

# Digital Transformation for Sustainable Development in Africa

Africa-Europe D4D Hub Multi-Stakeholder Forum | March 18, 2022

## FLASH REPORT

Co-hosted by the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), the first Africa-Europe D4D Hub Multi-Stakeholder Forum took place on 18 March 2022, one month after the EU-AU Summit, Africa-Europe Week, and the EU-Africa Business Forum, key events for the AU-EU partnership where digital cooperation took a central role in the agenda. In line with the European Union's Global Gateway strategy and the African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa, leaders from both continents announced an Africa-Europe Investment Package, which amongst other priorities aims to accelerate Africa's digital transition.

The Africa-Europe D4D Hub Multi-Stakeholder Forum followed up on these ambitions and provided a platform to discuss concrete joint actions and opportunities for cooperation with the digital communities in both continents.

## Key Takeaways | Recommendations

The Forum demonstrated the common wish to work together between the AU and EU to promote an **inclusive digital transformation**. The digital ecosystems of Europe and Africa are based on values, and they put people at the centre of digital innovation. Whether it is about sustainable growth, digital ID systems, or the Global Gateway: panellists agreed that participatory processes, co-creative approaches, and equitable frameworks, which help citizens to trust digital infrastructures, are a prerequisite for leaving no one behind.



### Key Recommendations: Connectivity

- Improving connectivity between Europe and Africa and scaling up meaningful connectivity can only be achieved through **technology-neutral collaborations between the private and public sector**.
- It is imperative that the EU Global Gateway strategy and the AU Digital Transformation Strategy are **aligned with existing frameworks** to drive continuity based on the needs of communities, in particular rural communities.
- Addressing the issue of last mile connectivity requires opening up the market to new operators, including community networks, and strengthening **capacities of local communities**.
- **Satellite technologies** open new opportunities for connectivity, also as part of the also as part of the Global Gateway.
- **Joint AU-EU investments** in connectivity:
  - should be centred on connectivity that supports economic integration, last mile connectivity, MSME capacity building, and gender inclusion.
  - need to **harness domestic resources** to complement the AU-EU partnership and ensure investment-readiness in Africa.
  - require **smart policies and regulatory frameworks** to be implemented quickly, so that there are no regulatory burdens to investments in infrastructure development.
  - should be oriented towards renewable technology and a **green digital transition**.

*“What we want to see is not just the harmonisation of policies, but also the implementation.”*

– Oyeronke Oyetunde, MTN



## Key Recommendations: Digital Governance

- The EU, AUC, Smart Africa, and national governments with the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders should work together in the development of **harmonized national data governance frameworks** in line with the AUC Continental Data Policy Framework to enable seamless data flows across the continent.
- **Data sovereignty** is a key aspect that needs to be addressed on both policy and technical levels. Discussions around data sovereignty shall not lead to new silos, but to joint policy dialogues bringing grassroots stakeholders both from civil society and the private sector to the table.
- **Participatory processes** and co-creative approaches ensure that nobody is left behind. Equitable frameworks and new partnerships are needed to build joint infrastructures and open source resources for data governance.
- The main guiding principles to successfully facilitate data governance are **privacy by design, transparency, and accountability**.

*“We need to look at the economic regulations in order to make more equitable the opportunities that the data economy provides.”*

– Alison Gillwald, Research ICT Africa



## Key Recommendations: Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- **Collaboration and networking** are pillars for business development, especially for entrepreneurs who will make the biggest difference in the digital transformation in Africa.
- Enabling **ecosystems**, access to markets and financial support are required to support entrepreneurs. Local ecosystems - hubs, networks and other intermediaries - are crucial for entrepreneurs, youth and women in particular. Several projects under the Flagship of the African-European Digital Innovation Bridge (AEDIB) are building cooperation between European and African Digital Innovation Hubs.
- There has been a marked improvement in the funding environment in Africa in recent years, however, most of the funding is still mainly focused on the most developed countries, while there is a clear need to get **all African countries** on board.
- Successes of **women** in tech need to be celebrated – loudly and visibly. Role models need to be showcased, harmful and incorrect stereotypes need to be broken. Targeted programmes to teach girls and women digital skills, and to show them that the sector is much more than coding, are extremely valuable. Youth-friendly spaces, online safety and mentorship make it easier for girls to engage. Specific funding needs to be provided through e.g. development programmes.
- Taking up of entrepreneurship in Africa is sometimes challenging because education and the labour market do not match. This issue can be tackled through programmes **fostering partnerships between governments, universities, and the private sector**. However, intercontinental programmes should make the effort to understand the specificities of the African context, which is within itself very heterogeneous.

*“We want to strengthen digital innovation ecosystems in African countries and link them to those in European countries.”*

– Carla Montesi, European Commission (DG INTPA)

Gender was mainstreamed across the event: The gender digital divide is linked to broader societal equality challenges which also cover race, age, and ableism, for example. Thus closing the gender digital divide requires a holistic approach. This view was expressed by all stakeholders: engaging the innovations and capacities of 50% of the world population makes social and economic sense and is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

# Conference Figures

**1637** people joined the event throughout the day, representing **580** organisations.

They originated from **45** African countries and **32** European countries.



Figure: Countries represented in the event.

**821,000** people were reached on social media in the lead up to and during the event, resulting in **1882** social media interactions.

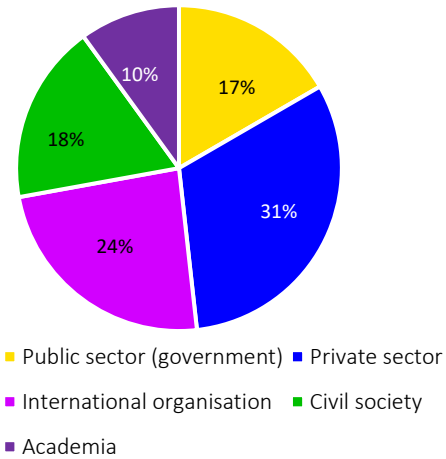
**87** speakers and moderators participated in the event.

The programme comprised **13** sessions, including **7** side sessions co-organised with **10** organisations from civil society, public and private sector, academia from both Africa and Europe.

**1698** people registered on the event platform.

**54%** of them identified as male, **46%** as female, and **0.3%** as other.

**17%** registered as representing public sector,  
**31%** as representing private sector,  
**24%** as representing international organisations,  
**18%** as representing civil society, and  
**10%** as representing academia.



# Final Programme

TIME*	SESSION			
09:00	<p><b>Opening session with AU Commissioner Dr Amani Abou-Zeid and EU Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen</b>  <b>Moderator: Sannssi Cissé</b></p>			
09:30	<p><b>Setting the scene: Building an inclusive digital economy and society that leaves no one behind</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Sannssi Cissé</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carla Montesi, Director at Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), European Commission</li> <li>• Lacina Koné, Director General and CEO, Smart Africa</li> <li>• Nanjira Sambuli, Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</li> <li>• Oyeronke Oyetunde, General Manager, Regulatory Affairs, MTN</li> </ul>			
10:00	<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>The Global Gateway in action: advancing digital transformation and joint infrastructure projects on digital connectivity</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Christine Mhundwa, Journalist</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Towela Nyirenda-Jere, AUDA-NEPAD</li> <li>• Thierry Barbé, DG INTPA, European Commission</li> <li>• Anriette Esterhuysen, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)</li> <li>• Alessandro Gropelli, European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association</li> <li>• Thabo Mashegoane, Africa ICT Alliance</li> <li>• Hossam Elgamal, ICC Digital Economy Commission</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>Closing the gender digital divide: From policymaking to on-the-ground implementation</b>  <b>Side session with CONCORD Europe   Moderator: Stacy Dina, EU Youth Sounding Board</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soraya Melyani, Agence de Développement du Digital Maroc</li> <li>• Capucine Gonnord, Enabel</li> <li>• Toby Ojok, Smartup Factory</li> <li>• Halimah Oladosu, Revel Sytems</li> <li>• Michelle Charles, SAP</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>Unlocking data governance potential for sustainable growth</b>  <b>Side session with Vodafone/Vodacom   Moderator: Lara Natale</b></p> <p>Keynote address: Prof. Pamela Andanda,</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Souhila Amazouz, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Bruno Gencarelli, DG Justice, European Commission</li> <li>• Teki Akuetteh, Africa Digital Rights' Hub</li> <li>• Mikko Niva, Vodafone</li> <li>• Geraldine de Bastion, Konnektiv</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>The Global Gateway in action: advancing digital transformation and joint infrastructure projects on digital connectivity</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Christine Mhundwa, Journalist</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr Towela Nyirenda-Jere, AUDA-NEPAD</li> <li>• Thierry Barbé, DG INTPA, European Commission</li> <li>• Anriette Esterhuysen, Association for Progressive Communications (APC)</li> <li>• Alessandro Gropelli, European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association</li> <li>• Thabo Mashegoane, Africa ICT Alliance</li> <li>• Hossam Elgamal, ICC Digital Economy Commission</li> </ul>	<p><b>Closing the gender digital divide: From policymaking to on-the-ground implementation</b>  <b>Side session with CONCORD Europe   Moderator: Stacy Dina, EU Youth Sounding Board</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soraya Melyani, Agence de Développement du Digital Maroc</li> <li>• Capucine Gonnord, Enabel</li> <li>• Toby Ojok, Smartup Factory</li> <li>• Halimah Oladosu, Revel Sytems</li> <li>• Michelle Charles, SAP</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unlocking data governance potential for sustainable growth</b>  <b>Side session with Vodafone/Vodacom   Moderator: Lara Natale</b></p> <p>Keynote address: Prof. Pamela Andanda,</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Souhila Amazouz, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Bruno Gencarelli, DG Justice, European Commission</li> <li>• Teki Akuetteh, Africa Digital Rights' Hub</li> <li>• Mikko Niva, Vodafone</li> <li>• Geraldine de Bastion, Konnektiv</li> </ul>
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11:00	<b>Break</b>			
11:15	<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p><b>Regulating data: Opportunities and challenges of implementation</b>  <b>Round table   Moderator: Treasure Maphanga, AeTrade Group</b></p> <p>Opening address: Thibaut Kleiner (EC) and Moses Bayingana (AUC)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaby Moustapha Mamy, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Didier Nkurikiyimfura, Smart Africa</li> <li>• Drudeisha Madhub, Government of Mauritius</li> <li>• Stéphan-Eloïse Gras, Digital Africa</li> <li>• Mark Holzberger, Government of Germany</li> <li>• Oyeronke Oyetunde, MTN</li> <li>• Eva Sow Ebion, i4policy</li> <li>• Lionel Baraban, FAMOCO</li> <li>• Alison Gillwald, Research ICT Africa</li> <li>• Adedeji Adeniran, Center for the Studies of Economics of Africa</li> </ul> </td> <td> <p><b>Investing in digital skills to unleash Africa's digital entrepreneurship and innovation potential</b>  <b>Side session with Refactory Uganda and Orange   Moderator: Asma Bannouri, Orange</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agnieszka Skuratowicz, DG INTPA, European Commission</li> <li>• Asma Ennaifer, Orange Tunisia</li> <li>• Michael Niyitegeka, Refactory Uganda</li> <li>• Prof. Henk Sol, University of Groningen</li> <li>• Grant Kasowanjete, Global Campaign for Education</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Regulating data: Opportunities and challenges of implementation</b>  <b>Round table   Moderator: Treasure Maphanga, AeTrade Group</b></p> <p>Opening address: Thibaut Kleiner (EC) and Moses Bayingana (AUC)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaby Moustapha Mamy, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Didier Nkurikiyimfura, Smart Africa</li> <li>• Drudeisha Madhub, Government of Mauritius</li> <li>• Stéphan-Eloïse Gras, Digital Africa</li> <li>• Mark Holzberger, Government of Germany</li> <li>• Oyeronke Oyetunde, MTN</li> <li>• Eva Sow Ebion, i4policy</li> <li>• Lionel Baraban, FAMOCO</li> <li>• Alison Gillwald, Research ICT Africa</li> <li>• Adedeji Adeniran, Center for the Studies of Economics of Africa</li> </ul>	<p><b>Investing in digital skills to unleash Africa's digital entrepreneurship and innovation potential</b>  <b>Side session with Refactory Uganda and Orange   Moderator: Asma Bannouri, Orange</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agnieszka Skuratowicz, DG INTPA, European Commission</li> <li>• Asma Ennaifer, Orange Tunisia</li> <li>• Michael Niyitegeka, Refactory Uganda</li> <li>• Prof. Henk Sol, University of Groningen</li> <li>• Grant Kasowanjete, Global Campaign for Education</li> </ul>	
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12:30	<b>Break</b>			
13:00	<p><b>Wrap-up: Highlights of the first half day</b>  <b>Moderator: Sannssi Cissé</b></p>			

<b>13:30</b>	<p><b>Towards a joint European-African partnership for digital entrepreneurship and innovation</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Agata Hidalgo, France Digitale</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moetaz Helmy, Afrilabs</li> <li>• Séverine Peters-Desteract, Expertise France</li> <li>• Josephine Miliza, KICTANet Kenya</li> <li>• Hafsah Jumare, CoFounder CoAmana</li> <li>• Thomas Festerling, Founder GreenTec</li> <li>• Charles Murito, Google</li> </ul>	<p><b>Safeguarding open and free internet</b>  <b>Side session with African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)   Moderator: Freda Yawson, ACET</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan Hofmeyr, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation</li> <li>• Chloe Teevan, European Center for Development Policy Management</li> <li>• Karishma Banga, Institute of Development Studies</li> <li>• Kristina Mänd, e-Governance Academy Estonia</li> </ul>	<p><b>WhyID: Make your case</b>  <b>Side session with Access Now   Moderator: Elias Okwara, Access Now</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mihret Woodmatas, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Yassah Musa, Nubian Rights Forum</li> <li>• Bronwen Manby, London School of Economics</li> <li>• Kaija Kirch, Cybernetica</li> <li>• Udbhav Tiwari, Mozilla</li> </ul>
<b>14:30</b>	<b>Break</b>		
<b>14:45</b>	<p><b>Foster Africa-Europe peer to peer Partnerships for inclusive Digital Transformation</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Christian Minoungou, African Union Commission</b></p> <p>Keynote address: Treasure Maphanga, Ae Trade Group</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jyrki Pulkkinen, Government of Finland</li> <li>• Dr. Rimeh Daghrrir, AeTrade Group</li> <li>• Ruth Negash, COMESA Federation of Women in Business</li> <li>• Tanner Methvin, Impact Amplifier Ltd</li> <li>• Robert Sanders, BIC Africa (EBN – European Business &amp; Innovation Centre Network)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internet connectivity: achievements to date, challenges and opportunities ahead</b>  <b>Side session with Internet Society and APC   Moderator: Dawit Bekele, Internet Society</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Towela Nyirenda-Jere, AUDA-NEPAD</li> <li>• Lars-Erik Forsberg, DG Connect, European Commission</li> <li>• Hillary Cheserek, Kenya Education Network</li> <li>• Ramón Roca, Guifi.net Foundation</li> <li>• Aarti Holla-Maini, Global Satellite Operators' Association</li> </ul>	
<b>15:45</b>	<b>Break</b>		
<b>15:50</b>	<p><b>Wrap-up: Highlights of the second half day</b>  <b>Moderator: Sannssi Cissé</b></p>		
<b>16:10</b>	<p><b>Next steps: Stepping up our digital partnership</b>  <b>Plenary session   Moderator: Sannssi Cissé</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moses Bayingana, Director for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission</li> <li>• Carla Montesi, Director, DG INTPA, European Commission</li> </ul>		
<b>16:40</b>	<b>Closure of the event</b>		

*\* All times are in Central European Time (CET, corresponds to Central African Time -1)*