



# Combined Scenario

## Impact on extreme poverty

Jakkie Cilliers

Last updated 14 January 2025 using IFs v8.13

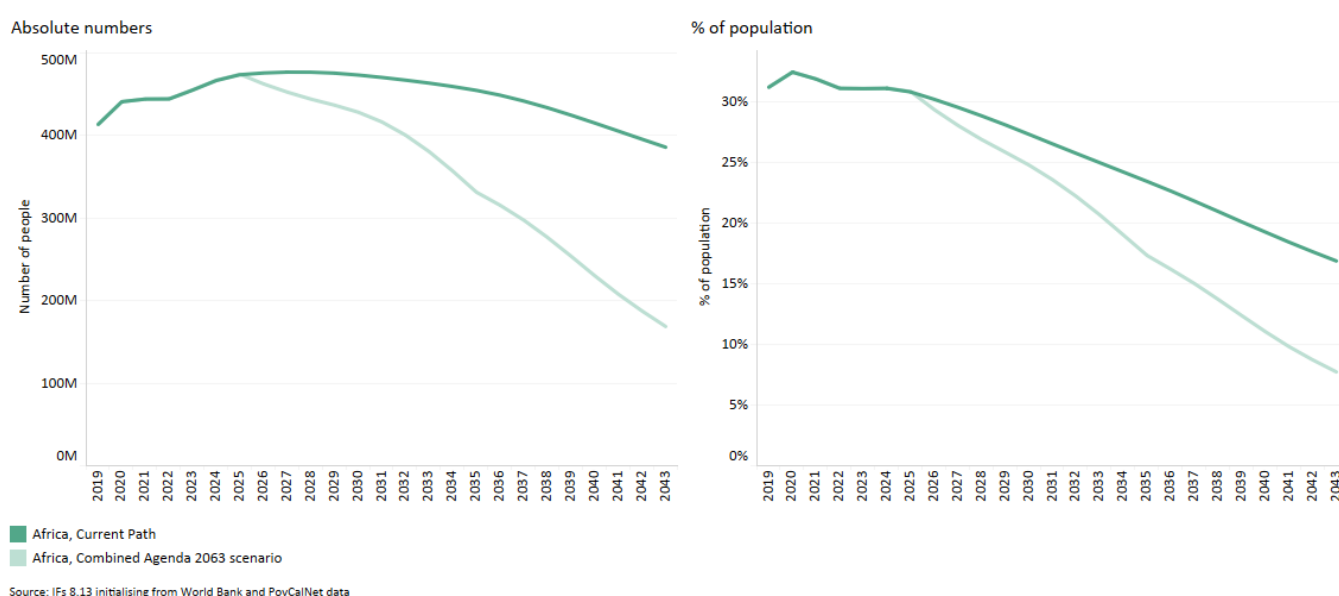


## Impact on extreme poverty

The Combined scenario has an even more impressive impact on poverty than on economic size and GDP per capita. The forecast of the number of extremely poor people in Africa presented in Chart 6 (using the US\$2.15 threshold), shows that 31% of Africa's total population (or 455 million people) was considered to be extremely poor in 2023, a ratio that will decline to 27% by 2030, 25% in 2033 and 17% by 2043 in the Current Path forecast. Owing to rapid population growth, relatively slow economic growth and often high levels of inequality, 386 million Africans would therefore still live in extreme poverty in the Current Path forecast by 2043, meaning that the absolute number of extremely poor Africans will have declined only modestly since 2023.

The impact of the Combined scenario is for extreme poverty to drop to 25% in 2030, 21% in 2033 and 8% in 2043, equivalent to 428, 380 and 169 million poor people, respectively.

Chart 6: Extreme poverty, 2019–2043, using US\$2.15



The Combined scenario represents a potentially seismic shift in Africa's fortunes, as poverty reduction is perhaps the most critical measure of improved well-being. Although extreme poverty will remain a feature of Africa for the next generations, the portion of extremely poor people in Africa will have dropped dramatically.

It is clear that even in the Combined scenario, Africa will miss the SDG target of eliminating extreme poverty by 2030 by a very large margin. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to these depressing forecasts, the key reason is that Africa's economies are not growing rapidly enough, given population growth. Although Africa (and Southern Africa in particular) has relatively high levels of inequality, the continent has to find ways of growing its economies much more rapidly if it intends to increase incomes, provide jobs and dramatically reduce poverty.

## Donors and sponsors



### Reuse our work

- All visualizations, data, and text produced by African Futures are completely open access under the [Creative Commons BY license](#). You have the permission to use, distribute, and reproduce these in any medium, provided the source and authors are credited.
- The data produced by third parties and made available by African Futures is subject to the license terms from the original third-party authors. We will always indicate the original source of the data in our documentation, so you should always check the license of any such third-party data before use and redistribution.
- All of our charts [can be embedded](#) in any site.

### Cite this research

Jakkie Cilliers (2025) Combined Scenario. Published online at [futures.issafrica.org](https://futures.issafrica.org). Retrieved from <https://futures.issafrica.org/thematic/17-combined-agenda-2063/> [Online Resource] Updated 14 January 2025.

## About the authors

Dr Jakkie Cilliers is the ISS's founder and former executive director. He currently serves as chair of the ISS Board of Trustees, head of the African Futures and Innovation (AFI) programme at the Pretoria office of the Institute, and is an extraordinary professor at the University of Pretoria. His 2017 best-seller *Fate of the Nation* addresses South Africa's futures from political, economic and social perspectives. His three most recent books, *Africa First! Igniting a Growth Revolution* (March 2020), *The Future of Africa: Challenges and Opportunities* (April 2021), and *Africa Tomorrow: Pathways to Prosperity* (June 2022) take a rigorous look at the continent as a whole.

## About African Futures & Innovation

Scenarios and forecasting can help Africa identify and respond to opportunities and threats. The work of the African Futures & Innovation (AFI) program at the Institute for Security Studies aims to understand and address a widening gap between indices of wellbeing in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The AFI helps stakeholders understand likely future developments. Research findings and their policy implications are widely disseminated, often in collaboration with in-country partners. Forecasting tools inspire debate and provide insights into possible trajectories that inform planning, prioritisation and effective resource allocation. Africa's future depends on today's choices and actions by governments and their non-governmental and international partners. The AFI provides empirical data that informs short- and medium-term decisions with long-term implications. The AFI enhances Africa's capacity to prepare for and respond to future challenges. The program is headed by Dr Jakkie Cilliers.