

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

OSF-AFRICA STRATEGY 2022-2026

CONTEXT

- Rising authoritarianism and a breakdown of the social contract.
- COVID-19 coupled with the lack of access to social services.
- Internal deficiencies, unequal local, national and international global power relations.
- The capture of public resources and decision-making processes by political and economic elites.
- Further recessions of civic space.
- Women paying the highest price for unjust and patriarchal societies.
- Africa as a frontier for security and ideological geopolitical battles.

ROLE

The largest political/HR philanthropy in Africa —built to catalyze, support and connect open society causes and actors at scale, on the continent and beyond, in partnership with others.

VISION

A globally assertive, vibrant and integrated Africa, characterized by democratic governance, sustainable development, and economic systems that deliver more just, inclusive, and accountable outcomes with and for the people and the environment in Africa.

MISSION

To deepen people-centered democracy, accountable governance and inclusive development in Africa through strategic grantmaking, convening power, investment in African knowledge production and people-centered advocacy, focused on promoting open societies, accountable governance, human rights, sustainable development and just climate transitions in Africa.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our ambition is to contribute to transformative change at the national, regional, continental, and global levels.

We are guided by the African proverb “if you want to go fast, go alone and if you want to go far, go with others”.

We will achieve impact by being part of a Pan-African ecosystem of socioeconomic and political transformation driven by values of social justice.

We will seek to achieve change at scale by acting in solidarity with and amplifying the voices of people most directly affected by human rights violations, autocracy, exclusion, poverty, and injustice.

PEOPLE POWER: We will amplify the voices and actions of African artists, activists, academics, social movements, civil society organizations, private sector, and states as well as any other stakeholders directly affected by or working to combat impunity, injustice, discrimination, poverty and inequality.

GENDER JUSTICE: In OSF-Africa we will adopt a gender-justice approach across all our work streams and programs. We will prioritize approaches and solutions that seek to end all forms of discrimination, injustice and violations of rights suffered by women and gender non-conforming people.

CROSS-MOVEMENT AND CROSS-ISSUE ORGANIZING: We will build coalitions within, across and between countries, regions and continents across movements, themes, professional disciplines and issues from the local to the global level.

ENGAGE SOUTH-SOUTH AND GLOBAL SOUTH POWERS: We will engage with relevant international and Global South powers, including BRICS, as well as key global processes addressing issues such as debt, climate, trade, investment, fiscal accountability, development governance and security.

APPROACHES AND TOOLS

Grantmaking

Research and knowledge building

Convenings and issue-based collaborations

Advocacy, communications, campaigns

Impact investment

Use of culture, arts, and engaging creatives

Direct technical assistance

Learning

Strategic litigation

4 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ACCOUNTABILITY AND JUSTICE

OBJECTIVES

- Institutional transformation and renewal promoted for justice and accountability.
- Continental, regional, and national human rights, and legal accountability mechanisms strengthened for greater protection of human rights and access to justice.
- Corporate power challenged to ensure that public institutions function without the improper influence that arises from capture.
- People-led and broad-based intersectional feminist movements supported and strengthened to advance the human rights and accountability agenda in national, regional, and international spaces.

OPPORTUNITY AND EQUITY

OBJECTIVES

- Access to justice and the rights of marginalized constituencies.
- Inequality addressed by supporting transformative social policies and practice.
- Better conditions for people-focused sustainable and inclusive economies supported: enablers, and catalytic economic sector reform.
- Fair global climate governance and justice, anchored in human rights.

PARTICIPATION AND EXPRESSION

OBJECTIVES

- Capture of democratic processes and institutions resisted to defend against rising authoritarianism.
- Capture of electoral processes and institutions resisted to defeat electoral authoritarianism.
- Access to information, digital rights, and independent media promoted to power participation.
- Culture and the arts promoted for participation and expression.
- Efforts by human rights defenders supported to advance rights and challenge the overreach and abuse of power by state and non-state actors.

SECURITY AND RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES

- Accountable security sector governance and effective peoples' oversight supported.
- Change of narrative around insecurity and terrorism supported to focus on governance gaps and community agency.
- Security and safety for women and girls in conflict areas and sexual and gender minority groups advanced.

2 CROSS-CUTTING AREAS

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES

- The footprint of African women's rights well positioned in the global space.
- The field strengthened to anchor the work of thematic clusters
- Broad-based, intersectional feminist movements supported.
- Intersectional feminist knowledge and alternatives strengthened and leveraged in challenging oppressive systems.

POLICY AND ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES

- Pan-African and regional impact goals advanced.
- Advocacy, communications and policy utilized in support of overall strategic objectives.
- Flexible, grounding and substantial funding and support to African change ecosystems.
- Stronger, more connected and resourced African higher education and impact research.
- African influence in the global space supported.
- Advanced engagement between African civil society and the African Union Commission to advance implementation of continental people-centred norms.