytic capital acts as the fuel that powers effective MSPs, especially in drawing private sector involvement.

Catalytic capital de-risks investments, attracts private sector participation, and unlocks funding where traditional finance won't go.

Photo Credit: pexels.com

Catalytic Capital. Risk-Taking for Real Impact

Think of it as brave money, willing to go where others won't. Fundamentally, it can be defined as capital that intentionally accepts disproportionate levels of risk and/or lower financial returns to create significant positive social or environmental benefits. This type of resourcing is crucial to filling critical financial gaps that traditional market-rate capital is unwilling to tread into. For example, a substantial financing gap of approximately $4.8 billion in Ghana has been identified within the agriculture, forestry and fishing SME sectors. Catalytic capital has demonstrated a notable potential to bridge such gaps and mobilize additional investment. A 2022 report in the catalytic capital investment ecosystem in Ghana indicated that the volume of disbursed catalytic capital has grown fivefold since 2004, and importantly, has enabled third-party investments valued at nearly 7 times the value of the initial catalytic investment.[65]

Where does catalytic capital come from in Africa?

The sources of catalytic investment in Ghana in 2022 were reported as: Private Sector (41%), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) (34%), Government (21%), International Development Agencies (4%) and foundations (1%).[66] This distribution highlights the significant role that private sector actors and DFIs already play in deploying catalytic capital, while simultaneously indicating that foundations' core contribution is a relatively small proportion, suggesting a considerable area for potential growth and increased engagement from the philanthropic sector.

Catalytic capital plays two main roles:

- Firstly, it's **seed money for new ideas**—startups and organizations that haven't yet proven they're commercially viable.
- Second, **it's fuel for growth**—helping successful social enterprises and impact funds scale up, especially in vital areas like climate change and public health.

> The sources of catalytic investment in Ghana in 2022 were reported as: Private Sector (41%), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) (34%), Government (21%), International Development Agencies (4%) and foundations (1%).

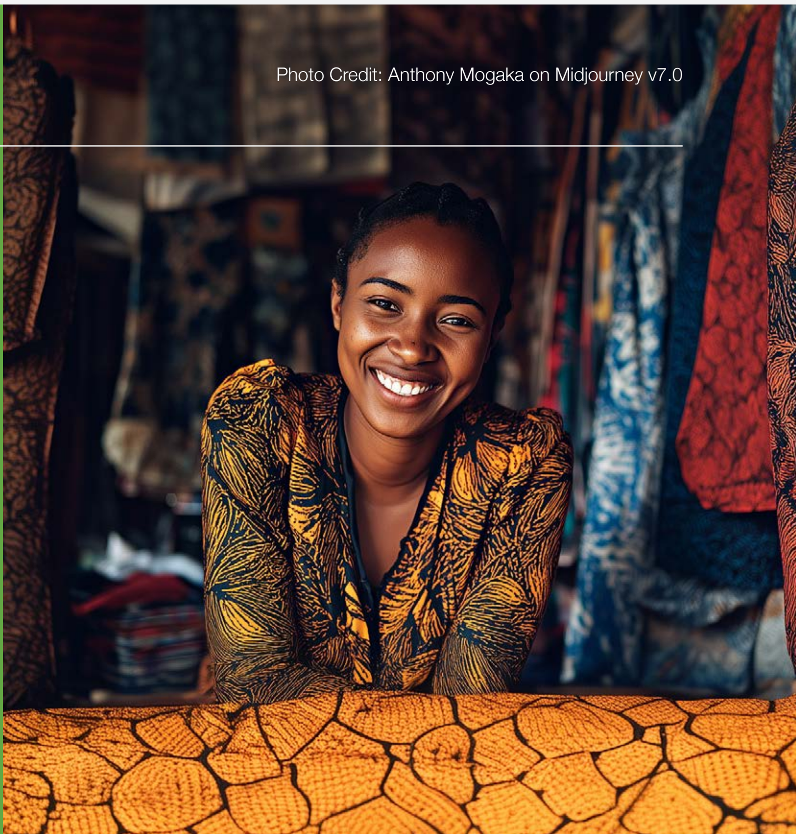

Photo Credit: Anthony Mogaka on Midjourney v7.0

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[65] Impact Investing Ghana & Ashesi University. (2022). *Catalytic Capital Investment in Ghanaian SMEs: Strategies, Hurdles and Outcomes Report.*

[66] Impact Investing Ghana & Ashesi University. (2022). *Catalytic Capital Investment in Ghanaian SMEs: Strategies, Hurdles and Outcomes Report.*

Challenges in Deploying Catalytic Capital

But it's not as simple as writing checks. In Senegal, catalytic capital is underutilized, with existing initiatives lacking sufficient scale, effective coordination among stakeholders and clear alignment with measurable social impact objectives. Insights from KIIs posited that the effective deployment of catalytic capital extends significantly beyond merely providing financial resources. *(Money is only part of the solution.)*

Successful deployments require accompanying hands-on technical support mechanisms, facilitating access to relevant markets, providing strategic mentorship and coaching *(with one KII respondent highlighting support periods ranging from 3 months to a year)*, governance and registration support, and creating platforms that enhance visibility to attract follow-on investment. The experience of MyAgro, a social enterprise in Senegal, further illustrates a specific challenge related to catalytic investment in hybrid models: the difficulty of effectively reinvesting profits generated from such investments back into core social programs due to unfavourable local tax regulations.

In Kenya, the $35 million of USAID funding through Kenya Investment Mechanism (KIM) mobilized $650 million of private sector investment over five years, with its impact on Kenya's economic landscape, entrepreneurship, innovation, and beyond felt long after the life of the project. KIM started by incentivizing and strengthening the ecosystem of local financial institutions and business advisory service providers (BASPs) through training and technical assistance helping facilitate private finance and investment for the working capital needs of smallholder farmers and micro, small, and medium enterprises, which were both vastly underfunded and largely ignored. KIM then helped financial institutions to develop new products, making it easier for them to engage in future transactions with little to no technical assistance. For example, using KIM's technical training, Absa Bank adopted a venture capital approach as part of their agribusiness lending strategy.The innovative 'pay for results' incentives introduced by KIM reduced the perceived risk associated with small business financing. As a result, 122 transactions were successfully closed between BASPs and financial institutions, demonstrating the strength of the partnerships established through KIM. At the same time, the team led policy reform efforts which were laser-focused on removing barriers to large scale investments into these sectors, helping to unlock even more finance in a sustainable way.

The Kenya Red Cross is engaged in "social investments" through its business arms (a training institute, ambulances, a hotel industry school, and a hotel) with the explicit purpose of generating surpluses that are 100% reinvested into their humanitarian work for sustainability. This blended finance approach, while not explicitly termed as "catalytic capital" in the KII, is a creative way to leverage commercial activities for social good. However, they face challenges too: lack of implementation readiness, accountability issues, potential misuse of funds, and capacity gaps in meeting donor requirements. We need to act decisively to unlock the full potential of catalytic capital, dismantling the barriers and creating the ecosystems that allow it to flourish. The future of African development hinges on smart, risk-taking investments and the power of collective action.

The MSMEs financing gap in Nigeria, stands at US$158.1 billion requiring more innovative financing models to address the deficit, with the unmet demand for credit from MSMEs of approximately US$32.2 billion. Traditional and conventional financing methods have not fully bridged the financing gaps for MSMEs, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, particularly in countries like Nigeria. This situation has placed additional financial strains on businesses, especially for SMEs. As a result, there is a growing necessity for catalytic capital to complement conventional financing and specifically addresses the needs of SMEs.

There is an opportunity presented on availability of catalytic funding from the public sector with Nigeria's paying outstanding debt to the International Monetary Fund which has reduced from SDR 2.45 billion in 2023 to SDR 306.81 million in 2025.

The future of African development won't be written by aid alone, nor by markets operating in isolation. It will be forged by partnerships powered by catalytic capital—where the courage to take risks meets the commitment to deliver impact. The question is no longer if this approach works, but how quickly we can scale it. The time for brave money is now.

Catalytic capital is proving to be the lifeblood of effective Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) across Africa—but its true power lies in how it transforms collaboration into systemic change. The most impactful MSPs are those that leverage catalytic funding not just as a financial tool, but as a strategic instrument to align governments, businesses, and communities around shared goals.

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The future of African development won't be written by aid alone, nor by markets operating in isolation. It will be forged by partnerships powered by catalytic capital—where the courage to take risks meets the commitment to deliver impact.

Photo Credit: pexels.com

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Country-Specific Situational Analysis

This section provides a more detailed exposition of the philanthropic and MSP ecosystems within each country, drawing upon the initial situational analyses and KII insights.

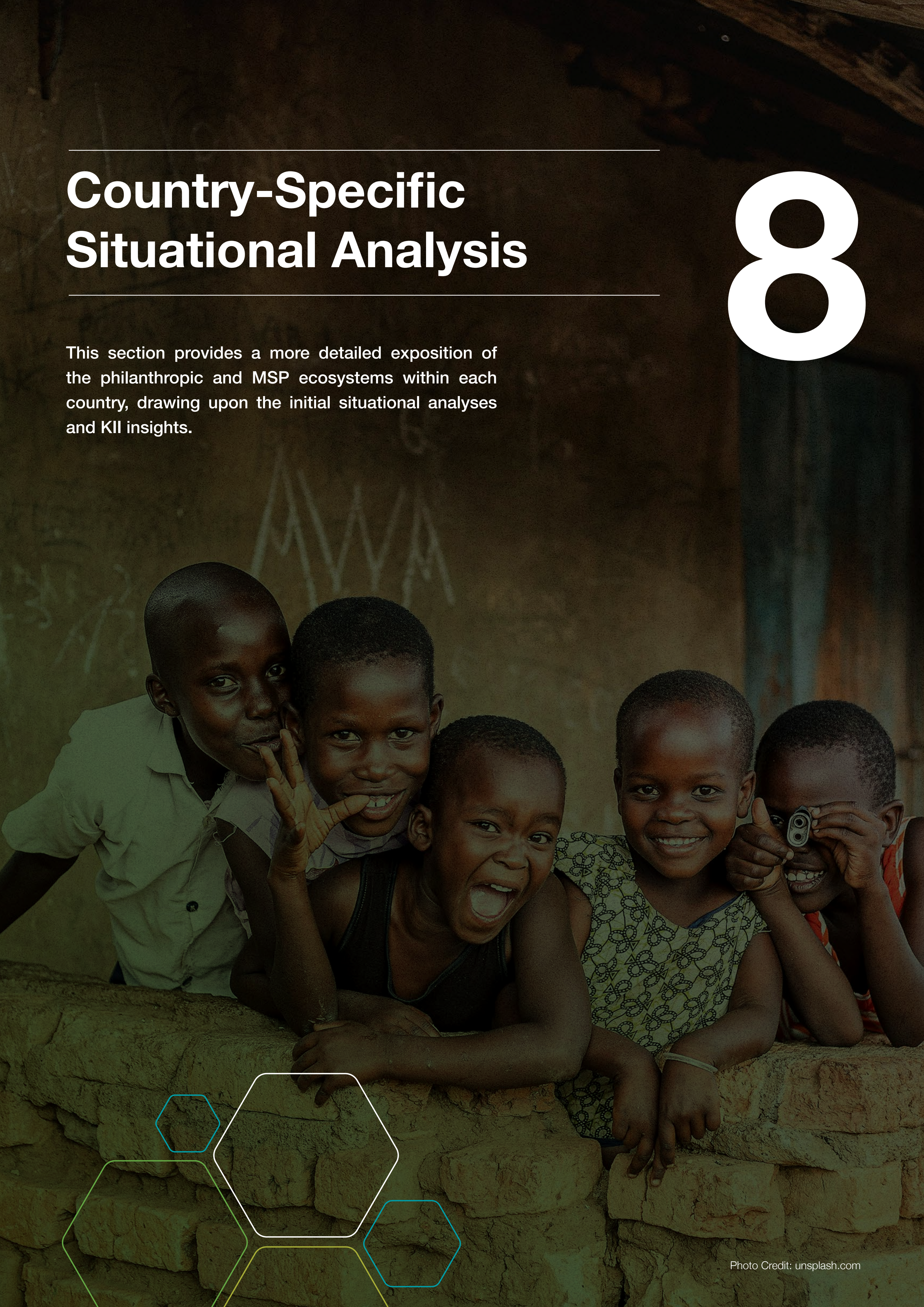

Photo Credit: unsplash.com

Kenya

Overview of Kenya.
A Hub of Innovation and Evolving Philanthropic Practices

Kenya is a dynamic economic and technological force within East Africa, characterized as an emerging lower-middle-income country. Projections indicate a robust average GDP growth rate of 5.1% between 2024 and 2026. This growth is significantly propelled by a vibrant and confident private sector and ongoing efforts to optimize public sector efficiency.

Regarding the political system, Kenya is a democratic republic with two spheres of government: 1 national government and 47 county governments, with a bicameral parliament comprising two houses: a national assembly (known as the Bunge) and a senate. The head of state is the president, who is directly elected by universal adult suffrage for a maximum of two five-year terms.

Kenya's population is projected at **53 million**[67], with over 80 percent of the population aged 35 years and below. The youth aged 18 to 35 years, are and will remain a significant proportion of Kenya's population in the foreseeable future as they constitute 35 percent of the Kenyan population.[68]

A stable political environment, the tech and innovation as well as the youth budge, positions Kenya as a strategic vantage point for examining innovative social investment models and impactful multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs). The nation's entrepreneurial spirit and technological advancements play a pivotal role in shaping its philanthropic ecosystem, paving the way for new approaches to addressing complex societal challenges.[69,70]

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67 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics: https://www.knbs.or.ke/

68 National Council for Population and Development: https://ncpd.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Brief-56-YOUTH-BULGE-IN-KENYA-A-BLEESING-OF-A-CURSE.pdf

69 Worldbank. Kenya Overview. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya/overview

70 WINGS (2020). *Philanthropy can be a solution to making localisation a reality.*

Photo Credit: unsplash.com

Philanthropy in Kenya

A fascinating confluence of tradition and modernity marks the landscape of philanthropy in Kenya. The enduring spirit of 'Harambee,' a cultural practice of communal self-help, remains deeply ingrained in Kenyan society, fostering a strong sense of collective responsibility. However, contemporary philanthropy in Kenya is witnessing a significant shift toward more structured, strategic, and data-driven approaches. Corporate giving has moved beyond ad hoc contributions to encompass long-term sustainability strategies and dedicated corporate foundations. This evolution is underscored by Kenya's relatively favorable score of 3.5 out of 5 on the 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index.[71] This score assesses various crucial indicators, including the ease of operating philanthropic organizations, tax incentives, cross-border philanthropic flows, political and economic stability, and sociocultural factors influencing giving. This suggests a relatively enabling environment for diverse forms of philanthropic engagement. Kenya's philanthropic landscape is shaped by diverse actors beyond the commonly cited examples. For instance, the SDG Partnerships Platform in Kenya acts as a crucial national convener, uniting government, UN agencies, private sector, and civil society to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.[72] This platform actively addresses lack of coordination and synergy, issues prominently raised during the AVPA-DD webinar.[73]

Additionally, sector-specific initiatives are vital. In agriculture, for example, numerous regional bodies work across borders to improve food security, directly addressing the webinar concern that *"Africa is treated as implementers but not co-creators; lack of long term commitment beyond funding"*.[74] These bodies promote local ownership and implementation, countering the "Closed organizations (Organizations work individually rather than collaboratively)" problem also discussed in the webinar.[75] Furthermore, corporate foundations such as the KenGen Foundation focus on sustainable development projects in regions where their parent companies operate, contributing significantly to community empowerment and environmental conservation.[76] The KCB Foundation similarly invests in enterprise development and education through initiatives like its 2jiajiri program, enhancing job creation and skills development.[77] These varied actors collectively enrich Kenya's philanthropic ecosystem and highlight the multi-faceted nature of impact work.

Forms of Philanthropy in Kenya

Philanthropic activity in Kenya is characterized by a multifaceted and diverse range of expressions. A key study from 2021 identified several prominent forms, including:[78]

Family or Individual Philanthropy. Personal giving driven by cultural values, religious beliefs, and a sense of personal responsibility.

Faith-Based Giving. Charitable contributions channeled through religious institutions and organizations, often deeply rooted in community support networks.

Community Philanthropy. Local initiatives driven by community members themselves to address specific needs and challenges.

Corporate Philanthropy. Formalized giving and social investment programs implemented by businesses, often through dedicated corporate foundations.

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[71] Mwendwa, C. and Sabula, N. (2022). *The 2022 Global Philanthropy Index Kenya*.

[72] SDG Partnerships Platform (Kenya). About Us .*https://sdgpp-kenya.org/*

[73] AVPA & Development Dynamics. (2025). *MSP Webinar Breakout Rooms Rapporteur's Report*. Breakout Room 1, Response 1 & Breakout Room 4, Response 3.

[74] AVPA & Development Dynamics. (2025). *MSP Webinar Breakout Rooms Rapporteur's Report*. Breakout Room 4, Response 2.

[75] AVPA & Development Dynamics. (2025). *MSP Webinar Breakout Rooms Rapporteur's Report*. Breakout Room 4, Response 1.

[76] KenGen Foundation. (Various years). *Our Work*. *https://kengenfoundation.co.ke/*

[77] KenGen Foundation. (Various years). *2jiagiri* *https://foundation.kcbgroup.com/programs/2jiajiri/*

[78] State of Philanthropy https://www.stateofphilanthropy.org/

Notably, corporate philanthropy in Kenya is increasingly robust.[79] Major technology, banking, and finance companies are significant contributors, often donating Ksh 1 million and above. The emergence of prominent corporate foundations, such as the Safaricom Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, Equity Foundation, KCB Foundation, and the Aga Khan Foundation, has substantially expanded the scale and impact of philanthropic endeavours.[80]

Furthermore, the role of Diaspora philanthropy is gaining increasing recognition. The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA), representing a diverse array of diaspora groups, is actively advocating for more formalized and organized giving from Kenyans living abroad, seeking to leverage their collective resources and networks for development impact. KDA is currently a registered trust and a Federation of over forty (50+) registered diaspora organizations. KDA encourages its over 1,000 member organizations to help build progressive diaspora philanthropy initiatives.[81]

Photo Credit: freepik.com

Photo Credit: freepik.com

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[81] Carson-Copeland J. (2007). *Kenyan Diaspora Philanthropy: Key Practices, Trends and Issues*. https://search.issuelab.org/esources/9991/9991.pdf

Challenges Facing the Philanthropy Ecosystem in Kenya

Despite its dynamic philanthropic environment, Kenya grapples with a series of interconnected challenges that hinder its ability to maximize impact and achieve sustainable change. These obstacles need to be addressed strategically and comprehensively to foster a more robust and effective ecosystem for social investment.

Complex and Opaque Regulatory Framework.
The existing regulatory framework governing philanthropic organizations is often perceived as complicated, highly bureaucratic, and inaccessible to the public. This lack of clarity and accessibility creates inefficiencies in operations, delays project implementation, and discourages new actors from entering the sector. Meta-governance for multi-stakeholder partnerships in Kenya is weak and fragmented but could benefit from partnerships, particularly in local ownership and scaling successful cases.[82]

Significant Dependency on External Funding.
A substantial number of Kenyan philanthropic organizations and foundations rely heavily on funding from external donors. This reliance creates a dependency that makes these organizations vulnerable to shifts in donor priorities, funding cycles, and even the “whims” of international funders. This can undermine local ownership, hinder long-term planning, and compromise the sustainability of initiatives.

Erosion of Trust Due to Transparency and Accountability Deficits.
Concerns about transparency and accountability have contributed to a palpable trust deficit within the philanthropic ecosystem. Stakeholders often perceive a lack of openness in operations and financial reporting, leading to skepticism and hindering collaboration.

Duplication of Efforts and Lack of Coordination.
Inadequate coordination and collaboration among organizations often result in duplication of efforts and inefficient resource allocation. This lack of synergy diminishes the overall impact of philanthropic activities and hinders the development of comprehensive solutions to complex challenges.

Political Interference and its Impact on Sensitive Sectors.
Philanthropic work, particularly in sensitive areas such as advocacy and human rights, is frequently subject to political interference. This interference can obstruct progress, create an uncertain operating environment, and stifle efforts to address critical issues effectively.

Limited Public Awareness of Tax Frameworks for PBOs.
There is a concerning lack of public awareness, and even among some practitioners, of the tax frameworks that govern Public Benefit Organizations (PBOs) in Kenya. This limited awareness may prevent organizations from taking full advantage of available tax benefits and operating more effectively.

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[82] Beisheim, M., Ellersiek, A., Goltermann, L., & Kiamba, P. (2018). Meta-Governance of Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Actors’ Perspectives from Kenya. Public Administration and Development, 38, 105-119. https://doi.org/10.1002/PAD.1810.

Catalytic Capital, as an emerging opportunity in Kenya

Catalytic capital, with its willingness to accept higher risk and lower financial returns for social impact, presents a significant opportunity for Kenya's development.[83] However, effectively navigating and deploying this type of capital comes with its own set of complexities. This includes understanding the various forms and sources of catalytic capital, identifying suitable investment opportunities, and aligning with innovative financing models.[84]

Catalytic Capital is essential for

1. **Seeding Novel Enterprises.** Supporting start-up social enterprises and intermediaries with innovative models that haven't yet achieved commercial viability.
2. **Scaling Existing Impact Funds.** Providing growth capital to proven initiatives in areas such as climate change or health crises, allowing them to expand their impact and reach.

Effectively channeling catalytic capital in Kenya necessitates collaboration between various actors, including impact investors, development finance institutions, government bodies, philanthropic foundations, and local organizations. Building capacity within Kenyan organizations to access and manage catalytic capital is also crucial.

The State of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) in Kenya

MSPs are a vital component of Kenya's social development landscape, attracting diverse organizations with varying motivations. The embrace of MSPs is driven by strategic objectives unique to each sector, yet united by the desire for collective impact. For example, consider a local PPPP that's boosting Ethiopian coffee production, [though outside Kenya, the model is relevant for Agriculture]. Such a partnership demonstrates how private businesses and philanthropic organizations can work with government and multilateral agencies to improve supply chains, benefit local farmers, and enhance market access.[85]

The SDG Partnerships Platform serves as a national-level convener, bringing together government, UN agencies, private sector, and civil society to drive progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. This multi-stakeholder approach is essential in addressing lack of coordination and synergy, as highlighted in webinar discussions. Additionally, initiatives focused on specific sectors, such as agricultural development, demonstrate diverse approaches to social impact. Regional bodies that work across borders and address multiple countries. This addresses the concern from the webinar response *"Africa is treated as implementers but not co-creators; lack of long term commitment beyond funding."* These players can ensure local level implementation and ownership. This avoids the "Closed organizations (Organizations work individually rather than collaboratively)" that was also highlighted from the webinar discussions. These diverse actors collectively contribute to the vibrancy and effectiveness of Kenya's philanthropic efforts. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and government entities are often drawn to MSPs primarily for the opportunity to access financial resources and in-kind support essential for implementing their initiatives. These partnerships provide vital avenues to supplement funding gaps, secure necessary goods or services, and leverage additional expertise to advance their missions.

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[83] Catalytic Capital Africa Consortium (2024). Risk-Sharing Mechanisms in Africa. Retrieved from https://catalyticcapitalconsortium.org/

[84] Catalytic Capital Africa. https://www.catalyticcapitalafrica.org/

[85] PPP Partnership to boost Ethiopian coffee production, benefit local farmers and consumers. (2015). *PPPP Library WORKING*.

In contrast, the private sector's engagement in MSPs is frequently motivated by a desire to build reputation, achieve industry recognition, and enhance competitive standing. Participation in these collaborations can enhance corporate social responsibility (CSR) profiles, provide societal legitimacy, facilitate knowledge acquisition and innovation, and offer platforms to influence relevant regulations, thereby creating a favorable business environment.[86]

This interplay of varied motivations shapes the intricate dynamic of MSPs in Kenya. Successful partnerships hinge on the ability of stakeholders to navigate these differing agendas, find common ground, and build a strong foundation of mutual trust and shared goals.

Kenya Philanthropy Players Shaping Kenya's MSP Landscape | Catalysts for Change

Kenya's Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) landscape is powered by a diverse array of philanthropic actors who play vital roles in mobilizing resources, driving innovation, and achieving social impact.[87] Beyond the key players mentioned in the original document, it's crucial to recognize the broader ecosystem that includes community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international development agencies, and even academic institutions. However, the following key players highlighted are some of the most influential and impactful in Kenya.

Key Foundations and Organizations

The KenGen Foundation focuses on sustainable development projects, often with an emphasis on environmental conservation, education, and community empowerment in areas where KenGen operates. It's deeply connected to KenGen PLC, Kenya's leading electricity generating company, which allows for synergy between the foundation's work and the company's broader strategic initiatives. For example, they have been involved in initiatives focused on reforestation, water projects, and scholarships for needy students.

The KCB Foundation is the corporate social investment arm of the KCB Group PLC, one of East Africa's largest banking institutions. The foundation focuses on enterprise development, education, and environmental conservation. It is particularly known for its 2jiajiri program, a skills development and job creation initiative. They have also invested significantly in initiatives promoting green financing and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Their vast reach through KCB branches across Kenya allows for effective grassroots level engagement and impact.

The Safaricom Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Safaricom PLC, Kenya's largest telecommunications company. It focuses on health, education, and economic empowerment, particularly in marginalized communities. Their initiatives often leverage technology for development. M-PESA Foundation Academy is a prominent example of their commitment to education. Their expansive projects cover areas like healthcare through mobile clinics, education through building schools and ICT centers, and economic empowerment through agribusiness projects. Safaricom's widespread network enhances the Foundation's ability to reach even the most remote areas.

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[86] Ewege G., Sajjad A., Nath S. D., Kobayashi K. (2020). Multistakeholder partnerships: a catalyst to achieve sustainable development. https://www.academia.edu/89153405/Multi_stakeholder_partnerships_a_catalyst_to_achieve_sustainable_development_goals

[87] State of Philanthropy Report 2024. (2024). State of Philanthropy in Kenya. Retrieved from https://www.stateofphilanthropy.org/

The Africa Philanthropy Network (APN), a pan-African network, plays a critical role in strengthening philanthropy across the continent. They promote knowledge sharing, capacity building, and collaboration among philanthropic actors. APN works across countries to facilitate policy dialogue, advocate for enabling environments for philanthropy, and build the evidence base for effective giving. They are important in creating a unified voice for philanthropy at the continental level.

The East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN), a regional network that focuses on advancing philanthropy in East Africa through knowledge sharing, capacity building, and policy advocacy. They work at a more focused regional level, addressing the specific challenges and opportunities within East Africa's philanthropic landscape. They support local philanthropic initiatives and serve as a convening platform for regional dialogues and partnerships.

The Kenya Philanthropy Network, is a national platform in Kenya provides a convening space for philanthropic actors, facilitating dialogue, and promoting best practices within the country. They focus on domestic policy issues, advocate for favorable legislation, and organize training and learning events for their members. They play a pivotal role in shaping the regulatory and operational environment for philanthropy within Kenya.

Impact Philanthropy Africa is a forum of self-funded corporate and private charitable foundations working in Kenya to create social impact. The Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and the M-Pesa Foundation are the co-conveners of the Forum.

East Africa Private Equity & Venture Capital Association represents private capital providers supporting businesses and enterprise to achieve their goals, catalyzing development and creating meaningful jobs across the region. The membership represents development finance institutions (DFIs), private equity and venture capital funds, family offices, impact investors among others.

Beyond These Key Players

It's essential to acknowledge the critical contributions of other actors that shape Kenya's philanthropic ecosystem.

International NGOs (INGOs) Organizations like Oxfam, World Vision, and CARE International, among many others, have significant operations in Kenya and play a major role in development and humanitarian aid. They often work in partnership with local organizations, bringing resources, expertise, and international connections.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). These grassroots organizations are crucial in addressing local needs and mobilizing community resources. They often have deep knowledge of local contexts and are instrumental in implementing projects on the ground.

Academic and Research Institutions. Universities and research centers in Kenya contribute by conducting studies, providing data, and training professionals in fields relevant to philanthropy and development.

Religious Organizations. Churches, mosques, and other religious bodies play a substantial role in charitable giving and social services in Kenya. They often have extensive community networks and strong social capital.

Diaspora Groups. Kenyans living abroad continue to be significant contributors to development efforts, through remittances and organized giving initiatives. Their financial contributions and knowledge transfers are essential for many communities.

Impact and Significance

The diverse array of philanthropy players in Kenya contributes to a vibrant and dynamic ecosystem. Their work supports a broad range of sectors, including education, health, environment, economic empowerment, and social justice. They serve as:

- **Resource mobilizers.** Channeling funds and other resources to communities and initiatives.
- **Capacity Builders.** Providing training and technical assistance to local organizations.
- **Advocates.** Championing policy changes and addressing systemic issues.
- **Innovators.** Developing and testing new approaches to development challenges.
- **Connectors.** Linking different stakeholders and facilitating partnerships.

Understanding the roles and interactions of these various players is critical for anyone seeking to engage with or support the philanthropic sector in Kenya.

Policy Review | Examining the Enabling Environment and Challenges for Philanthropy in Kenya

Kenya's philanthropic sector operates within a policy environment that, while showing signs of potential, requires critical attention and reform to support its growth and effectiveness fully. According to the 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index, Kenya scored 3.5 out of 5, suggesting a relatively favorable enabling environment. However, this score masks several underlying challenges that hinder the sector's optimal performance:

KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The philanthropic sector in Kenya faces significant challenges stemming from its regulatory environment.

1. Public Benefit Organizations Act (PBO) 2013 and Regulatory Complexity: The PBO Act of 2013, while intended to provide structure, has resulted in a regulatory landscape marked by complexity and bureaucratic hurdles. Multiple agency registrations lead to delays, increased costs, and operational inefficiencies, deterring potential entrants and hindering established organizations. This complexity inhibits the growth and agility of the sector.

2. Income Tax Policies and Underutilized Exemptions: Awareness and utilization of tax exemptions for philanthropic organizations remain critically low, with only 23% reported to leverage these benefits. This stems from inadequate information dissemination and a lack of robust incentives for both corporate and individual giving. A 2024 revision to the Income Tax Act, introducing the ***"Charitable Organisations and Donations Exemption Rules,"*** further complicates this issue. These rules demand stricter demonstration of "solely charitable purposes" and exclusive application of funds for "public benefit" within Kenya. This change has:

- **Raised Compliance Thresholds:** Organizations now face higher standards to earn and maintain tax-exempt status, requiring meticulous documentation and adherence to stricter criteria. This is a significant shift, particularly for previously exempt entities, demanding careful transition strategies.

- **Prompted Jurisdictional and Operational Questions:** The new rules have triggered broader discussions regarding jurisdiction, operational models, and the evolving role of philanthropy under a more stringent fiscal regime. Ambiguity surrounding the definition of "public benefit" in the 2024 rules, distinct from the 2013 Act, has further compounded these concerns.

The TrustLaw, CDH Advocates, Kenya Philanthropy Forum and the East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN) convened an Issue Lab in May 2025 to clarify the implications of the 2024 rules, address sectoral concerns—ranging from board structuring to fund disbursement models—and foster a collective understanding and strategic response within the sector.

Political Environment and Independence

Political interference in philanthropy is a persistent concern, highlighting the urgent need to safeguard the independence and operational space of philanthropic organizations. For the sector to thrive, it must be free from undue influence and able to operate with transparency and autonomy. With Kenya's projected economic growth of 5.1% of GDP, it is crucial to establish clear and easily accessible policy incentives to stimulate corporate and individual giving and leverage the potential of a strengthened private sector.

Socio-Cultural Context and Diaspora Engagement

The "Harambee" spirit, a traditional culture of communal self-help, provides a strong foundation for philanthropy and trust-building within Kenyan communities. However, despite this solid socio-cultural base, diaspora engagement remains limited. The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (KDA) reports that approximately 68% of diaspora remittances face unclear exchange policies, hindering their potential to contribute more effectively to philanthropic efforts.[88] Streamlining exchange policies and actively engaging the diaspora could unlock significant resources and expertise for social development in Kenya.

Policy Recommendations for Strengthening Kenya's Philanthropic Ecosystem

To fully unlock the potential of Kenya's philanthropic sector and enhance its impact on social development, targeted policy interventions and strategic reforms are necessary. The following recommendations aim to address key challenges and create a more enabling environment:

- **Streamlining Registration for Public Benefit Organizations (PBOs).** Implement a harmonized and unified registration platform for PBOs, eliminating the current duplication of efforts and streamlining the registration process in accordance with the Public Benefit Organizations Act (PBO) of 2013. Lessons can be drawn from successful models like the Imbergo platform in Rwanda, which provides a single point of entry for registration and regulatory compliance.[89] This would reduce bureaucratic hurdles, save time and resources, and encourage greater participation in the sector.

- **Expand and Simplify the range of Non-Tax Incentives** available to philanthropic organizations, as proposed by the Kenya Philanthropy Network. These incentives could include recognition programs, access to government facilities, fast-tracked approvals, and streamlined partnerships with public institutions. Clearly communicating and making these incentives easily accessible will encourage increased participation and effectiveness of philanthropic initiatives.

Catalytic Capital

According to the Catalytic Capital Africa Consortium (2024), only 12% of impact funds in Kenya benefit from co-investment from the government. This indicates a significant underutilization of public-private partnerships in leveraging catalytic capital.[90] Furthermore, there appears to be a misalignment between the Kenya National Climate Change Action Plan (2023-2027) and existing climate-focused philanthropic initiatives, leading to missed opportunities for synergistic action.

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[89] UNDP. (2022). Policy Planning and Evaluation Handbook. https://www.undp.org

[90] Catalytic Capital Consortium. (2024). Risk-sharing Mechanisms in Africa. https://catalyticcapitalconsortium.org

Policy Recommendations for Catalytic Capital

- **Establish a dedicated Catalytic Capital Match Fund** to leverage the projected GDP growth and attract increased private investment in social and environmental initiatives.[91] This match fund would incentivize private investors by providing partial government funding to projects that meet specific social impact criteria, effectively amplifying the reach and impact of catalytic capital. This would also support growth, innovation and sustainability.

- **Integrate philanthropic organizations into the National Climate Change Council** to ensure that their climate-focused initiatives are aligned with national priorities and strategies.[92] This collaboration would facilitate better coordination, knowledge sharing, and resource mobilization, leading to more effective climate action.

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

The Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) ecosystem in Kenya is notably diverse, featuring three primary structural models. First, **Advisory Councils** are often led by private sector entities and tasked with shaping policy. Second, **Sector-wide Approaches** involve the joint management of funds by government agencies. Finally, **Co-design Platforms** are characterized by collaborative initiatives between philanthropic organizations and academic institutions. This variety of MSP models presents a complex landscape with both significant opportunities for innovation and collaboration, as well as inherent challenges in coordination and alignment.

Policy Recommendations for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

- **Institutionalize the representation of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships at the County government boards** within the framework of the Devolution Policy 2022.[93] This would strengthen local governance, enhance accountability, and facilitate better alignment between national and county-level development priorities. It also promotes and ensures local ownership of initiatives and partnerships.

- **Establish a Philanthropy Regulation Sandbox** to pilot innovative partnership models without the full burden of regulatory compliance.[94] This sandbox would allow organizations to test new approaches in a controlled environment, learn from experience, and refine their models before scaling up. This would foster innovation, flexibility, and experimentation in the sector, and remove bureaucratic hurdles from novel approaches.

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[91] Kenya Economic Update: A Balancing Act - Opportunities for Making Growth More Inclusive During Challenging Times. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099121323045531 28

[92] Government of Kenya. (2023). Kenya National Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2027. Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Government of Kenya

[93] Government of Kenya. (2022). Devolution Policy 2022 Retrieved from https://www.devolution.go.ke/

[94] Kenya Philanthropy Network (KPN). (2023). Philanthropy Regulatory Sandbox Proposal. Retrieved from https://www.kenyaphilanthropy.org/

Photo credit: Kenny Murgor on Unsplash

Conclusion & Feedforward: Kenya Analysis

In conclusion, Kenya's philanthropic ecosystem stands as a dynamic and fertile ground for transformative social impact. This vibrant landscape is propelled by a robust private sector, a palpable spirit of entrepreneurial innovation, and deeply rooted traditions of communal support, most notably exemplified by the enduring practice of 'Harambee.'

However, the full realization of this potential remains contingent upon the resolute and strategic confrontation of several critical challenges. These encompass a labyrinthine regulatory framework, marked by complexity and opacity; a significant paucity of reliable data, hindering informed decision-making; an over-reliance on external funding streams, rendering organizations vulnerable; pervasive trust deficits among key stakeholders; and persistent deficiencies in effective coordination and collaboration.

To cultivate a truly enabling environment conducive to thriving philanthropic endeavors, Kenya must undertake a series of strategic policy reforms. Paramount among these is the streamlining of registration processes for Public Benefit Organizations (PBOs), thereby dismantling bureaucratic hurdles and fostering wider participation. Additionally, implementing judicious tax and non-tax incentives for giving is imperative to mobilize greater resources and encourage philanthropic engagement from diverse actors. Establishing a dedicated Catalytic Capital Match Fund would provide a crucial financial lever, unlocking further investment and amplifying the impact of innovative initiatives. Furthermore, the creation of a Philanthropy Regulation Sandbox would offer a controlled space for the testing and refinement of novel approaches, promoting experimentation and learning. Concurrently, institutionalising Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) representation at the county government level would serve to decentralize efforts, enhance local ownership, and bolster accountability mechanisms, thereby strengthening the overall effectiveness of collaborative initiatives.

Looking ahead, the insights and findings articulated in this report must transition from theoretical analysis to tangible, actionable strategies. This translation necessitates several **key "feedforward" actions**.

- Facilitating sustained and productive dialogues with key government stakeholders, since these are essential to advocate for and drive the aforementioned policy reforms
- Creating accessible and vibrant platforms for knowledge sharing among philanthropic actors is crucial to foster collaboration, dissemination of best practices, and mutual learning.
- Developing capacity-building programs, with a particular focus on data management, monitoring and evaluation, and compelling proposal development, will empower organizations and enhance their effectiveness.
- Initiating pilot projects within the Philanthropy Regulation Sandbox will allow for practical testing of innovative approaches and provide valuable real-world insights.

Kenya holds the distinct opportunity to fully harness the power of its philanthropic assets, catalytic capital, and robust Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships. This will be achieved by consciously and strategically weaving together the threads of research, policy, and on-the-ground practice. This integrated approach will not only drive sustainable and inclusive development within its own borders but will also position Kenya as a beacon and model for impactful social investment across the wider region.

Ghana

Overview of Ghana

Ghana is a democratic lower-middle income country in West Africa with a GDP of 75.27 billion USD (2025) according to the International Monetary Fund. With a total population of nearly 35 million, and a median age of 21.3 years, it is the second-most populated country in the region.[96] The country relies on domestic revenue, loans and development partner grants for its national budget, with philanthropy offering a minimal contribution.

One recent development in their financial economic system is a review in December 2024, where the IMF approved a disbursement of US $360 million of the US $3 billion Extended Credit Facility (ECF) programme which was agreed on in May 2023. The programme is a conduit to macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability post-Covid 19.[97] Alongside other CSOs, STAR Ghana Foundation regards philanthropy as a vital part of bridging the financial gap to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.[98]

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[96] Worldometer. Ghana population. Retrieved April 5, 2025, from https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/ghana-population/

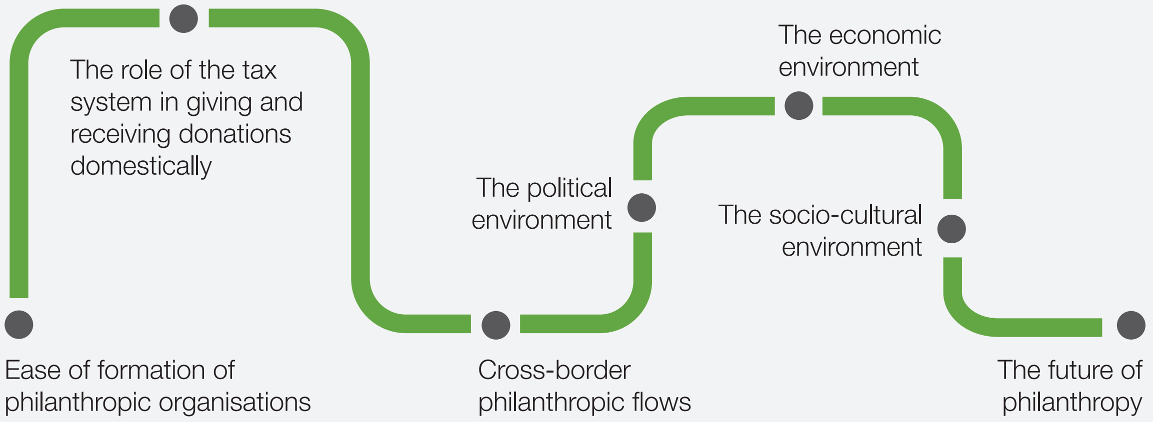
[97] International Monetary Fund. (2023). Request For An Arrangement Under The Extended Credit Facility—Press Release; Staff Report; And Statement By The Executive Director For Ghana (IMF Country Report No. 23/168). International Monetary fund. Retrieved April 5, 2025, from https://mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/basic-page/Ghana-2023-IMF-ECF-Programme.pdf

[98] Junior, J. A. (2024). Philanthropy key to bridging Ghana's financial gap for SDGs - STAR Ghana Foundation, others. Ghana News Agency. https://gna.org.gh/2024/05/philanthropy-key-to-bridging-ghanas-financial-gap-for-sdgs-star-ghana-foundation-others/

Photo Credit: Pius Quainoo on unsplash.com

Key aspects of the philanthropy environment in Ghana

According to the 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index, Ghana had an overall score of 3.51 out of 5 in terms of its philanthropic environment.[99] This scoring includes



Overall, the score indicates that Ghana is a conducive environment for philanthropy, supported by an open and free political landscape devoid of interference, a fiscal system that incentivises the giving of donations, an open civic space and a legal and regulatory environment that has been showing promise of philanthropic support since 2020. The economic upturn over the past several years has increased the number of high net worth individuals who may represent a new viable audience for the philanthropic sector to tap into for domestic giving.

The traditional cultural history of Ghana has carried into the present, where there is a readiness of the citizens to participate in informal individual giving towards matters like healthcare, education and other social issues. Faith-based philanthropy also contributes significantly to meeting some of these needs as approximately 94% of Ghanaians subscribe to a religion. This conducive environment can be exemplified by the success of the Ghanaian government in mobilising US $3.9 million from individual and corporate groups to combat the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019.

Challenges facing the philanthropy ecosystem in Ghana

There is a lack of data on the nature and extent of philanthropy with respect to organised giving and corporate social responsibility.

There is insufficient commitment to catalysing philanthropy for development.

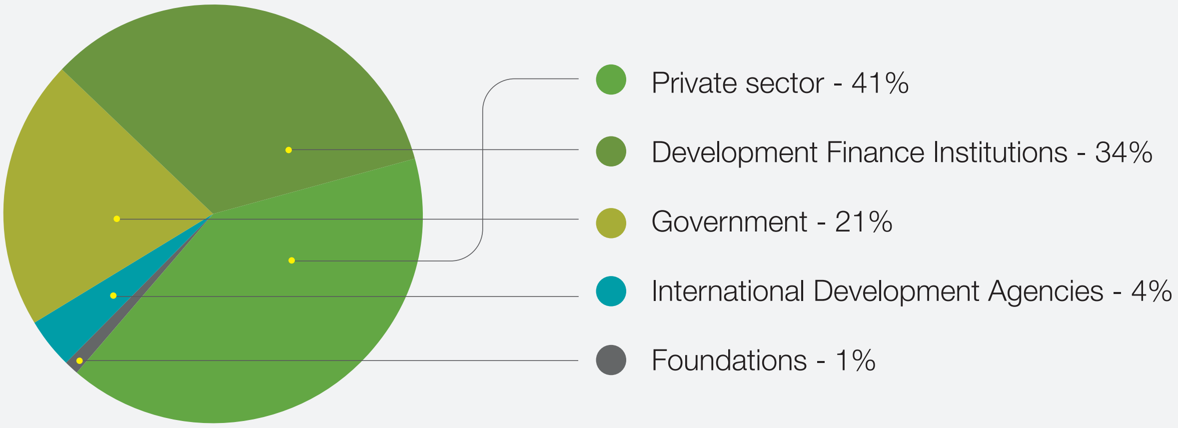
Lack of transparency on tax exemption for nonprofit organizations.

There are poor policy and legal frameworks to govern organised forms of philanthropy.

The state of Catalytic Capital in Ghana

There exists a financing gap of approximately $4.8 billion facing agriculture, forestry and fishing SMEs in Ghana, especially in regions which have the highest poverty rates. Traditional investing that seeks returns at market rate has proven inappropriate for the scale of funding needed to boost economic growth and impact in the country. Since 2004, the volume of catalytic capital disbursed in Ghana has grown five times, enabling third party investments worth nearly 7 times the value of the initial investment to be possible.100

According to a 2022 report on the catalytic capital investment ecosystem by Impact Investing Ghana and Ashesi University, the sources of catalytic investments include:



The state of multi-stakeholder partnerships

Multi-stakeholder collaboration is viewed as one of the key mechanisms to financing development. In Ghana, this kind of collaboration is primarily seen as a means of advancing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. As such, in 2015, they joined the SDG Philanthropy Platform.[101] One concern is regarding the power tensions between philanthropic institutions and governments when it comes to whose interests get represented. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are a ripe avenue for scaling up social innovation projects.

In Ghana, several PPPPs are emerging across diverse sectors. The key actors in Ghana are collaborating with many other global north partners and there are several discussions on how to foster a better system of engagement. There is work to improve local ownership and there needs to be more capacity sharing amongst stakeholders. We could look at PPPPs like Capacity [102] for some key learnings. [Though it is in Italy] it demonstrates urban and social regeneration in partnership and also how the *"creation of quality urban and socio-economic systems"* leads to "personalized and community projects of socio-cultural mediation.

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100 Impact Investing Ghana & Ashesi University. (2022). *Catalytic Capital Investments Strategies, Hurdles and Outcomes.*

101 Kumi, E. (2019). Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals: An analysis of the potential role of philanthropy in Ghana. Journal of Asian and African Studies, 54(7), 1084–1104. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909619862591

102 Capacity. (2017). *PPPP Library WORKING*

Key philanthropy actors and MSPs in Ghana

Ghana's philanthropic landscape is increasingly dynamic, featuring a range of actors dedicated to driving social change. Beyond the general enabling environment mentioned earlier, specific organizations and initiatives are shaping the sector and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs). Here are some key actors and a broader look at the Ghanaian context:[103]

1. Philanthropy Ghana. This network acts as a central coordinating body, aiming to strengthen and promote philanthropy in Ghana.[104] Its role in advocacy, capacity building, and convening is crucial for addressing the "lack of coordination and synergy" often seen in the philanthropic sector, as highlighted in the AVPA-DD webinar.[105] By providing a platform for dialogue and collaboration, Philanthropy Ghana helps to break down silos and encourage a more strategic approach to giving. It acts as a vital connection point for organisations, helping to share information and best practices and develop the sector as a whole. It is vital for aligning goals and enabling collective action. As reported by the State of Philanthropy Report, *"Network-building and coordination are fundamental to addressing systemic issues."*

2. NEXUS Africa - Ghana Chapter. Part of a global network, NEXUS Africa's Ghana Chapter focuses on connecting young philanthropists, impact investors, and social entrepreneurs.[106] This network is particularly important for engaging the next generation of leaders and fostering innovative solutions. It acts as a platform for catalytic capital and "upskilling grantees ~ financial collaboration among ventures (standardization and structuring of deals for first loss guarantees)." NEXUS fosters partnerships with a vision to build communities of trust amongst young investors, social entrepreneurs, philanthropists and allies to drive positive impact.

3. GivingTuesday Ghana. As part of the global movement, GivingTuesday Ghana promotes a day of giving and encourages generosity.[107] This initiative is instrumental in raising awareness about philanthropy and mobilizing community support for various causes. Giving Tuesday is critical for organisations to engage local donors and support local causes. By highlighting local organizations on a specific day, local donors are made more aware.

4. Women in Philanthropy Ghana. This organization is dedicated to empowering women in philanthropy and supporting initiatives that benefit women and girls.[108] Their work is crucial for addressing gender inequality and promoting women's leadership in the social sector. Their unique focus on women specific issues is vital, supporting "vision dissonance and misalignment" that can happen in partnerships. Their laser focus on women supports MSPs in seeing the core aim of their project. Women in Philanthropy Ghana highlights the vital point that MSPs should include women at all levels of the partnership for successful outcomes.

5. African Youth Philanthropy Network. This network engages and empowers young people across Africa to participate in philanthropy and social change.[109] Its presence in Ghana highlights the importance of youth engagement in shaping the future of the sector. As highlighted at the Africa MSPs webinar,[110] it is important to have more creative, locally based innovations. Youth participation allows for this innovation.

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[103] https://www.star-ghana.org/latest-news/637-star-ghana-foundation-leads-35-other-csos-to-present-local-philanthropy-proposals-to-ndc-2024-manifesto-committee

[104] Philanthropy Ghana. (Various years). About Us. [https://philanthropygh.org/about-us/]

[105] AVPA & Development Dynamics. (2024). *MSP Webinar Breakout Rooms Rapporteur's Report*.

[106] NEXUS Africa - Ghana Chapter. (Various years). *About Us*. [https://nexusglobal.org/about/#]

[107] GivingTuesday Ghana. (Various years). Facebook Page. [https://web.facebook.com/GivingTuesdayGhana/?_rdc=1&_rdr#]

[108] Women in Philanthropy Ghana. (Various years). *About Us.* [https://womenphilanthropygh.org/]

[109] African Youth Philanthropy Network. (Various years). *Who We Are.* [https://africanyouthphilanthropy.org/who-we-are/]

[110] AVPA & Development Dynamics. (2024). *MSP Webinar Breakout Rooms Rapporteur's Report*.

6. GADEF International. GADEF International focuses on various development initiatives, including education, health, and economic empowerment.[111] Their holistic approach to development highlights the interconnectedness of social issues and the need for multi-faceted interventions.

7. Ghana Philanthropy Forum. Similar to Philanthropy Ghana, this forum serves as a platform for dialogue, networking, and collaboration among philanthropic actors. It provides opportunities for sharing knowledge, building partnerships, and advocating for a stronger philanthropic sector.

8. The Enterprise Support Organisation Collaborative exists to collaborate to; build an ecosystem where ESOs; thrive, increase investments into businesses, develop businesses that are sustainable, innovative, well-governed, cooperative, and profitable, and develop a sustainable business environment in Ghana. The Enterprise Support Organisation (ESO) program sharing and rating platform is a community resource developed by the Enterprise Support Organisation Collaborative which brings together the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), National Entrepreneurship & Innovation Programme (NEIP), Ghana Hubs Network, Impact Investing Ghana, Mirepa Capital, InnoHub Foundation, Social Enterprise Ghana, MBC Africa, Reach for Change, ScaleUp Africa, and Center for Entrepreneurship & Evaluation Development. The platform is managed by Impact Investing Ghana and was built with funding from the Research and Innovation Systems in Africa (RISA) program of UK AID.

9. Impact Investing Ghana, is the first Sub-Saharan African subsidiary of the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment (GSG), an independent global group catalyzing impact that creates awareness and engagement about impact investment and its potentials. IIGh aims to unlock $1 billion in funding for Ghana and West Africa through innovative collaborative projects driven by five core strategic objectives.

10. The Pensions Industry Collaborative (PIC) unites Ghana's top pension trustees and fund managers to grow pension investments into alternative assets that support national development. Convened by Impact Investing Ghana, PIC focuses on policy advocacy, capacity building, and pipeline visibility to drive sustainable economic growth.

11. The Ghana Venture Capital and Private Equity Association (GVCA) is an association of specialized practitioners engaged in the business of private equity in Ghana. The role of the association is to provide a strong voice for industry practitioners in stakeholder engagement and advocacy, drive the growth of the industry, bring legitimacy to its members and develop the capacity of industry players so they can safeguard investors and investees.

12. The Venture Capital Trust Fund (VCTF) is a quasi-Public Fund of Funds institution established by the Government of Ghana under the VCTF ACT 680. VCTF's mandate is to make funds available to SMEs in Ghana and to spearhead the establishment of a vibrant venture capital Industry in Ghana. VCTF supported the establishment of the Ghana Alternative Exchange (GAX). The GAX is to promote Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) listing and also to establish a listing support fund dedicated to helping SMEs to cover the upfront cost required to list on the Market.

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111 GADEF International. (Various years). [https://gadef.org/]

112 Ghana Philanthropy Forum. (Various years). *About Us.* [https://ghanaphilanthropy.org/about-us/]

Other Relevant Actors and Initiatives in Ghana

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives. Many companies in Ghana have active CSR programs focusing on education, health, and community development. These initiatives often involve partnerships with NGOs and government agencies. This connects to the challenge of *"Erosion of Trust. A Foundation Cracking"* where companies that are seen to have a clear CSR strategy can garner trust from local communities.

Faith-Based Organizations. Religious institutions play a significant role in providing social services and mobilizing community support. They are vital actors who understand and live in the communities they serve. Faith based organisations in MSPs ensure a strong local voice is being represented.

International NGOs. Many international NGOs operate in Ghana, implementing projects in various sectors and partnering with local organizations. These partners need to work together to avoid the *"Dependency Dilemma. Holding Charity Hostage"* that can come from international partners.

Development Finance Institutions (DFIs). DFIs provide crucial funding for development projects in Ghana, often through public-private partnerships (PPPs). We see a significant financing gap of approximately $4.8 billion in Ghana within the agriculture, forestry and fishing SME sectors.[113] The 2022 report on the catalytic capital investment ecosystem in Ghana indicated that DFIs are the second largest provider of Catalytic Capital in Ghana, representing 34%. This shows their important role in the philanthropy space in Ghana. DFIs can support *"seed money for new ideas"* and provide *"fuel for growth"*, both roles that catalytic capital plays.

Photo Credit: freepik.com

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[113] Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ghana. (2024). Agricultural Sector Report. Accra, Ghana

Ghana's philanthropic policy and regulatory landscape

The legal and regulatory framework for philanthropy is still not well developed in Ghana. One marker of this is the lack of clarity around the terms NGO, trust, foundation and CSO. Charity and philanthropy are also not well distinguished. As such, all relevant institutions must register as companies limited by guarantee or as individual trusts.[114,115] The statutory requirements for NGOs are considered burdensome as organisations have to register with:

1) the Registrar's General Department for a Certificate to Commence Business and Certificate of Incorporation, and

2) the Department of Social Welfare.[116,117] Eight documents are required for the registration to be successful and operations to start.

Some CSOs, however, register under the Professional Bodies Registration Decree (NRCD 143) of 1976 as professional bodies, further demonstrating the lack of coherence in the regulatory space.

While various tax incentives exist for philanthropic organisations according to the VAT Act, 2013 (Act 870), Income Tax Act, 2015 (Act 896), and Customs Act, 2015 (Act 891), there are unclear structures of how to access them. Furthermore, CSOs are not automatically exempted from tax obligations due to claims of fraud and abuse, and contention exists about whether CSOs should indeed be exempted from tax. Awinbugri and Owusu (2022) argue that tax exemptions do not negatively affect national revenue mobilisation.[118]

Policy Considerations for Ghana's MSPs and Catalytic Capital

Ghana's philanthropic ecosystem, as revealed in our research, exhibits both significant potential and certain inherent challenges that call for carefully considered policy interventions.

To maximize the impact of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) and catalytic capital within Ghana, we offer the following policy considerations:

1. Enhancement and Clarification of the Regulatory Framework. The report highlights the critical need for greater clarity and accessibility in the regulatory environment governing NGOs, CSOs, trusts, and foundations. *"Regulatory bottlenecks are not just administrative hurdles; they are barriers to social progress."* Policy should aim to streamline registration processes, provide explicit definitions, and ensure transparency, reducing perceptions of bureaucratic complexity. As noted in the Global Philanthropy Environment Index 2022, *clear and consistent regulatory frameworks are foundational to a healthy philanthropic sector*.[119] Furthermore, addressing specific challenges faced by hybrid organizations, particularly concerning the reinvestment of profits and tax implications (akin to the MyAgro case in Senegal), is crucial to encourage innovative social enterprise models.

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[114] Kumi, E. (2019). Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals: An analysis of the potential role of philanthropy in Ghana. Journal of Asian and African Studies, 54(7), 1084–1104. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909619862591

[115] SDG Philanthropy Platform. (2017). Enabling Environment For Philanthropy In Ghana. United Nations Development Program. Retrieved April 5, 2025, from https://siafrica.online/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/3.pdf

[116] The Ghana Philanthropy Forum. (n.d.). The Ngo Tax Regime & The Enabling Environment For Philanthropy In Ghana. Retrieved April 5, 2025, from https://wings.issuelab.org/resources/33768/33768.pdf

[117] SDG Philanthropy Platform. (2017). Enabling Environment For Philanthropy In Ghana. United Nations Development Program. Retrieved April 5, 2025, from https://siafrica.online/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/3.pdf

[118] Awinbugri, E. A., & Owusu, M. (2022). The impact of tax exemptions granted to CSO's on revenue mobilization targets: The case of CSOs in Accra-Ghana. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 06(08), 607–614. https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2022.6831

[119] Global Philanthropy Environment Index 2022.

2. Formalizing and Simplifying Regulatory Frameworks. The pervasive issue of unclear and complex regulatory environments hinders the sector's efficiency. *"Regulatory bottlenecks are not just administrative hurdles; they are barriers to social progress."* A concerted effort to clarify legal definitions for NGOs, CSOs, trusts, and foundations is paramount. Streamlining registration processes and simplifying fiscal regulations will reduce the burden on organizations and enable effective philanthropic action. Furthermore, specific provisions to support hybrid organizations and their unique operational models must be developed to foster innovation.

3. Enhancing and Promoting Tax Incentives. While socio-cultural norms favor giving, leveraging tax incentives can significantly amplify philanthropic contributions. Greater awareness campaigns regarding existing tax breaks, coupled with potential enhancements or expansions, could encourage increased formal giving from both individuals and corporations. This directly addresses the challenge of *"We need flexible funding that empowers, not funding that confines."* by increasing local contributions.

4. Developing a National Catalytic Capital Deployment Strategy. Given the identified $4.8 billion financing gap in Ghana's agriculture, forestry, and fishing SME sectors, and recognizing DFIs as the second largest provider of Catalytic Capital (34%), Ghana needs a strategic framework. This should include mechanisms for providing technical assistance, facilitating market access, offering mentorship, and attracting follow-on investments. Targeted catalytic funding towards specific sectors like agriculture where need is pronounced will aid development.

5. Strengthening Coordination of MSPs. The observed lack of coordination requires robust intervention. Establishing a national platform or forum for MSPs can enhance communication, collaboration, and resource alignment. This platform could also serve to share best practices and information to improve implementation readiness and accountability.

6. Facilitating DFI-Foundation Collaboration. While DFIs are significant players, foundations' contribution to catalytic capital in Ghana remains low. This points to a clear opportunity to encourage collaborative initiatives and blended finance models. These partnerships can combine financial strength with programmatic expertise, driving more effective outcomes.

Photo Credit: Kofi Bhavnani unsplash.com

Conclusion and Feed Forward: Ghana Analysis

Ghana's philanthropic sector presents a stark duality: robust potential overshadowed by significant constraints. While cultural traditions of giving and a relatively stable political environment offer a solid foundation, progress is undeniably hampered. Bureaucratic inefficiencies and a lack of regulatory clarity actively discourage participation and innovation. Catalytic capital remains underutilized, with current DFIs' dominance highlighting the glaring gap in foundations' engagement. Moreover, reliance on external funding leaves Ghana vulnerable to shifting global priorities.

The current state is suboptimal, not due to a lack of will, but due to systemic blockages. To truly unlock Ghana's philanthropic power, we must move beyond mere observation and engage in targeted dismantling of these obstacles. Catalytic capital is not just needed—it's critical; not just for infusion, but for initiation and acceleration. Ghana doesn't need a gentle push; it needs a strategic surge—one that is locally driven, powerfully coordinated, and decisively supported. This is less about unlocking potential and more about unleashing the already existing power that is currently bound by obstacles. **Ghana needs decisive action, not more discussion.**

To translate analysis into tangible impact, we propose the following direct steps:

1. Regulatory Overhaul—Now. Immediately initiate and expedite the review and simplification of regulations governing NGOs and philanthropic entities. Prioritize the removal of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and ensure clear, accessible guidelines. Create a government task force to do this specifically and quickly.

2. Catalytic Capital Mobilization Plan. Develop and implement a national plan targeting strategic deployment of catalytic capital, focusing on critical sectors such as agriculture and technology. Establish clear targets, timelines, and accountability mechanisms. Get clear about how this can activate local capital and how it will be monitored.

3. Activate Local Capital. Go beyond just discussion of engaging local partners and get clear about how this will be done. Get local investors actively involved with clear incentives. Remove all barriers to ensure local resources are unlocked.

4. Data Transparency Imperative. Establish a mandatory, public data repository for philanthropic activities. Data collection, analysis, and sharing are not optional; they are fundamental to accountability and strategic planning. Create a working database and provide training on how to use it and populate it.

5. Fund National Coordination—Period. Directly and substantially fund Philanthropy Ghana or a designated body to act as the central coordinating force. This entity must have the resources and authority to drive collaboration and information sharing.

6. Mandate Blended Finance Pilots. Require pilot projects leveraging blended finance approaches and impact bonds. Learning by doing is crucial—immediately test, adapt, and scale what works. Make it clear that all large grants need to include a sustainability plan and a local capital engagement plan.

7. Capacity Empowerment—Not Just Building. Implement robust training and mentorship programs that empower local organizations. Shift from 'capacity building' to *'capacity empowerment.'* This means listening and allowing local actors to lead the conversation of what support they actually need. Address real needs and dismantle the dependency model. Make sure there is a clear measurement for this empowerment.

8. Protect Civic Space—Unwaveringly. Ensure legal and practical protections against any political interference. A supportive and transparent political environment is not negotiable.

9. Youth in the Lead. Ensure meaningful inclusion and leadership of youth in all initiatives. Their innovative thinking and energy are indispensable. The youth will shape the future and must be activated now.

10. Global Learning, Local Focus. Learn from international models, yes, but keep the focus unwaveringly local. Adapt best practices to Ghana's context, rather than adopting them wholesale. Ghana needs local solutions that fit Ghana.

Ghana's opportunity is immediate. Decisive, bold action—centered on deregulation, local empowerment, and strategic resource deployment—will transform its philanthropic landscape from promising to powerfully impactful.

Photo Credit: Hannes Leitlein unsplash.com

Nigeria

Overview of Nigeria

Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation is situated in Western Africa and is one of the largest economies in the Sub Saharan Africa region. Nigeria, stands as a lower-middle-income country with a Gross Domestic Product of approximately $362.81 billion USD as of 2023.[120] Nigeria is situated in Western Africa and is one of the largest economies in the Sub Saharan Africa region, with an estimated GDP of 375 billion US Dollars. The country is the largest producer of crude oil in Africa and the sixth largest producer in the world, making it a key member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Nigeria has an estimated population of about 200 million with a projection that the 35 population will practically double in 2050 to about 411 million, Nigeria's potential for significant innovation and economic influence is undeniable.[121] With this projected population, Nigeria would be the third most populous country in 2050, behind India and China. Regarding political structure, Nigeria is divided into 37 subnational entities (states) and 774 local governments.

However, despite the strides made since its post-colonial era, Nigeria grapples with persistent challenges. These include stark income inequity, major security concerns stemming from the infiltration and insurgency of terrorist groups such as Boko Haram,[122] and substantial infrastructural deficits, particularly in sectors like energy. While the national budget remains heavily reliant on domestic oil revenue, philanthropic contributions, though currently modest, are steadily gaining significance.

The ongoing global economic fluctuations have placed Nigeria's oil-dependent economy in a precarious position, leading to increasing calls and concerted efforts to diversify the nation's economic base.[123] Paramount to this diversification is the imperative to engage and bolster the role of non-oil sectors to stimulate and sustain economic growth.

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[120] GDP (current US$) - Nigeria | Data. (n.d.). World Bank Open Data. Retrieved April 10, 2025, from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=NG

[121] Nigeria Population (2025). (n.d.). Worldometer. Retrieved April 10, 2025, from https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/

[122] Tayimlong, R. A. (n.d.). Fragility and Insurgency as Outcomes of Underdevelopment of Public Infrastructure and Socio-Economic Deprivation: The Case of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, 16*(2), 209–223.

[123] *Oil a Blessing or Curse: A Comparative Assessment of Nigeria, Norway and the United Arab Emirates.* (n.d.). Scientific Research Publishing. Retrieved April 10, 2025, from https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=83885

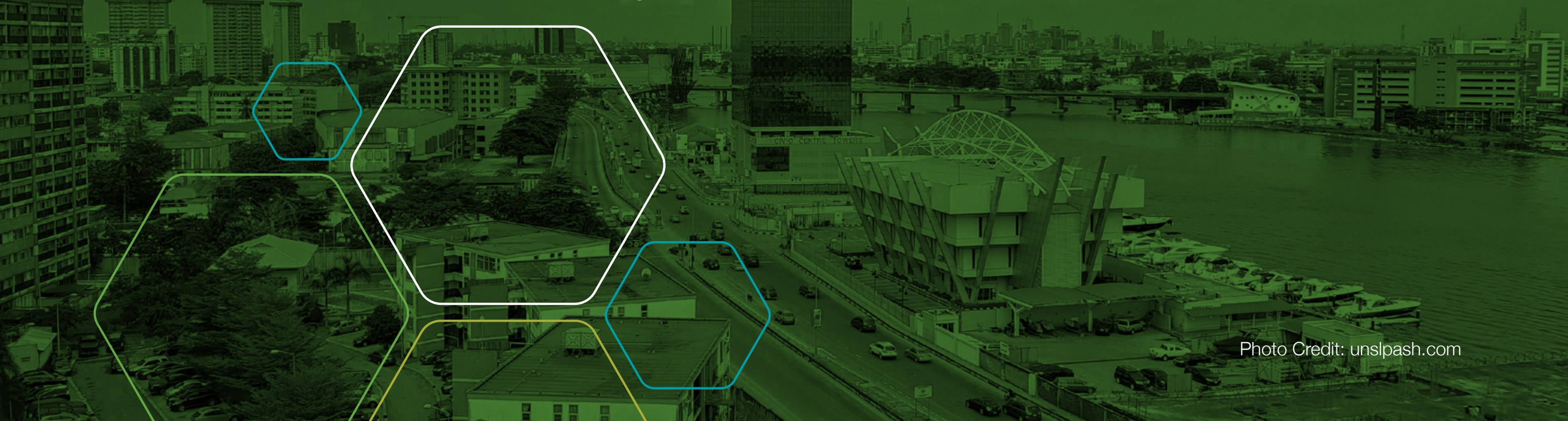

Photo Credit: unslpash.com

The Multifaceted Landscape of Nigerian Philanthropy

Nigeria's philanthropic landscape is characterized by a complex and multifaceted environment, marked by a blend of longstanding traditions and emerging trends. This landscape comprises several key features:

Strong Traditions of Informal Giving

Informal giving practices are deeply embedded within Nigerian culture. Community-based "esusu" savings and credit systems, along with religious giving, are integral parts of social fabric.[124] Additionally, to further enunciate the state of the philanthropy ecosystem in Nigeria, the African Philanthropy Forum (APF) conducted a comprehensive study titled "Scanning the Philanthropy Ecosystem in Nigeria," released in 2023. This research, commissioned by APF and executed by the Nigeria Network of NGOs with support from the Ford Foundation, offers an in-depth analysis of Nigeria's philanthropic landscape. The study, amongst many other aspects, offers different findings, including generational engagement. It identifies Generation X (born 1965–1980) as the most active group in Nigerian philanthropy, accounting for 40.3% of all foundations. They are followed by Generation Y (1981–1996) at 39.8%, Baby Boomers (1946–1964) at 32.4%, the Silent Generation (1928–1945) at 6.2%, and Generation Z (1997–2012) at 2.5%. As pertains to demographics, philanthropists in Nigeria are predominantly male (59.7%) and Christian (72.2%).[125] They also noted that motivations for giving ranged from a sense of social responsibility, religious obligations, to personal experiences with societal challenges.

Furthermore, diaspora remittances play a significant role, providing vital support to local communities and families.

Growing Formal Philanthropy

Alongside these informal practices, formal philanthropy is on the rise. This growth includes an increase in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, the emergence of foundations and impact investing firms,[126] and a robust religious giving culture observed within both Christian and Islamic communities.

Challenges in Data & Transparency

However, the Nigerian philanthropic sector faces notable challenges, particularly in data collection and transparency. Difficulty in quantifying the true extent of philanthropic giving due to limited data collection is a persistent issue.[127] Additionally, there are concerns regarding transparency and accountability in some philanthropic endeavors, which can erode trust and hinder broader participation. The report from the African Philanthropy Forum also notes other challenges such as lack of coordination among philanthropic entities that ultimately hinder the growth and effectiveness of philanthropy in Nigeria.

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[124] *Financial inclusion: An African approach to financing models.* (2024, October 8). The World Economic Forum. Retrieved April 10, 2025, from https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/10/financial-inclusion-african-financing-models/

[125] Abridged Version + Philanthropy Ecosystem in Nigeria. (n.d.). African Philanthropy Forum. Retrieved May 27, 2025, from https://africanpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Scanning-the-Philanthropy-Ecosystem-in-Nigeria.pdf

[126] Christodoulou, E., & Banerjee, S. (2022). *When Two Rivers Cross: Impact Investing & Philanthropy In Nigeria*. Cambridge Judge Business School. Retrieved April 1, 2025, from https://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022-12-csp-impact-investing-nigeria.pdf

[127] *Scanning The Philanthropy Ecosystem in Nigeria.* (2024, May). African Philanthropy Forum. Retrieved April 1, 2025, from https://africanpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SCANNING-THE-PHILANTHROPY-ECOSYSTEM-IN-NIGERIA-updated-1-1.pdf

Regulatory Hurdles

Navigating the regulatory environment can be challenging for NGOs and philanthropic organizations in Nigeria. Complex legal and regulatory frameworks often impede operations, and issues related to tax exemptions and cross-border philanthropic flows further complicate the sector.

Sociopolitical Factors and Geopolitical Shifts

Sociopolitical factors and geopolitical shifts also significantly influence the landscape. Security concerns and ethnic tensions can obstruct the distribution of funding and hamper efforts toward effective social change.

Despite these multifaceted challenges, there is a growing recognition of the pivotal role that multi-stakeholder partnerships and philanthropy can play in addressing Nigeria's mounting development needs. A poignant example of this was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, where large corporations and private high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) swiftly mobilized to provide substantial funding for medical supplies and food distribution, demonstrating the potential for rapid and impactful collective action.


Image credit: Emmanuel Ikwuegbu on unsplash.com

Key Philanthropic and Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) Actors in Nigeria

Nigeria's vibrant philanthropic and development landscape is enriched by a diverse array of actors, each contributing uniquely to addressing the nation's complex challenges. Examining these key actors provides valuable insight into the dynamics of philanthropy and MSPs in the country.

1. Dangote Foundation. As one of Africa's largest private charitable foundations, the Dangote Foundation, founded by Aliko Dangote, has a broad and substantial impact across Nigeria. Its focus areas include health, education, and disaster relief. The foundation's work is characterized by large-scale initiatives, substantial financial investments, and a focus on measurable outcomes. The Dangote Foundation's work is likely documented in various annual reports and case studies available on their official website, where one can find details of their flagship projects, funding allocations, and impact assessments. They are capable of mobilizing massive *"Fuel for Growth."*

2. MTN Nigeria Foundation. The MTN Foundation serves as the Corporate Social Responsibility arm of MTN Nigeria, the country's largest telecommunications company. It is dedicated to investing in initiatives that promote education, health, and economic empowerment. The Foundation often partners with government agencies, NGOs, and community organizations to implement its projects. Reports detailing their CSR activities, project locations, and beneficiary numbers would likely be available on the MTN Nigeria or MTN Foundation websites. They can use their marketing reach to increase the profile of local initiatives.

3. Tony Elumelu Foundation. The Tony Elumelu Foundation is well known for its focus on empowering young African entrepreneurs, including many from Nigeria. TEF provides seed funding, business training, mentorship, and networking opportunities through its flagship Entrepreneurship Programme. The foundation's approach aims to stimulate economic growth and job creation across Africa. Information regarding the annual cohort of entrepreneurs, success stories, and the overall impact of the TEF programme can be found in their annual reports and impact assessments published on their website. Their engagement with local businesses ensures that their initiatives are addressing market needs. They are also developing future local philanthropists.

4. Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC). CISLAC is a prominent Nigerian non-governmental organization that focuses on advocacy for good governance, transparency, and accountability. Through research, public awareness campaigns, and legislative engagement, CISLAC works to address corruption and promote democratic principles. Their reports on corruption, governance, and public finance are often published and publicly accessible on their website or partner platforms. As an organization that stands as a watchdog, it's important they are supported. They can provide balance to MSPs.

5. The Impact Investors Foundation (IIF), formerly known as the Impact Investing Alliance of Nigeria (IIAN), IIF was founded in 2019 as a multi-sector collaborative comprising the Ford Foundation, Africa Capital Alliance, BusinessDay Media, Bank of Industry and Dalberg Advisors. IIF engages and collaborates with key stakeholders, active in the impact investing space, to unlock private capital for social investments in Nigeria. The overarching goal is to promote the growth and excellence of impact investing in Nigeria.

6. The Nigeria Philanthropy Office (NPO) is a private-led coordinating office, located in the Office of the Vice President to drive high level catalytic philanthropic support for MSMEs for targeted sectors that have high job creation potential.The Office, in partnership with The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) makes it easier for Nigeria to achieve its job creation goals by working with private sectors, donors, Impact investors, financial institutions and foundation. The various partners include: Aspire Coronation Trust (ACT) Foundation, Foundation for Partnership Initiative in the Niger delta (PIND), Odu'a Investments Limited, Ugwumba Foundation, Founders Institute, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), and Catalyst Now.

7. I-Philanthropy is an initiative of the Nigeria Office for Philanthropy and Impact Investing to democratizes philanthropic giving by enabling individuals to become Philanthropists through small donations towards Job Creation and supporting MSMEs in the Fashion, Furniture, Sustainable Agriculture and Renewable Energy. I-Philanthropists can decide the sector or State in Nigeria they would like to support and tracking their giving periodically.

8. Numerous Faith Based Organisations & NGOs. Nigeria has a diverse and active range of FBOs and NGOs, contributing to various sectors such as education, healthcare, social welfare, and community development. These organizations range from large, established entities to smaller, grassroots initiatives. Examples include Christian organizations affiliated with denominations such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Catholic Church charities, and Islamic organizations such as the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI). Reports, newsletters, and project descriptions can be found on the respective websites of these FBOs and NGOs. The FBOs bring deep spiritual engagement and connection with communities. The NGOs bring practical experience of service delivery.

9. Many local community development associations. At the grassroots level, local Community Development Associations (CDAs) play a critical role in addressing specific needs and challenges within their communities. These associations often focus on infrastructure development, basic services provision, and local economic empowerment. Funding for CDAs frequently comes from community contributions, member dues, and diaspora remittances. Information on CDAs can be found through local government offices, community centers, or neighborhood associations. They bring local knowledge, networks and accountability to MSPs.

These actors collectively illustrate the multifaceted nature of Nigeria's philanthropic and MSP landscape. Large foundations like Dangote Foundation and MTN demonstrate corporate engagement at scale, while TEF focuses on entrepreneurial development. CISLAC plays an important role in advocating for transparency and accountability, while FBOs and NGOs bring essential community-level services and outreach. CDAs show the importance of local, grassroots-level efforts.


Photo Credit: freepik.com

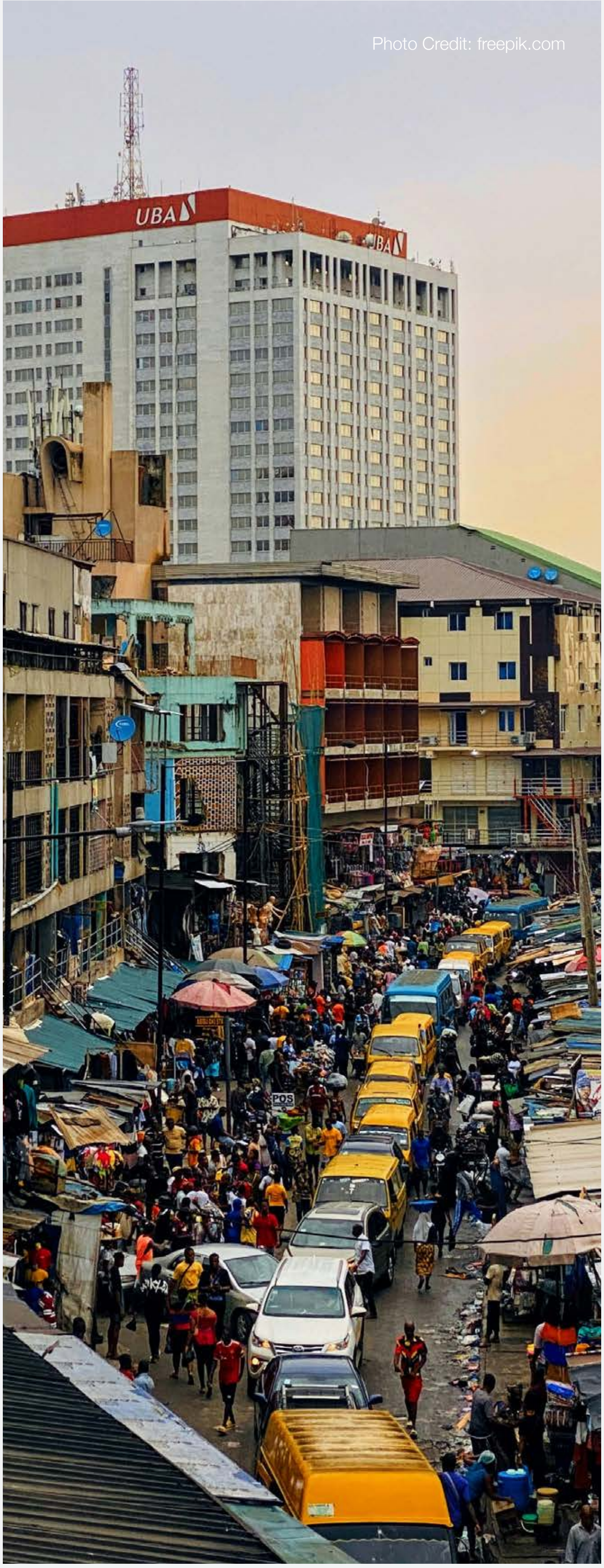
Photo Credit: freepik.com

Challenges Facing the Philanthropy Ecosystem in Nigeria

To understand the full potential and realized impact of philanthropy in Nigeria, it is imperative to first examine the significant challenges[128] that currently hinder the growth and development of philanthropic actors. These obstacles act as considerable constraints on the sector's ability to effectively address pressing social needs.

Data Gaps and Scarcity

One of the most pressing issues is the significant data gaps and scarcity of information regarding organizations and initiatives in need of funding. The absence of a central, vetted repository for such data profoundly affects the direction and efficiency of philanthropic funding and activities. This lack of accessible information creates an environment where potential donors struggle to identify credible and impactful projects.

Poor Governance and Lack of Transparency

Poor governance practices and a lack of transparency within both philanthropic entities and organizations seeking funding create an environment of mistrust, significantly inhibiting funding flows. This lack of transparency erodes confidence among potential donors and beneficiaries alike, creating a vicious cycle where promising initiatives struggle to gain traction.

Burdensome Regulatory and Legal Frameworks

The regulatory and legal frameworks surrounding philanthropic giving in Nigeria are often described as burdensome. Complex procedures and unclear guidelines can deter both local and international actors from engaging in philanthropic activities. These hurdles can stifle innovation and hinder the establishment of new initiatives.

Overreliance on a Few Funding Sources

A general overreliance on a limited number of funding sources makes the sector highly vulnerable to funding disruptions. This lack of diversification means that any changes in the priorities or availability of major funders can have severe repercussions, potentially leading to the collapse of vital programs and initiatives.

Corruption at Multiple Levels

Corruption, present at multiple levels – both local and national – significantly hampers development efforts and reduces the effectiveness of philanthropic activities. Corruption diverts resources, undermines accountability, and discourages genuine engagement, creating a major obstacle to the achievement of philanthropic goals.

The State Of Catalytic Capital

Catalytic capital in Nigeria plays a crucial role in bridging funding gaps and driving growth in key sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, and technology. While there is clear evidence of its positive impact, challenges remain in fully leveraging this form of capital for sustainable development.

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Role and Impact of Catalytic Capital

1. Economic Growth. Capital market operations, including market capitalization and new financial instruments, have a significant and positive effect on Nigeria's economic growth and GDP.[129] Effective capital market operations mobilize long-term funds, support business expansion, and facilitate productive investments in both public and private sectors.[130]

2. Closely related, the **emergence of Impact Investing firms and funds is also notable**. The development and application of advanced catalytic materials and nanozymes[131] are driven by societal needs, including healthcare and environmental sustainability, which aligns with the mission of impact investors seeking social and environmental return.[132]

3. The rapid evolution of nanotechnologies and biosensories in healthcare, agriculture, and diagnostics demonstrates **increased investment and interest in technology-driven start-ups and new businesses**.[133]

4. Sectoral Development. Investments in human capital, particularly in health and education, are strongly linked to increases in real GDP. Government expenditure in these areas accounts for a substantial portion of economic growth, highlighting the catalytic effect of targeted capital allocation.[134] There is a clear need for catalytic capital to address underfunding and disruptions in these sectors. The **influence of the oil industry and energy sector[135]**, particularly, remains a major area for catalytic applications and investment, indicating that oil continues to shape the direction of funding and capital allocation in Nigeria.

5. Manufacturing and Private Enterprise. The capital market acts as a catalyst for manufacturing growth, with market capitalization positively impacting sector output. Nigerian private enterprise has also advanced significantly, demonstrating the potential for domestic capital to drive long-term accumulation and production.[136,137]

6. Role of Development Finance Institutions and International Organizations. International collaboration and the involvement of global organizations are emphasized in advancing catalytic science and technology for sustainable growth, reflecting the importance of development finance institutions and international organizations in providing catalytic capital.[138]

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Some considerations

1. Funding Gaps. Despite the positive trends, critical sectors like healthcare and manufacturing still face underfunding and instability, underscoring the need for more innovative and transparent financing mechanisms.[139]

2. Policy and Market Environment. The effectiveness of catalytic capital is influenced by the broader policy and economic environment. Recommendations include increasing budgetary allocations to key sectors, improving transparency in fund usage, and creating a more conducive environment for both domestic and foreign investors.[140]

In summary, we confirm the acute need for Catalytic capital in Nigeria's economic transformation, especially in critical sectors, the rise of impact investing, and the pivotal role of international organizations, growing tech investment and the continued investment of oil on funding trends. While its positive effects are evident, maximizing its potential requires targeted investments, policy reforms, and improved transparency to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth.

Photo Credit: Mathurin Napoly Matnapo on unsplash.com

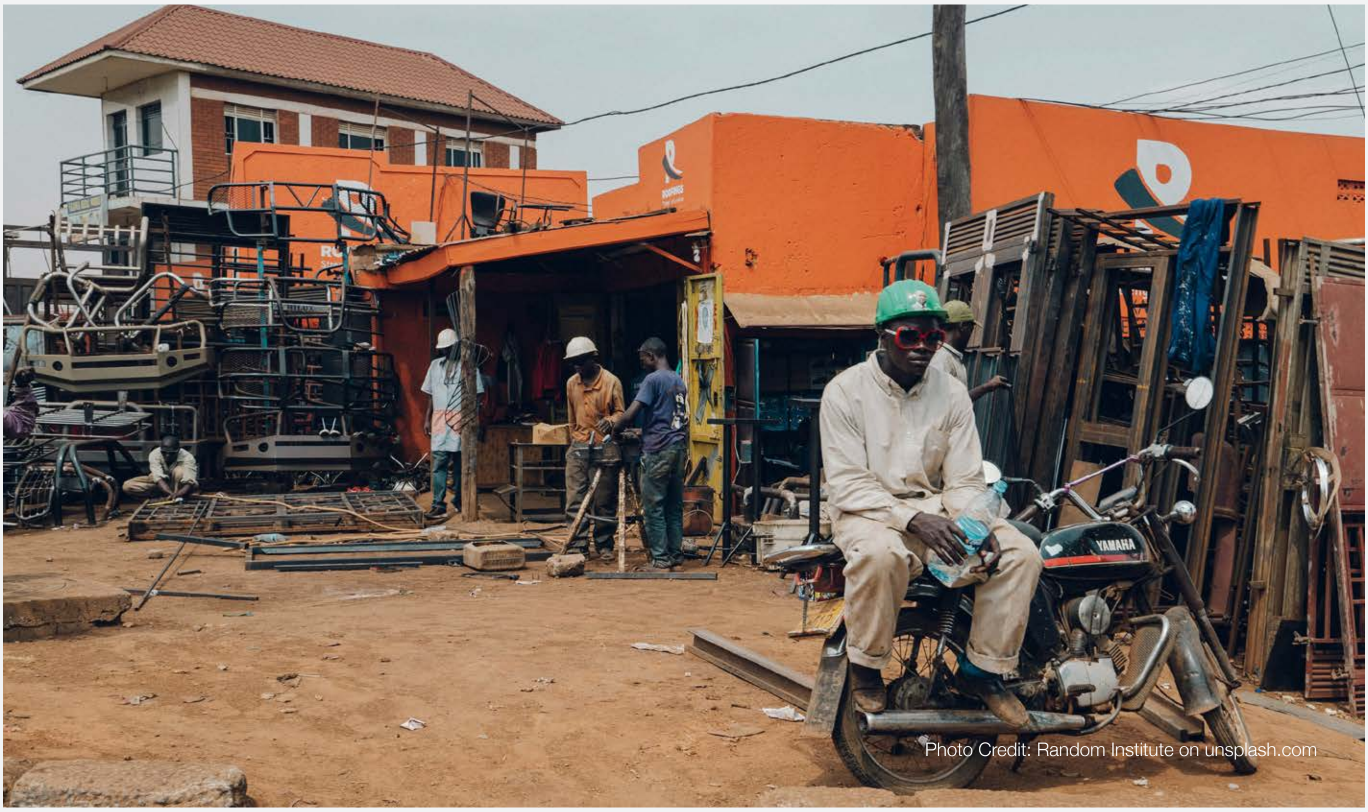

Photo Credit: Random Institute on unsplash.com

State Of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) are increasingly recognized as essential for achieving complex development goals like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the AU Agenda 2063. The research highlights both the growing momentum behind these collaborations and the persistent challenges they face.

1. Growing Recognition and Focus on Collaboration. There is a clear rise in the acknowledgement of the importance of partnerships between government, private and philanthropic entities in achieving development goals.[141,142,143,144]

2. Focus on SDGs and AU Agenda 2063. Many initiatives now prioritise multi-stakeholder partnerships as a core strategy for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and AU Agenda 2063, leveraging the strengths and resources of diverse actors to address sustainability challenges.[145]

3. Balancing power dynamics and representation. Even when partnerships are well-structured, challenges remain in ensuring equitable representation and balancing power among stakeholders. Issues such as fragmented understanding of goals, dominance by certain actors, and difficulties in aligning diverse interests are common.[146,147,148]

5. Need for Better Governance and Structures. Effective MSPs require governance frameworks, with well-defined roles and responsibilities for each partner. The literature emphasizes the need for improved decision making processes, transparent communication, and mechanisms to coordinate and monitor collaborative activities.[149]

In summary, Multi-stakeholder partnerships are vital for sustainable development, with growing recognition of their value. However, to maximize their impact, ongoing attention to governance, equitable participation, and clear role definition is essential.

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Conclusion and Feed Forward: Nigeria Analysis

Nigeria's philanthropic environment presents a study in contrasts, characterized by both immense potential and considerable hurdles. As Africa's most populous nation with a significant youth demographic, the country possesses a dynamic human capital base capable of driving substantial innovation and social change. The strong cultural roots of **informal giving**, the growing **formal philanthropy**, and the emergence of **impact investing** firms signal a sector poised for expansion.

However, the challenges are equally substantial. **Regulatory complexities**, **pervasive data gaps**, and issues with **transparency** erode trust and hinder effective resource allocation. The significant **reliance on the oil industry** for economic sustenance continues to shape funding priorities, potentially diverting attention from critical social sectors. Furthermore, **sociopolitical instability** and **security concerns** compound the challenges, impeding the effective distribution of resources and hampering the reach of philanthropic initiatives.

For Nigeria to fully leverage its philanthropic potential, it must strategically address these entrenched issues. The transition from informal to formalized giving requires **support for regulatory clarity and capacity building**. Catalytic capital, while increasingly recognized, needs to be directed with greater **precision and transparency**, ensuring it reaches sectors most in need and generates sustainable impact. The burgeoning interest in multi-stakeholder partnerships must be matched with **robust governance structures and equitable power dynamics** to foster genuine collaboration.

Overall, Nigeria's philanthropic sector stands at a pivotal point, demanding a shift from fragmented efforts to a more coordinated, transparent, and strategically aligned approach. The resilience shown during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates Nigeria's innate capacity for collective action. To build on this, it is vital to develop a philanthropic ecosystem that is less reliant on external influences, activates local capital, and is driven by Nigerian solutions for Nigerian challenges.

Photo Credit: freepik.com

MSPs in Nigeria must act decisively and rapidly.

To transform Nigeria’s philanthropic ecosystem and effectively mobilize catalytic capital, we propose the following focused feed forward considerations.

Implement Regulatory Reform and Data Transparency. Immediately overhaul the regulatory framework to create clarity and accessibility. Establish a national, centralized data repository for philanthropic initiatives, ensuring data is public, updated, and accessible in local languages. Address corruption in parallel through robust audits and oversight. Streamline rules and get data flowing.

Activate Local Capital and Diversify Funding. Develop and execute a national strategy to mobilize domestic resources, engage the diaspora, and foster innovative finance models. Reduce oil dependency and focus on diversifying funding sources. Engage local investors now with incentives and clear guidance. Stop relying, start activating.

Strengthen Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) Governance and Youth Engagement. Create and enforce clear MSP governance frameworks, including equitable power dynamics and clearly defined roles. Simultaneously, integrate and empower youth in all initiatives; establish advisory groups for large funders. Build fair partnerships and hand over the reigns to the next generation.

Empower Local Capacity and Innovation. Shift from ‘capacity building’ to ‘capacity empowerment,’ where local organizations lead and define their needs. Establish accessible hubs for training and mentorship. Implement performance-based subgranting and encourage tech-driven solutions for social challenges. Support real, local solutions.

Ensure Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation. Establish consistent, transparent monitoring and evaluation systems. Regularly review and adapt policies and strategies, utilizing feedback and data to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Make this data public. Measure impact and always improve.

It is time to move beyond discussions and strategies. We must activate the feedforward now! It is time to free the people-powered private, philanthropic and public sector partnerships in Nigeria and create sustainable social transformation. The time for analysis is finished, the time for action is here!

Senegal

Overview of Senegal

Senegal, located on the westernmost point of the African continent, is renowned for its political stability and rich cultural heritage.

Senegal is a multiparty republic. The 2001 constitution provides for a strongly centralized presidential regime—the head of state is the president, who is elected by direct universal adult suffrage and can be elected to two five-year terms. Senegal is divided into 14 *régions*, which in turn are divided into *départements and arrondissements*. Each région is administered by a governor whose role is coordinative and who is assisted by two deputy governors, one dealing with administration and the other with development.

As of 2025, the nation boasts a population of approximately 18 million, with Dakar serving as its bustling capital and economic center. The economy is diversified across sectors such as agriculture, mining, services, and a burgeoning tourism industry, all contributing significantly to the country's GDP.

Strategically positioned along the Atlantic coast, Senegal functions as a pivotal hub for trade and investment within the West African region. Despite consistent economic growth over the past decade, the country continues to confront challenges including poverty, inequality, limited industrialization, and insufficient access to essential services like healthcare, education, and clean water. High youth unemployment rates, regional disparities, and vulnerabilities to climate change, especially in rural and coastal areas, further compound these issues. To address these challenges, the Senegalese government introduced the Plan Sénégal Émergent (PSE) in 2014, a strategic framework aimed at achieving economic emergence by 2035 through structural transformation, human capital development, and improved governance.[150]

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Photo Credit: Omoniyi David on unsplash.com

Key Aspects of the Philanthropy Environment in Senegal

Philanthropy in Senegal is characterized by a blend of traditional charitable practices, diaspora contributions, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and an increasing focus on strategic social investments. The legal and regulatory framework governing philanthropy is still evolving, primarily addressing non-profit organizations and offering limited tax incentives for CSR activities. This nascent framework often presents bureaucratic challenges that can hinder the formalization and operation of philanthropic organizations.[151]

Religious organizations, particularly Islamic charities, play a significant role in providing support for health and education initiatives, reflecting the country's cultural and religious values. Additionally, the Senegalese diaspora substantially contributes to the philanthropic sector through remittances. In 2024, remittances were estimated at approximately $2.5 billion, accounting for nearly 10% of Senegal's GDP. These funds predominantly originate from Senegalese expatriates in Europe and North America and support various social initiatives, including education, healthcare, and community development projects.[152] However, relying on informal channels for these transfers can limit the scope and sustainability of philanthropic activities.

The philanthropic ecosystem in Senegal remains fragmented, with limited coordination among various actors including the government, private sector, international donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). While traditional charitable giving remains prominent, there is growing interest in adopting more structured and strategic approaches to philanthropy. Corporate philanthropy is also emerging as a notable trend, particularly among large companies engaged in CSR activities. However, challenges related to transparency, accountability, and monitoring persist.[153]

Photo Credit: freepik.com

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Challenges Facing the Philanthropy Ecosystem in Senegal

The philanthropy ecosystem in Senegal faces several challenges, including:

Limited data on philanthropic flows and social investments, hampering strategic planning and evaluation of philanthropic activities. This lack of data transparency also makes it difficult to measure the effectiveness of interventions, especially those implemented by smaller, local organizations.

Fragmentation within the ecosystem, with limited collaboration among stakeholders across various sectors including the government, private sector, and civil society organizations. The absence of coordinated efforts results in inefficiencies and programming overlaps.

Challenges in mobilizing local resources, as philanthropy is often perceived as externally driven, particularly by international NGOs and donors. This perception undermines local ownership and leadership in addressing pressing social challenges.

Inadequate policy frameworks that do not sufficiently encourage private sector engagement or the development of innovative funding mechanisms such as blended finance and catalytic capital. Additionally, policies related to tax incentives for philanthropy remain underdeveloped, discouraging greater participation from private sector entities.

The impact of political and economic instability on the sustainability of social initiatives, particularly those that rely on international donor support. Periodic political unrest and economic downturns exacerbate existing inequalities and hinder the progress of philanthropic efforts.

Limited engagement of local communities in decision-making processes, leading to interventions that may not fully align with the needs and priorities of beneficiaries. This disconnect often results in donor-driven approaches that lack sustainability.

Insufficient infrastructure for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of philanthropic initiatives, resulting in a lack of accountability and transparency. This challenge is compounded by the limited availability of digital tools and resources to support data collection and analysis.

Photo Credit: freepik.com

The State of Catalytic Capital in Senegal

Catalytic capital, intended to de-risk investments and attract additional funding through blended finance, remains underutilized in Senegal. While there is growing awareness of the need for innovative financing mechanisms, existing initiatives often lack scale, coordination, and the necessary framework to generate substantial social impact. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are commonly observed, especially in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and agriculture. Despite these efforts, there remains a disconnect between financial investments and measurable social impacts, primarily due to inadequate alignment of investment strategies with social objectives.

According to the African Climate Foundation, catalytic capital serves as a critical instrument for attracting private investment into high-risk sectors that may not initially offer competitive financial returns. It can unlock additional resources by demonstrating proof-of-concept, de-risking investments, or creating new markets. However, in Senegal, the use of catalytic capital is still nascent, with many initiatives lacking scale and strategic oversight. Effective coordination among stakeholders is a significant challenge, particularly given the diverse range of actors involved in these initiatives, including international donors, private investors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies.[154]

A significant development in this area is Senegal's $2.7 billion Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), aimed at accelerating the country's transition to a low-carbon economy. This initiative, supported by international donors such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, and other bilateral partners, seeks to increase the share of renewable energies in Senegal's electricity mix to 40% by 2030. The JETP represents a critical step in mobilizing catalytic capital to address climate change and promote sustainable economic growth.

Additionally, the African Development Bank's Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) has been instrumental in providing technical assistance, concessional financing, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening Senegal's ability to attract catalytic capital. The ACCF has supported various projects, including efforts to enhance climate resilience, improve renewable energy infrastructure, and promote sustainable agricultural practices. According to the AfDB, the ACCF has mobilized over $38.6 million across 30 projects in 26 African countries, including Senegal.[155]

The African Climate Foundation's 2023 report underscores the importance of integrating catalytic capital with other innovative financing mechanisms to achieve maximum impact. It also emphasizes the need for institutional capacity building, knowledge sharing, and policy advocacy to ensure the effective deployment of catalytic capital in Senegal.


Photo Credit: freepik.com

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The State of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) in Senegal


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Multi-stakeholder partnerships in Senegal typically involve collaborations between government entities, civil society organizations, international donors, and, increasingly, the private sector. These partnerships are prevalent in sectors such as health, education, agriculture, and climate resilience. For instance, the National Committee on Climate Change (COMNACC) and the World Food Programme's Strategic Plan emphasize strong partnerships with national agricultural stakeholders, including government entities and the private sector, to enhance food security and resilience. Despite some successes, these partnerships often face challenges related to coordination, accountability, alignment of diverse stakeholder interests, and the sustainability of interventions.

The absence of clear frameworks for partnership governance and resource allocation often results in inefficient project implementation. Moreover, power imbalances among stakeholders can create barriers to effective collaboration, particularly when international donors and government entities dominate decision-making processes.


Photo Credit: freepik.com

Analysis of the Policy and Political Environment in Senegal: Implications for Catalytic Capital and Philanthropic Frameworks

Senegal is widely regarded as one of Africa's most politically stable countries, with a history of peaceful transitions of power and democratic governance. Since gaining independence from France in 1960, Senegal has maintained a relatively stable political landscape, marked by regular elections, constitutional reforms, and adherence to democratic principles. The country operates under a semi-presidential system where executive power is shared between the President and the Prime Minister. However, recent constitutional reforms have shifted more power towards the presidency, enhancing executive control over key policy decisions.

Political stability in Senegal has been instrumental in attracting foreign investment and promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships. The country's consistent governance framework provides a conducive environment for philanthropic investments, particularly those involving catalytic capital aimed at social impact. This is further reinforced by Senegal's strategic regional affiliations with organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU), which enhance its political legitimacy and collaborative potential.

Despite its reputation for political stability, Senegal's political environment is not without challenges. Issues such as political patronage, corruption, and regional disparities continue to affect governance and public trust. While Dakar and other urban centers have experienced rapid economic growth, rural areas remain marginalized, with limited access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Additionally, power struggles between the executive and opposition parties during election periods can lead to tensions that undermine broader policy coherence and implementation.

Furthermore, the lack of coordination mechanisms between various government entities, private sector actors, and civil society organizations has been identified as a significant barrier to effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. Weak governance structures at the local level often impede the implementation of philanthropic initiatives, particularly those aimed at addressing complex social challenges through catalytic capital and innovative financing mechanisms.

Senegal's political environment offers both challenges and opportunities for strengthening the philanthropic ecosystem. On one hand, effective governance and political stability are essential prerequisites for fostering an enabling environment for philanthropy and multi-stakeholder partnerships. On the other hand, political fragmentation, inadequate policy coherence, and limited inclusivity in decision-making processes hinder progress towards building resilient and inclusive partnerships.

Photo Credit: freepik.com

Policy Environment and Catalytic Capital Frameworks

Senegal's policy environment is shaped by the government's development blueprint, the Plan Sénégal Emergent (PSE), launched in 2014. The PSE aims to achieve economic emergence by 2035 through structural transformation, industrialization, improved infrastructure, and enhanced human capital. It is divided into several phases, with the first phase (2014–2018) focused on foundational reforms, while the second phase (2019–2023) emphasizes consolidating growth and promoting social inclusion.

The PSE outlines several key policy priorities, providing a structured framework that aligns with broader philanthropic goals and the deployment of catalytic capital. While the PSE focuses primarily on economic growth and industrialization, it also emphasizes the importance of fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs) and utilizing innovative financing mechanisms to accelerate social development. This is particularly relevant to the philanthropic ecosystem, where the integration of catalytic capital is increasingly being recognized as a critical tool for de-risking social investments, enhancing scalability, and unlocking further private funding for impact.

The Plan Sénégal Emergent (PSE) serves as the cornerstone policy framework influencing the landscape of catalytic capital deployment. However, Senegal lacks a dedicated national framework or strategy that specifically addresses the role of catalytic capital in development. This gap undermines efforts to effectively harness philanthropic investments to drive large-scale social impact. Existing policies, while ambitious, often do not adequately integrate or align with innovative financing mechanisms such as catalytic capital, which could be instrumental in bridging funding gaps for critical sectors like education, healthcare, and renewable energy. Additionally, there is no formalized coordination mechanism between philanthropic organizations, government agencies, and private investors, which further limits the effectiveness and scalability of philanthropic initiatives.

The absence of a comprehensive catalytic capital framework has led to fragmented efforts, where private philanthropic organizations and international donors pursue isolated initiatives with limited coordination. This lack of integration presents challenges for scaling successful projects and achieving broader social outcomes. Enhanced policy coherence and alignment with the strategic objectives of the PSE could greatly improve the ability of catalytic capital to unlock additional private sector funding for social impact. Its alignment with the broader goals of social impact, sustainability, and inclusivity offers opportunities for philanthropists and investors to contribute to national development goals. However, the absence of a dedicated catalytic capital policy framework presents challenges in terms of policy coherence and effective implementation.

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Furthermore, Senegal lacks a comprehensive philanthropic framework that specifically addresses the integration of catalytic capital into national development plans. Despite the recognition of catalytic capital as a tool for de-risking investments and enhancing scalability, the absence of a structured framework creates barriers to its effective deployment. Key challenges include insufficient policy coherence, lack of formal coordination mechanisms between stakeholders, and limited awareness among policymakers of the potential of catalytic capital to drive systemic change. As a result, philanthropic investments often remain fragmented and lack the strategic oversight necessary to achieve lasting impact.

Developing a clear policy framework that integrates catalytic capital within the broader philanthropic ecosystem would provide critical guidance for investors, donors, and government agencies. While various policies touch upon relevant aspects of financial inclusion, poverty alleviation, and sustainable growth, there is a need for a more coordinated approach that explicitly recognizes the role of catalytic capital as a mechanism to bridge funding gaps and drive systemic change. Philanthropy in Senegal continues to operate within a fragmented policy landscape, which limits its effectiveness and scalability.

The PSE outlines several key policy priorities, including:

Economic Growth and Industrialization: Promoting agricultural modernization, industrial development, and diversification of the economy.

Infrastructure Development: Improving transportation networks, energy infrastructure, and digital connectivity.

Human Capital Development: Enhancing access to quality education, healthcare, and social protection systems.

Environmental Sustainability: Promoting green growth and resilience to climate change, particularly through initiatives like the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

Good Governance and Institutional Reforms: Strengthening public administration, combating corruption, and promoting transparency and accountability.

The PSE has been praised for providing a coherent framework for economic growth and development. However, critics argue that the policy's implementation has been uneven, with disparities between urban and rural areas persisting. Furthermore, some stakeholders have raised concerns about the lack of inclusiveness in the policymaking process, particularly regarding consultation with civil society organizations and grassroots communities.

Political Challenges and Opportunities

Political challenges in Senegal include frequent power struggles between the executive and opposition parties, particularly during election periods. While the country has largely avoided large-scale political violence, instances of civil unrest have occurred, often driven by economic grievances, youth unemployment, and perceived corruption among political elites.

Opportunities within the political environment include the government's commitment to democratic governance and institutional reforms aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability. Additionally, Senegal's strategic position within the West African region and its membership in organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) provide opportunities for regional collaboration and policy alignment.

The policy and political environment in Senegal have significant implications for the philanthropic ecosystem. Effective governance, stable political conditions, and supportive policies are essential for fostering an enabling environment for philanthropy, catalytic capital, and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Continued progress in implementing the PSE and addressing governance challenges will be crucial for enhancing social investment flows and achieving sustainable development goals.

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9

Comparative Trends and Insights: Charting the Complexities of Pan-African MSP Ecosystems

Executive Summary of Key Findings and Implications

A comprehensive synthesis of country-specific analyses, quantitative survey findings, and qualitative data from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) across Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal reveals a web of shared challenges, nuanced divergences, and burgeoning opportunities within the Pan-African Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) ecosystem. These insights provide not merely a descriptive snapshot but a critical analytical framework, crucial for stakeholders seeking to navigate this intricate terrain and optimize the deployment of catalytic capital for sustainable impact. This chapter aims to distill these findings into a resonant narrative that informs strategy and catalyzes actionable change.

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Pan-African MSP Landscape.

Key Partnerships & Capital Mobilisation.

Senegal

Sector: Health

Prominent MSP
Société Générale (hospital rebuilds via consortium)

Capital mobilisation:
USD 230m

Sector: Agriculture

Prominent MSP
Crédit Agricole & Senegal govt in peanut/ sugar PPPs

Capital mobilisation:
USD 1,100m

Ghana

Sector: Health

Prominent MSP
Ghana COVID-19 Private Sector Fund

Capital mobilisation:
USD 0.6m

Sector: Agriculture

Prominent MSP
COCOBOD-Barry Callebaut; Savannah Zone & OVCF

Capital mobilisation:
USD 91m

Sector: Manufacturing

Prominent MSP
Miro Forestry Developments Limited (BII)

Capital mobilisation:
USD 40.15m

Nigeria

Sector: Agriculture

Prominent MSP:
Olam Nigeria, Dangote, Babban Gona PPPs

Capital mobilisation:
USD 250-500m (est.)

Kenya

Sector: Health

Prominent MSP:
GE Healthcare MES PPP across 98 hospitals

Capital mobilisation:
USD 1,000m

Sector: Health

Prominent MSP:
mPharma Data Inc (with BII & Novastar Ventures

Capital mobilisation:
USD 3m

Key Trend 1: The Ascendance of Hybridity | A Survival Strategy for Sustainability

Observation: Across the four countries, a compelling, distinct and accelerating movement towards hybrid organizational models is emerging. Entities are no longer confirmed to traditional grant-dependent philanthropic approaches. Instead, they are embracing market-based mechanisms, such as social enterprises and earned income streams.

What the Data Tells Us: The research shows that organizational hybridity, characterized by engagement in diverse MSPs has emerged as a fundamental survival strategy within the development sector. This is evidenced by the high prevalence of organizations operating as NGOs/Non-profits (45%) and foundations (20%) engaging in a multifaceted array of MSPs including 70% of them being in multisector coalitions, 65% of them engaging in private-public partnerships and NGO-Government collaborations taking up 60%. The longevity of these engagements, with 45% of organizations participating in MSPs for over 10 years and 30% for 4-6 years further proves their strategic importance.

The extensive collaboration with NGOs/Non-profits (95%), Foundations (80%), and Governments (85%) within MSPs underscores a broad, inter-organizational web vital for sustained operations and impact. Furthermore, 70% of respondents reported high involvement in MSPs while 10% indicated exclusive focus, justifying that hybrid engagement is not merely supplementary but central to organizational mandates. The identification of “collaborative networks” and “strong leadership” (80%) as primary contributors to MSP success reinforces the intrinsic value of diverse, interconnected operational models for achieving resilience & effectiveness.

Inference: This shift is not merely an opportunistic whimsical experiment; it is a pragmatic and fundamental adaptive response to the turbulent reality characterized by dwindling traditional grant funding and increasing global economic volatility. Key Informants consistently emphasized the vulnerability inherent in relying on external, short-term, and often restrictive financial flows. This trend underscores a fundamental shift: organizations are proactively reconfiguring their revenue models to bolster long-term resilience and self-determination. This pivot to hybridity is a testament to African ingenuity and an acknowledgement that new solutions are required for long term success and independence.

Philanthropy actors should

- Invest in programs and initiatives that support the development and strengthening of hybrid models
- Provide technical assistance for revenue diversification strategies, including establishing social ventures and regional collaborative funding structures like string funds.

Intermediaries and implementers should

- Proactively develop plans for revenue diversification and financial resilience.
- Explore opportunities for creating distinct profit-generating branches or social ventures.
- Seek training and support in business development and financial management.

Key Trend 2. Government Engagement | A Double-Edged Sword

Observation: Governmental engagement emerges as an undeniable fulcrum upon which the efficacy and sustainability of MSPs pivot. This influence permeates various dimensions: the crafting and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks (often intricate and challenging in Kenya, Ghana, and Nigeria); direct government involvement in sector-specific initiatives (evident in the Ministry of Agriculture's role in Senegal); and the government's potential as a source of catalytic capital (21% of catalytic investment in Ghana in 2022, for instance).

What the Data Tells Us: Government engagement within MSPs presents a duality, acting as both a critical enabler and a significant impediment to collaborative development efforts. While 60% of organizations engage in NGO - Government MSPs, and governments are cited as partners by 85% of respondents, the data simultaneously reveals deep complexities. "Policy and regulatory barriers" were identified as a challenge by 40% of organizations engaging in MSPs, and by 50% of MSPs themselves. These regulatory hurdles were reported to affect MSPs "to some extent" indicating their extensive though not always debilitating, influence.

60%

of organizations engage in NGO - Government MSPs

85%

of respondents cite government as partners

Policy and regulatory barriers identified as a challenge by:

40%

of organizations engaging in MSPs

50%

of MSPs themselves

Despite these challenges, the overwhelming willingness of 70% of organizations being "extremely likely" to participate in regional policy dialogue sessions, reinforces a recognition of government engagement as indispensable for systemic change, even while acknowledging its inherent frictions and potential for hindering progress. This suggests a strategic imperative to navigate and influence the governmental landscape, despite its "double edged" nature.

Inference: Navigating bureaucratic mazes, securing policy alignment, and managing the ebb and flow of political transitions (particularly pronounced in Senegal) pose considerable obstacles. KIIs highlighted that effective government relations transcend formal agreements; they are predicated on cultivating robust personal relationships, a reality astutely grasped by MyAgro's dedicated government relations department and the Kenya Red Cross's government liaison efforts. Perceptions, political influence and potential interference are constant challenges, all underlining the importance of intentional relationship building which builds on a foundation of trust and mutual benefit.

All players in the impact investing value chain should therefore:

- Invest in dedicated government relations capacity.
- Cultivate relationships with key government officials.
- Prioritize policy advocacy and engagement strategies.
- Be prepared for political transitions and the need to rebuild relationships.

And on the other hand, Governments must:

- Streamline regulatory processes for philanthropic organizations and MSPs.
- Explore innovative models for government co-investment in catalytic capital.
- Foster open dialogue and collaboration with civil society.

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Key Trend 3. Power Dynamics | The Elephant in the Room.

Observation: Deep-seated power imbalances, particularly those existing between large international funders and local African organizations, represent a pervasive challenge within the MSP ecosystem. This asymmetry manifests in various forms: the imposition of short-term, project-based, rigid funding models; the absence of meaningful co-creation that genuinely integer local voices and priorities; and differing definitions of success and impact metrics.

What the Data Tells Us: Underlying tensions related to power dynamics, particularly concerning resource allocation and influence, appear to be a silent yet prevalent challenge within MSPs. While not explicitly named by respondents, the data provides strong inferential evidence. The disproportionate roles of "funder" (40%) versus "implementer" (25%) among partners in MSPs suggest an imbalance in leverage, where financial contributors may exert greater influence over strategic direction and operational priorities. This is further evidenced by the high prevalence of "limited access to funding" cited by 80% of respondents and "lack of resources" cited by another 60% as primary challenges faced by organizations within MSPs, and "limited financial resources" cited by 75% of respondents as a key challenge for MSPs themselves.

Imbalance in leverage:

40%
Funder

25%
Implementer

primary challenges faced by organizations within MSPs:

80%
of respondents: Limited funding

60%
of respondents: lack of resources

75%
of respondents: limited financial resources

These resource disparities can often reflect and reinforce existing power asymmetries. The reported "conflicting goals" cited by 65% of respondents within MSPs may also be a manifestation of divergent priorities rooted in unequal power distributions. Consequently, the strong demand for "stronger leadership structures" cited by 80% of respondents as an enhancement to coordination mechanisms can be interpreted as a desire for more equitable, transparent, and legitimate power distribution within collaborative frameworks.

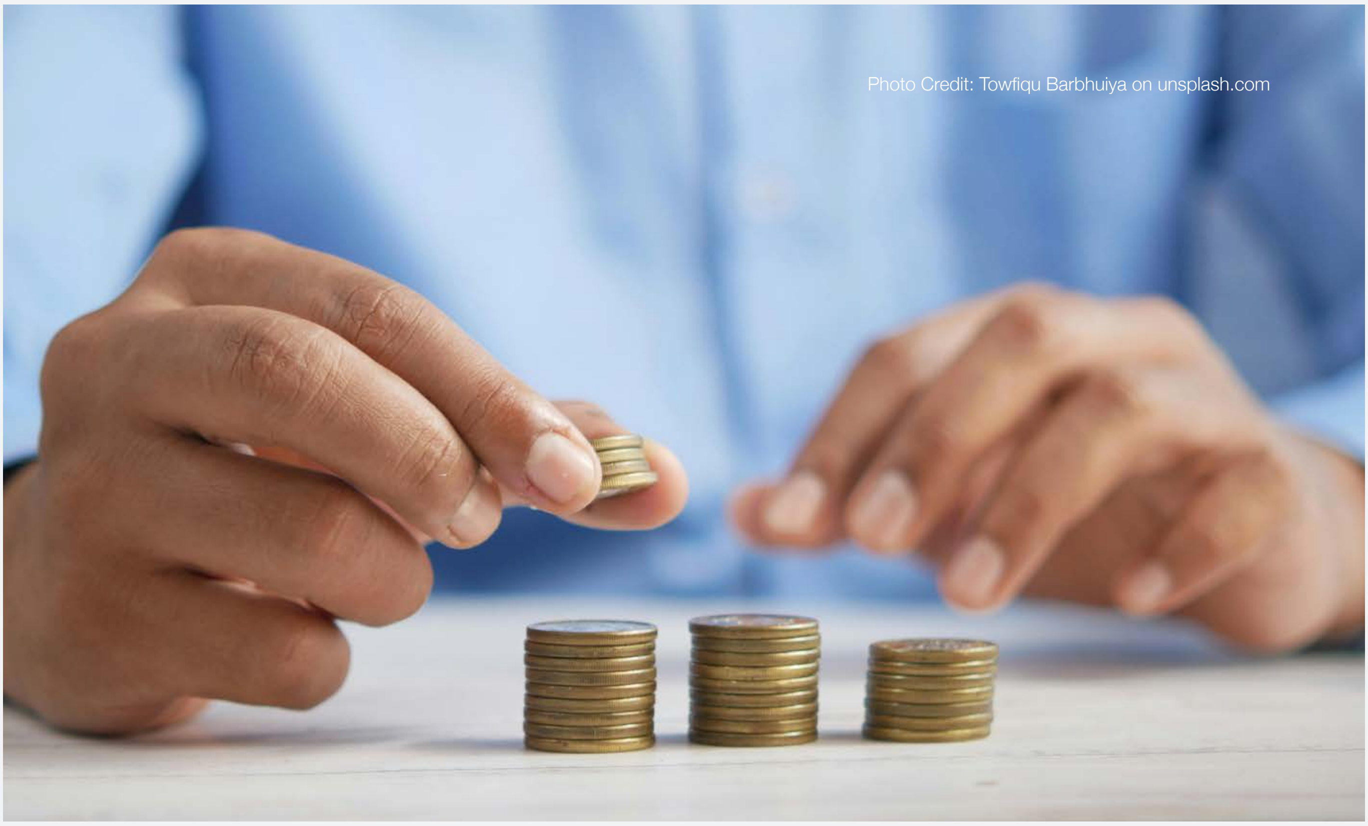
Inference: These distortions impede the development of truly equitable and impactful partnerships, often relegating local organizations to the role of implementers rather than strategic partners. Addressing these power dynamics is not an optional exercise; it is a prerequisite for fostering authentic local ownership and driving sustainable change. Intentional strategies that promote shared leadership, enhance transparency in decision-making, and cultivate mutual trust are paramount

Philanthropy should meet the moment with clear commitments:-

- Adopt more flexible and longer-term funding approaches.
- Prioritize genuine co-creation with local partners.
- Engage in dialogue to align on definitions of success and impact.
- Defend and refund capacity building and institutional strengthening for local organizations.

Local Organizations should equally play their part to meet the moment:-

- Advocate for equitable partnerships.
- Demand transparency in decision-making processes.
- Seek opportunities to build their own capacity and reduce reliance on restrictive funding models.



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Key Trend 4. The Shadow of Data Scarcity | The Silent Obstacle to Informed Action

Observation: A recurrent and pervasive lack of comprehensive, reliable, and accessible data plagues the philanthropic sector across all four nations and the region at large. This includes data on funding flows, the landscape of active organizations, and intervention impact. The absence of a centralized partner database in Kenya was specifically singled out as a major impediment, hindering the identification of potential collaborators and a clear understanding of the ecosystem.

What the Data Tells Us: The research indicates a latent but significant challenge related to data scarcity, acting as a silent hindrance to fully informed decision-making and optimal impact assessment within MSPs. While 45% of respondents rated their MSPs as "very effective" and 35% "effective", the absence of detailed metrics or systematic reporting on how effectiveness is quantitatively measured points to potential data gaps. While "knowledge sharing" is a highly successful outcome as cited by 80% of respondents, this does not necessarily translate to actionable data for scaling or replication.

The limited scalability of current MSP successes across different regions or contexts (only 20% "highly scalable", 40% "very and moderately scalable") implicitly suggests a lack of granular data on underlying success factors, hindering systematic replication. Moreover, the importance placed on "enhancing knowledge exchange platforms" cited by 50% of respondents implies a recognition of the need for improved information flow, which, when effectively structured, can mitigate data scarcity. The identified need for "enhanced digital platforms" cited by 75% of respondents as an improvement for coordination can also indirectly address data collection, analysis and dissemination deficits.

Inference: This data vacuum significantly hampers strategic planning, efficient coordination, and the optimal allocation of limited resources. Addressing this dearth is imperative towards building a more informed, agile, and effective ecosystem.

All in the Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) value chain must

Invest in robust data collection mechanisms and shared knowledge platforms.

Support the development of central databases of philanthropic organizations and initiatives.

Promote a culture of evidence-based practice and transparency.

Key Trend 5. Beyond the Checkbook | The Indispensable Value of Non-Financial Support

Observation: A consistent finding from the KIIs underscores that the constellation of support within MSPs extends far beyond fiscal capital. Successful catalytic interventions and partnerships require more than financial contributions. Non-financial support, such as technical assistance, market access facilitation, mentorship, and support for governance and legal registration, are not supplementary, but rather indispensable elements of catalytic interventions and meaningful partnership outcomes.

Observation: The findings highlight that the success and sustainability of MSPs are not solely dependent on financial capital but are significantly augmented by indispensable non-financial forms of support. While "funder" is a common role (40%), the prominent involvement of NGOs/Non-profits (95%) and the significant role of 'implementers" (25%) highlight the value of technical expertise, human capital and operational capacity. The most successful outcomes of MSPs were identified as "knowledge sharing" cited by 80% of respondents and "stakeholder engagement" cited by 65% of respondents, which are non-financial contributions.

Further, the top factors contributing to MSP successes were "collaborative networks" and "strong leadership" all of which are forms of social, human and organizational capital. Even in the deployment of catalytic capital, its effectiveness was rated as only "moderately effective" by 50% of respondents, suggesting that financial infusions alone are insufficient without parallel non-financial enablers like strong networks, coordinated efforts and robust leadership.

Inference: These non-financial aspects are often the "secret sauce" that maximizes the impact of financial capital. The strategic provision of these "soft" supports can significantly amplify the leverage and impact of financial capital, enhancing the resilience and effectiveness of local organizations.

highlight the value of technical expertise, human capital and operational capacity:

40%
are Funders

95%
are NGOs/Non-profits

25%
are Implementers

60%
of respondents:
lack of resources

The most successful outcomes of MSPs:

80%
of respondents:
knowledge sharing

65%
of respondents:
stakeholder engagement

Practically, funders, ecosystem support ventures and intermediaries should

- Integrate non-financial support into funding programs.
- Offer capacity-building workshops, mentorship opportunities, and technical assistance.

And local organizations should:

- Actively seek and leverage non-financial support.
- Identify capacity gaps and request assistance in specific areas.

Key Trend 6. Convening Power | Building Bridges and Fostering Networks

Observation: Organizations that serve as convenors and network facilitators (e.g., Trust Africa, EAPN, APN) play a critical role in strengthening the MSP ecosystem. They foster collaboration, build trust, facilitate knowledge exchange, and enable collective action through cross-sector convenings and thematic working groups.

What the Data Tells Us: Convening power of MSPs, defined as their capacity to assemble diverse stakeholders and cultivate collaborative networks, is identified as a critical enabler of their success. The high engagement in "multisector coalitions" by 70% of the respondents directly exemplified this conveying function. The broad collaboration with NGO/Non-profits at 95%, foundations at 80% and governments at 85% within MSPs demonstrates the extensive bridging of organizational divides. Success in "knowledge sharing" and "stakeholder engagement" are direct manifestations of effective convening, facilitating the exchange of insights and the deepening of relational ties. The centrality of "collaborative networks" as a factor contributing to MSP success further emphasizes the outcome of strong convening.

The high importance placed on "clear communication protocols" and "accountability mechanisms" cited as "extremely important" by 60% of respondents for successful coordination emphasize the necessity of structured approaches to maintain and strengthen these convened networks. The frequent use of "regular meetings" cited by 80% of respondents as a coordination mechanism further highlights the ongoing practice of bringing stakeholders together.

Inference: These platforms provide essential spaces for dialogue, learning, and coordinated action, transforming isolated actors into a cohesive force for change, which are often overlooked but highly impactful.

Funders focus should evolve to:

- Invest in and support convening organizations and networks.
- Recognize their crucial role in ecosystem building.

Organizations, large or small need to:

- Actively shape agenda and participate in and leverage convening platforms and networks.
- Build relationships and share knowledge.

Key Trend 7. Policy Advocacy | A Fundamental Enabler

Observation: The prevalence of complex and often obstructive regulatory landscapes across the region, coupled with specific hurdles such as unfavorable tax policies for innovative models and trade barriers, accentuates the urgent need for strategic and targeted policy advocacy.

What the Data Tells Us: Policy advocacy is recognized as a fundamental enabler for the effectiveness and sustainability of MSPs, shaping the broader environment in which they operate. The engagement of organizations in primary focus areas such as “economic empowerment” as cited by 80% of respondents, “climate and environment” as cited by 65% of respondents and “gender equality” as cited by 55% of respondents necessitates a supportive policy and regulatory landscape for impact.

The challenge of “policy and regulatory barriers” (40% cited by organizations and 50% for MSPs) directly point to the dire need for advocacy to ameliorate hampering frameworks. The overwhelming consensus on “developing regulatory frameworks” cited as “extremely important” by 70% of respondents for strengthening MSPs provides direct empirical support for the finding that policy advocacy is not merely beneficial but foundational. Further, the exceptionally high likelihood of organizations participating in regional policy dialogue sessions signifies a strategic commitment to engaging in and influencing policy discourse to create a more conducive operating environment for MSPs in Africa.

The engagement of organizations in primary focus areas:

80%

of respondents:
economic empowerment

65%

of respondents:
climate and environment

55%

of respondents:
gender equality

The challenge of “policy and regulatory barriers”:

40%

cited by organizations

50%

for MSPs

Consensus on “developing regulatory frameworks” cited as “extremely important” by:

70%

of respondents for strengthening MSPs

Inference: Crafting a more conducive legal and fiscal environment is fundamental for facilitating the formation, operation, and scaling of MSPs and philanthropic initiatives. Convening organizations and networks, given their breadth and scope, are uniquely positioned to coordinate and spearhead these critical advocacy endeavors.

Convenors and all in the Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSP) Ecosystem need to:

Support and engage in policy advocacy efforts.

Share information about regulatory challenges and best practices.

Coordinate and lead policy advocacy initiatives.

Key Trend 8. Impact Storytelling | Building Trust and Unlocking Resources

Observation: Brilliant initiatives and impactful work often fade into obscurity if their stories are not told compellingly. In the context of African philanthropy and multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs), this lack of visibility translates directly to missed opportunities for attracting vital resources and forging broader support. We've seen incredible work happening, but without effectively communicating the tangible outcomes and transformative power of these initiatives, the momentum stagnates. It's not enough to do good; you must also show the good that's being done.

What the Data Tells Us: The findings highlight the key role of impact storytelling in building trust among stakeholders and unlocking essential resources for MSPs. The high rate of reported successful outcomes through MSPs and catalytic investments, with 95% of respondents affirming with a resounding yes, provides a rich reservoir of potential narratives, while not expressly quantified as "storytelling," the areas of greatest success - knowledge sharing, stakeholder engagement and resource mobilization - are all domains where compelling narratives are important.

Effective communication of successful knowledge exchange and robust stakeholder engagement enhances credibility, thereby promoting trust. Consequently, the achievement of "resource mobilization" cited by 60% of respondents implies that organizations are to some degree effectively articulating their value proposition. The "significant" and "moderate" contribution of MSPs to organizational objectives (35%) and "complete contribution" (20%) are compelling results that, when articulated through effective storytelling, can attract further investment and engagement, thereby serving to build trust and unlock future resources.

Inference: Funders and partners need to see tangible results. Compelling stories bridge the gap between abstract goals and concrete realities, boosting confidence and unlocking support. Storytelling is a strategic tool and should not be an afterthought. It's how we demonstrate accountability, shift perceptions, and inspire action. When we showcase the human faces behind the data, we can prove impact and combat skepticism.

It's an imperative for organizations on both sides of the social/investment to:

Invest in communication. Dedicate resources to building storytelling capacity, and building platforms to share impact consistently.

Measure the metrics that truly matter. Stories. Not just numbers. Collect testimonials, case studies, and visual evidence. Humanize data to show real change.

Share engaging content and compelling narratives that showcase impact. Use infographics, short video, and interactive web content that's mobile friendly and shareable.

Partner with media and content creators to amplify your stories and reach wider audiences.

Key Trend 9. Implementation Readiness | Closing the Funding and Action Gap

Observation: Even when funding is successfully secured, challenges related to the implementation readiness of organizations and their partners can impede impact.

What the Data Tells Us: The findings reveal a glaring gap between the availability of potential access to funding and the full operational readiness for effective implementation within MSPs. This is highlighted by "limited access to funding" and "lack of resources" cited by 80% and 60% of the respondents respectively as primary challenges for organizations, coupled by "lack of technical capacity" cited by 50% of respondents as major hurdles for MSPs.

While 50% of organizations actively deploy catalytic capital, its reported effectiveness is only "moderately effective" for 40% of respondents, with a combined 15% finding it "extremely" or "very" ineffective. This suggests that the mere presence of capital does not automatically translate to optimal implementation. The significant barriers to deploying capital including "lack of funding" and "high perceived risk" cited by 75% of respondents and "limited investor interest" cited by 60% of respondents further demonstrate the systemic challenges in translating financial potential into actionable projects.

The consensus on "increasing access to catalytic capital" noted as "extremely important" by 60% of respondents for strengthening MSPs directly points to the recognized need to bridge this funding-to-action gap, emphasizing that readiness extends beyond just funds to include the capacity and enabling environment for deployment.

primary challenges for organizations:

80%

of respondents:
limited access to funding

60%

of respondents:
lack of resources

50%

of respondents:
lack of technical capacity

50% **of organizations actively deploy catalytic capital**

Effectiveness:

40%

of respondents:
moderately effective

Effectiveness:

15%

of respondents:
"extremely" or "very" ineffective.

Barriers to deploying capital include:

75%

lack of funding & high perceived risk

60%

limited investor interest

Both funders and organizations should:

Prioritize implementation planning and readiness assessments.

Address bureaucratic bottlenecks.

Ensure clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders.

Photo credit: Beks on Unsplash

Concluding Call for Collective Action and Ecosystemic Transformation

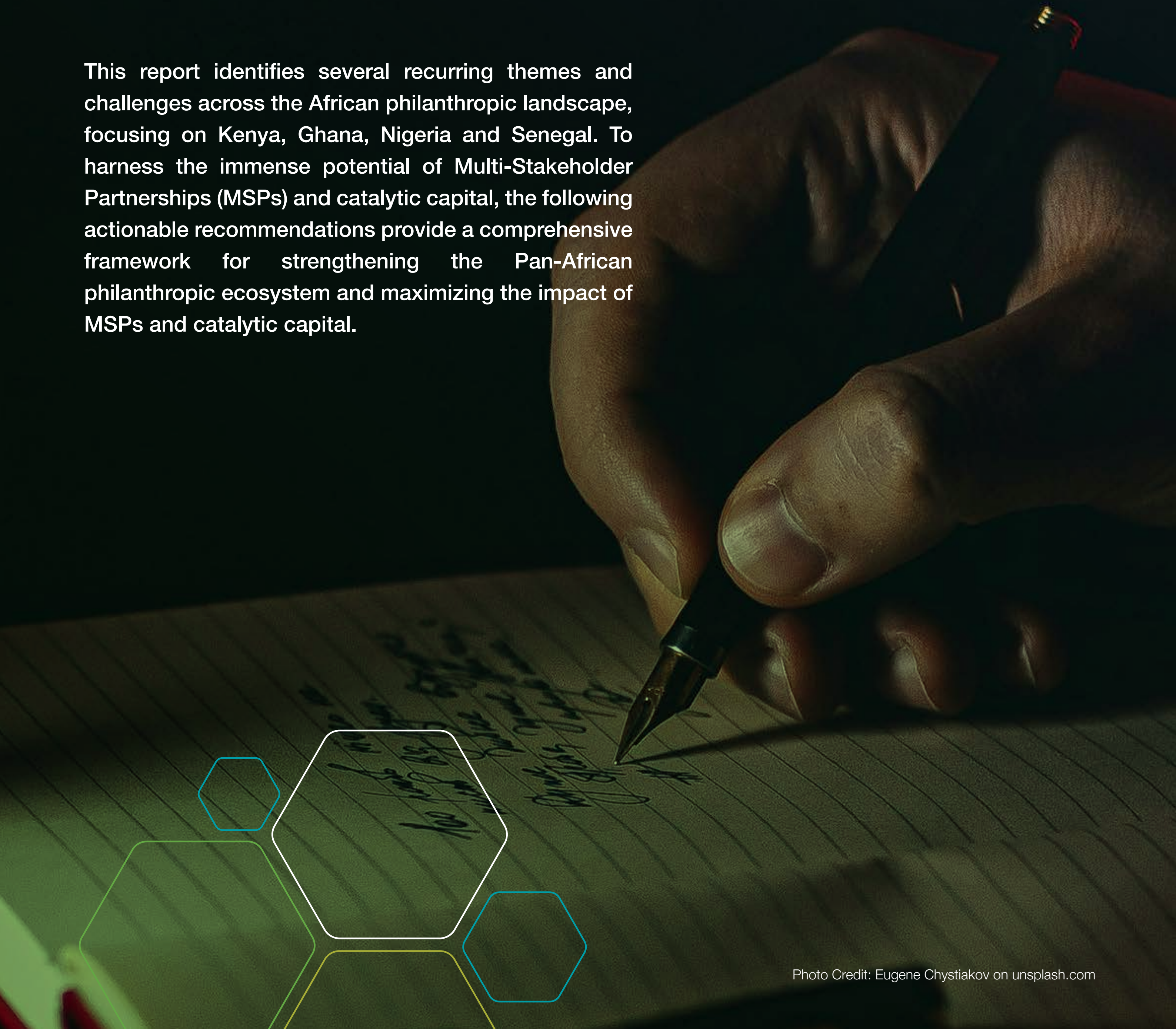
These comparative trends collectively illuminate the intricate and interconnected and multi-faceted nature of the challenges and opportunities within the Pan-African MSP ecosystem. Addressing these issues requires concerted effort from all stakeholders to foster a comprehensive, collaborative, transparent, resilient, and ultimately more impactful environment for social investment across Africa.

It is our hope that this knowledge product will go beyond being a descriptive account – and that it will serve as a clarion call and starting point for the strategic action and ecosystemic transformation.

10

Actionable recommendations for Strengthening Pan-African MSPs and Catalytic Capital

This report identifies several recurring themes and challenges across the African philanthropic landscape, focusing on Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. To harness the immense potential of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) and catalytic capital, the following actionable recommendations provide a comprehensive framework for strengthening the Pan-African philanthropic ecosystem and maximizing the impact of MSPs and catalytic capital.



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Key Action Area 1

Establish the Foundations. Focus on creating the necessary legal, regulatory, and data infrastructure for effective philanthropy

Overall Recommendation

Fostering Enabling Environments: Regulatory Reform and Data Transparency

Specific Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Streamline and Clarify Regulatory Frameworks. Governments across Africa should review and simplify the regulatory landscape governing NGOs, CSOs, and philanthropic entities. Reduce bureaucratic hurdles, clarify definitions, and ensure transparent processes for registration and operations. This includes issues related to tax exemptions and cross-border philanthropic flows.

Recommendation 2: Establish National Philanthropic Data Repositories. Develop and maintain centralized, publicly accessible data repositories with vetted information on organizations, initiatives, funding flows, and impact metrics. This enhances transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making. Data should be accessible in local languages.

Recommendation 3: Promote Data Transparency and Accountability. Mandate regular financial audits and public disclosure of funding information for all philanthropic entities. Establish independent oversight mechanisms and reporting lines for misconduct or corruption.

Key Action Area 2

Fuel The Engine. Mobilize diverse funding sources and strategically deploy catalytic capital.

Overall Recommendation

Mobilizing Resources and Catalytic Capital: Diversification and Innovation

Specific Recommendations

Recommendation 4: Diversify Funding Sources. Actively pursue funding from a broad range of donors, including private foundations, corporations, individual philanthropists, and diaspora communities. Reduce over-reliance on external donors or single industries (e.g., oil).

Recommendation 5: Activate Local Capital. Develop national strategies to encourage and mobilize domestic resources. Create incentives for local investment in social impact initiatives. Explore innovative financing models like social impact bonds, blended finance, and regional trust funds that engage local investors and maintain local control of initiatives.

Recommendation 6: Strategic Deployment of Catalytic Capital. Develop national strategies for deploying catalytic capital, focusing on critical sectors like healthcare, agriculture, technology, and entrepreneurship. This includes providing technical assistance, mentorship, and support for innovative models, with a clear focus on impact measurement. Support for the seeding of innovative ideas is critical.

Key Action Area 3

Build the Networks. Strengthen MSPs through governance, coordination and addressing power imbalances

Overall Recommendation

Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs): Governance and Collaboration

Specific Recommendations

Recommendation 7: Establish Clear MSP Governance Frameworks. Develop and enforce clear governance structures for MSPs, including defined roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, and communication protocols. Implement mechanisms for equitable representation and power sharing. Provide mandatory partnership training for those engaging in partnerships.

Recommendation 8: Enhance Coordination and Collaboration. Establish or strengthen national platforms or forums to facilitate communication, knowledge sharing, and coordination among philanthropic actors. Address duplication of efforts and promote synergy.

Recommendation 9: Address Power Imbalances. Actively address power imbalances within MSPs. Ensure that local organizations and communities are treated as equal partners and co-creators, not just implementers. Include community and local voices at every step.

Key Action Area 4

Empower the Actors. Invest in organizational capacity and resilience through empowerment, hybrid models and flexible funding.

Overall Recommendation

Building Organizational Capacity and Resilience

Specific Recommendations

Recommendation 10: Empower Local Capacity, Not Just Build It. Shift from “capacity building” to “capacity empowerment,” where local organizations define their needs and lead capacity strengthening initiatives. Provide training, mentorship, and resources based on these needs. Use capacity sharing approaches.

Recommendation 11: Adopt Hybrid and Market-Based Models. Encourage the exploration and adoption of hybrid organizational models, such as social enterprises that combine social missions with revenue-generating activities. Explore regional trust funds and other innovative funding models. Explore Pay-for-performance funding models.

Recommendation 12: Promote Flexible Funding and Rapid Response Mechanisms. Funders and intermediary organizations should provide flexible funding modalities that allow for adaptation to changing circumstances and rapid responses to crises.

Key Action Area 5

Strategic foresighting. Focus on impact measurement, youth engagement, and African-led approaches for long-term sustainability

Overall Recommendation

Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability and Impact

Specific Recommendations

Recommendation 13: Focus on Impact Measurement and Evaluation. Implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track the impact of philanthropic activities. Develop standardized impact measurement tools and methodologies and make the data public. Use data-driven decision-making and regular reviews to adapt and improve strategies.

Recommendation 14: Invest in Youth and Entrepreneurship. Create programs and initiatives that support young entrepreneurs and innovators in addressing social challenges. Leverage the creativity and energy of youth as drivers of change. Establish youth advisory boards.

Recommendation 15: Promote African-Led Philanthropy. Shift the focus from external dependency to African-led philanthropy. Emphasize local ownership, knowledge, and solutions. Support African philanthropy networks and initiatives that promote self-reliance and sustainability.

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Conclusion

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents an indivisible framework, wherein the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets are deeply interconnected. This integrated nature necessitates a collaborative approach to implementation—one that transcends sectoral boundaries and harnesses the comparative advantages of diverse actors. Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) have emerged as a critical mechanism for advancing this agenda, facilitating coordinated action across governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, and international organizations.

MSPs are defined by their ability to:

Pool Expertise and Resources – By combining the strengths of different sectors, MSPs address gaps that unilateral interventions cannot. Governments provide regulatory frameworks and public infrastructure, the private sector contributes innovation and investment, civil society ensures community engagement, and academia offers evidence-based solutions.

Enhance Legitimacy and Accountability – Shared decision-making and transparent governance structures ensure that interventions are both inclusive and aligned with local priorities, mitigating risks of exclusion or misalignment.

Drive Systemic Change – Unlike isolated projects, MSPs are designed to tackle root causes of development challenges through long-term, adaptive strategies—particularly in areas such as climate resilience, health equity, and inclusive economic growth.

For MSPs to fulfill their potential, the following conditions must be met:

Strong Institutional Frameworks – Clear mandates, governance structures, and accountability mechanisms are essential to sustain collaboration beyond ad hoc engagements.

Flexible Financing Models – Catalytic capital, blended finance, and outcome-based funding can de-risk investments and incentivize sustained participation from private and philanthropic actors.

Policy Coherence – National and regional policies must create an enabling environment for cross-sector collaboration, including streamlined regulations and incentives for partnership-building.

The findings of this report underscore that MSPs are not merely a supplementary tool but a fundamental driver of sustainable development. To accelerate progress:

Governments must **prioritize MSPs in national development strategies**, ensuring alignment with SDG localization efforts.

Development Partners should shift from project-based funding to **systems-strengthening investments** that bolster partnership ecosystems.

All Stakeholders must commit to **shared measurement frameworks**, ensuring that MSPs deliver measurable, equitable impact.

The complexity of the SDGs demands a departure from fragmented approaches. Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships represent a proven, scalable model for achieving systemic impact, but their success hinges on intentional design, sustained investment, and unwavering political commitment. As the international aid landscape evolves, MSPs offer a pathway to more resilient, inclusive, locally rooted and globally informed development.

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Appendices

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