



Combined Agenda 2063

Impact on extreme poverty

Jakkie Cilliers

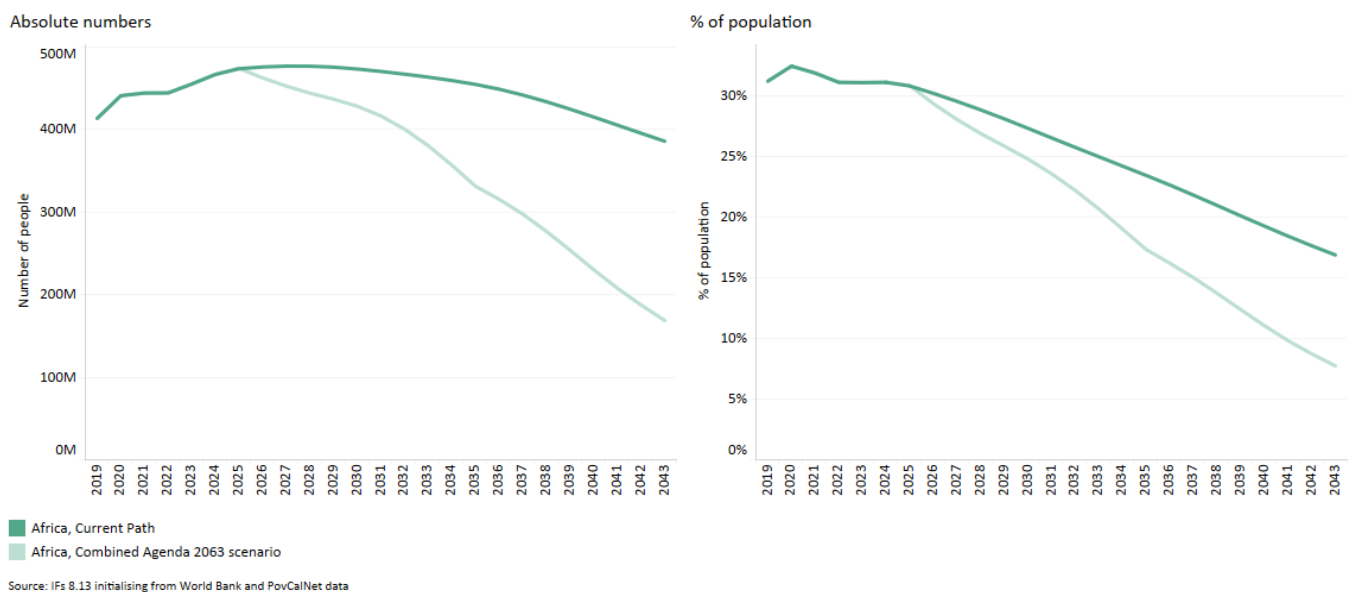
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Impact on extreme poverty

The Combined Agenda 2063 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 Agenda 2063 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 Agenda 2063 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.

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About the authors

Dr Jakkie Cilliers is the ISS's founder and former executive director of the ISS. He currently serves as chair of the ISS Board of Trustees and head of the African Futures and Innovation (AFI) programme at the Pretoria office of the ISS. 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.

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