

**CASA ÁFRICA**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2022-2024**



**CASA ÁFRICA**



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## Africa, our neighbour

In an increasingly interconnected world, the relationship with our neighbouring continent, Africa, is crucial, both for Spain and for the well-being of all. This is reflected in both Spanish foreign policy and at a local level, as is evident in the case of the Canary Islands and other autonomous communities with close ties to Africa.

Africa's future is our business, in the same way that the fight for peace, human rights and gender equality, combating climate change or ecological and digital transition are global issues that affect us all and require solutions beyond our borders. Public diplomacy approaches these transnational challenges from a positive perspective of collaboration among equals and in search of mutual benefit.

Public diplomacy approaches these transnational challenges from a positive perspective of collaboration among equals and in search of mutual benefit. Moreover, and as a tool for external action, it recognizes the vital importance of civil society and public opinion in international relations and in positioning a country on the global agenda and on the public imaginary. Reciprocal knowledge, trust and long-term alliances are useful instruments, as is a constructive dialogue between Africans and Spaniards in the common search for fresh solutions.

In contrast to traditional diplomacy, which is exercised by diplomats and directed primarily to other diplomats

or foreign government representatives, public diplomacy is a much broader concept that is primarily aimed at civil society and is exercised by all types of players, both governmental and non-governmental, in favour of the country's interests. In our case, the goal is to raise awareness about Africa in Spain, and vice versa, and to help key players north and south of the Mediterranean meet and get acquainted.

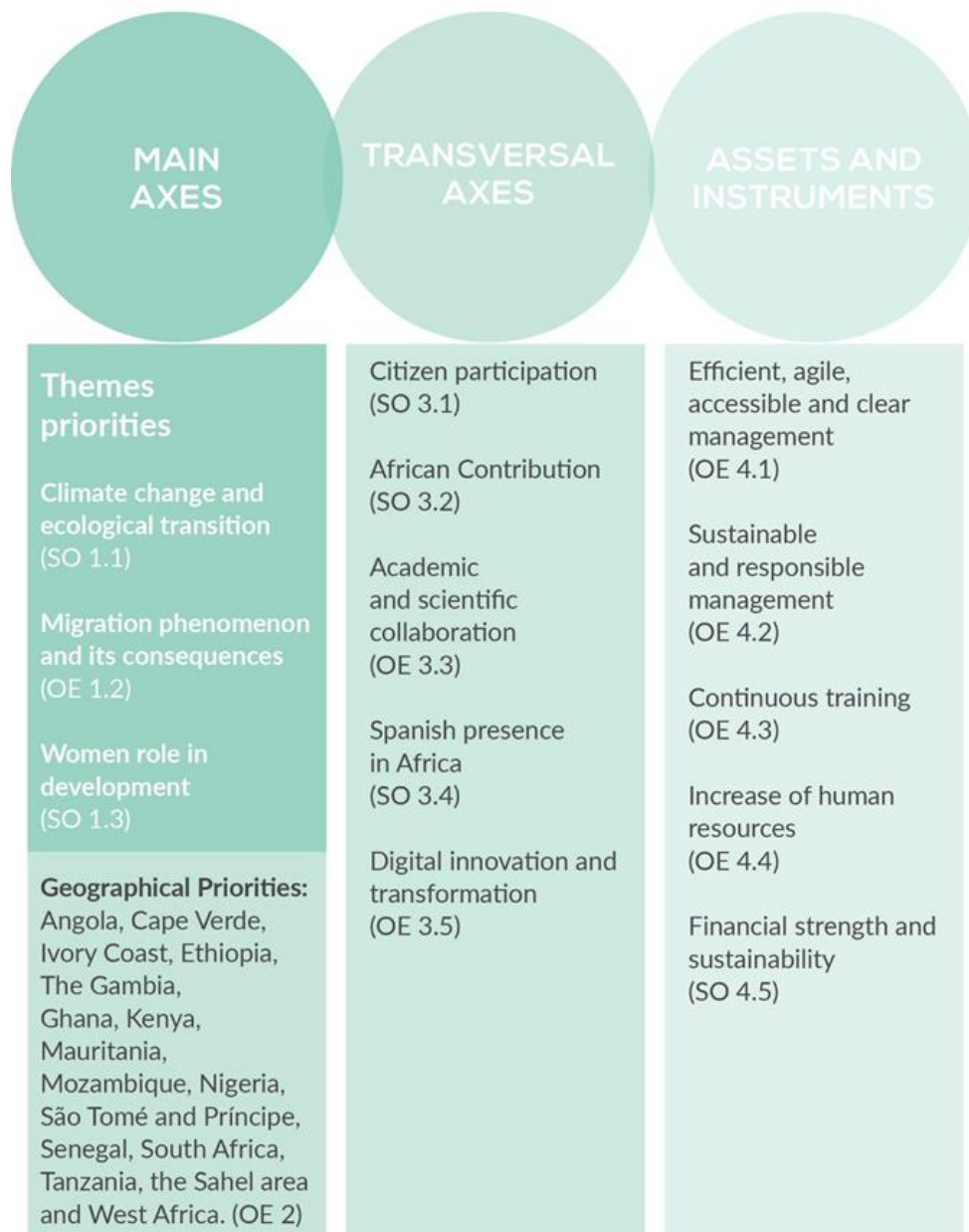
This work carried out by Casa Africa for the benefit of Spanish and African societies is influenced by the social, economic, technological, environmental and cultural changes that occur over time. The coronavirus pandemic, along with the resulting health, social, economic and migratory crises, reveal the magnitude of global interdependence and the value of international cooperation in terms of addressing shared challenges. The inherent elements of public diplomacy - mutual awareness, trust, understanding and solidarity - are essential in terms of constructing these international ecosystems of engagement and partnership, not forgetting that it is essential for us to be able to count on African residents in our country to assist in this construction.

The disruptive changes brought about by the pandemic have not only put digital capabilities at the centre of public diplomacy, but also strategic thinking, as they have revealed the advantages of having a vision of the future and agile strategic planning in terms of both facing threats and taking advantage of opportunities

that arise. And that is precisely the goal of this strategic plan, to prepare Casa Africa as an institution that can better respond to the current needs and future demands of civil society

while continuing our commitment to working towards making this a more egalitarian, caring world and bringing Africa and Spain ever closer together.

## Strategic priorities summary 2022-2024





## About this plan

This fourth Casa Africa's Strategic Plan has been taken advantage of by the Consortium's Governing Council during its XXVII Meeting that was held on December 17, 2021, and will remain in force until 2024. The Plan seeks to align the institution's activities with the needs of its stakeholders while fostering improvements in the results of its programming in line with the mission, vision, values of the institution and its proposed objectives.

The legal framework for the design of the Strategic Plan is determined by the general principles of action of public sector entities, provided for by Law 40/2015, of the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector: planning and management by objectives, management control, evaluation of the results of public policies; efficiency in the fulfilment of the objectives set, economy, sufficiency and strict adaptation of the means for institutional purposes.

Likewise, the aforementioned law establishes the obligation for State Public Institutional Sector (SPIE) entities such as Casa Africa to possess a multi-annual action plan that establishes the strategic lines for the entity. In addition, the institution must draw up as many annual plans as exercises covered by the Strategic Plan.

The starting point for the drafting process for this Strategic Plan were the priorities of Casa Africa's stakeholders and Spain's

international commitments with relevance to Spanish public diplomacy with Africa. Casa Africa's board members were informed about the plan's draft in the meeting hold on July 29, 2021. Their valuable contributions have been taken under consideration, in order to enhance the various synergies that exist between their respective priorities.

In addition, it has been taken into account the needs of citizens and other Casa Africa groups of interest, such as African diplomatic representations in Spain and collaborators with the consortium, expressed in dialogue with them through an open survey disseminated through the institution's official channels on social networks and available on the website [www.casafrica.es](http://www.casafrica.es) during the period July 29 to September 15, 2021.

Once it is approved by the Casa Africa Governing Council, the final document is published on the Casa Africa website: [www.casafrica.es](http://www.casafrica.es).

The Plan is divided into three main sections. **The first** defines Casa Africa's framework for action and encompasses administrative, governmental, conceptual, geostrategic, and the current economic situation. Those are aspects that contextualize the actions of the institution.

**The second section** details the strategy for the next three years. This strategy is based on two common analysis methods for the strategic planning: PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological and



Legal) and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The PESTEL analysis is used to predict, the key aspects of the external context, while the SWOT analysis allows to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the own institution, considering its internal and external situation.

The second section details the institution's *Mission*, *Vision* and *Values*, which establish the objectives

and paths to follow over the next three years. Based on these, the activity's general objectives, institutional goals and two strategic axes are established. These two strategic Axes are: The *Main Axis*, that defines what to address, and the *Transversal Axis*, that establish how to proceed in order to achieve better results. In *Assets* and *Instruments*, it is explained how to *assess* and manage resources to accomplish the *Mission* and *Vision*.

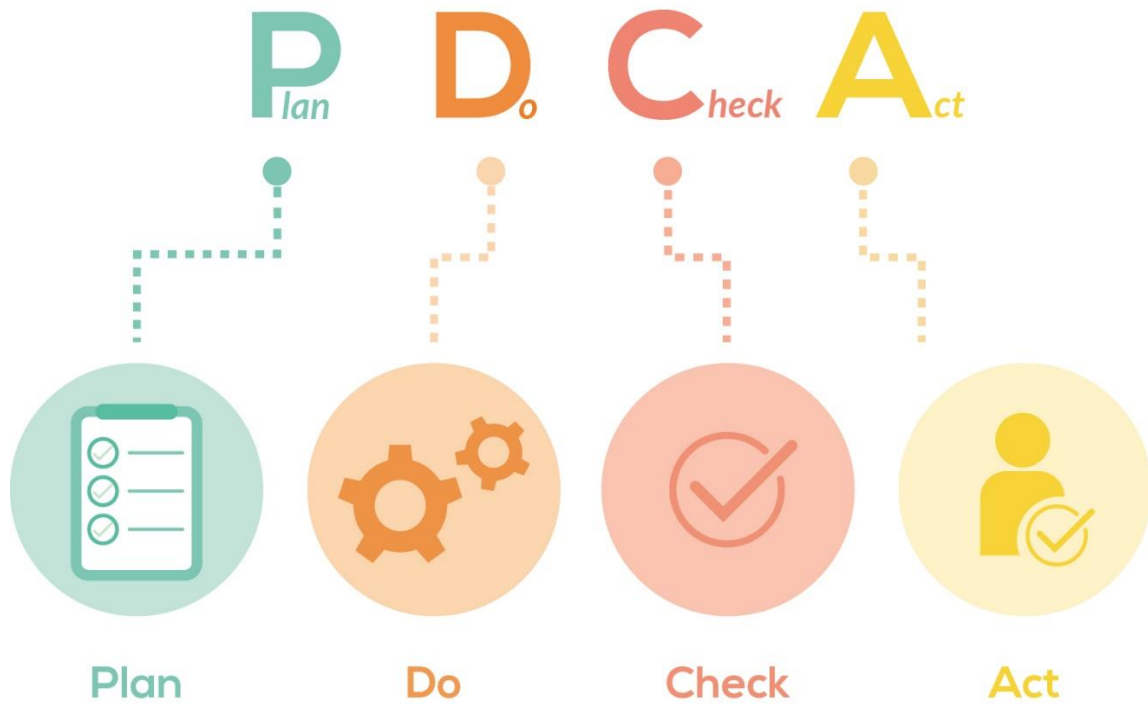
**The third section** of this plan describes the operational framework of the institution and encompasses the definition of the scope of activities, programmes and Casa Africa's key groups of interest

This gives rise to the Annual Action Plans (AAP), operational plans that lend maximum importance to their alignment with the priorities established in this Strategic Plan in order to achieve the greatest coherence with regard to action. The programmes are subject to modifications in each exercise if needed. In the programme's level the specific, tangible, reachable, realistic and limited in time operational objectives are established.

The AAP are independent documents and must be approved by the Governing Council during the last semester of the previous year before entry into force and being available on the institution website.

As a public entity, Casa Africa also counts with an *Evaluation and Monitoring System* with measurable results indicators that make it possible to gauge, using objective information, the level of compliance with the Annual Action Plans of the years 2022 – 2024 and, then, the level of compliance with the current Action Plan.

Its goal is to ensure that the objectives are accomplished and to provide information about compliance, deviations that could have happened and its causes. The results evaluation constitutes a key tool to continuously improve the quality, which is part of the click “Plan - Do - Check - Act”, also known as PDCA.

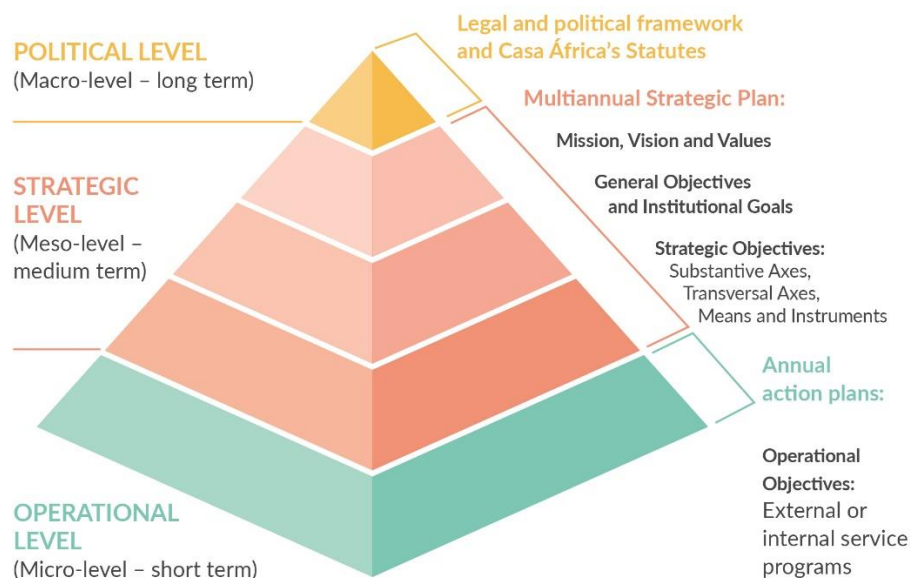


It should be stressed that the success of this plan depends on the implementation process, management leadership and team

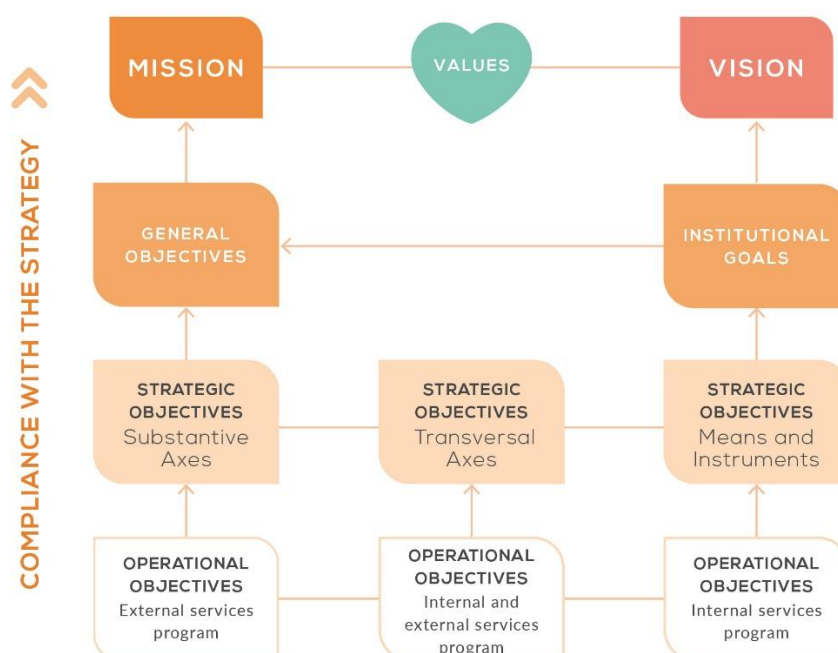
involvement, as well as on the allocation of the financial, human, administrative and technological resources required.



## Goals and objectives hierarchy



## Results achievement







## Casa Africa operational framework

### Administrative framework

The organizations that constitute the Casa Africa Consortium are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (MAUC), the Government of the Canary Islands and the City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

The organization was constituted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 2006 as a **public consortium** and is configured as a Public Law Entity of an inter-administrative nature, with its own legal personality and full capacity to act. The consortium is fully integrated in the State Public Sector and is attached to the MAUC, its main consortium partner. As part of the **Spanish public administration**, its annual accounts are audited by the General Comptroller of the State Administration (IGAE) and published in the Official State Gazette (BOE). Its performance is audited by the Court of Auditors and a transparency portal is available on the institutional website.

The Casa Africa Consortium is governed by the provisions of its **Articles of Association**, the sixth and latest version of which was approved by the Governing Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 2018. These define, as thereof its activity, the improvement of relations with Africa through the management of socio-cultural and training services, institutional

services and support for objective development cooperation and economic cooperation. The Casa also serves as a meeting and exchange space that seeks to improve reciprocal knowledge between Spain and the African continent and to promote the Canary Islands as a platform for knowledge, services and cooperation with Africa. It should also aid the diplomatic representations of African countries in the dissemination of the realities of their countries.

The institution is part of the **Red de Casas** (House Network) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, which includes *Casa Africa*, *Casa de América*, *Casa Árabe*, *Casa Asia*, *Casa Mediterráneo* and *Centro Sefarad-Israel*. According to the ministry itself, this group of institutions constitutes “a powerful network of **public diplomacy** of the Spanish Government aimed at political and economic cooperation, intercultural dialogue, reciprocal knowledge and the strengthening of ties between civil societies in the different geographical areas in which it operates”. Casa Africa represents Spain's and the Canary Islands' commitment to Africa and, in particular, to sub-Saharan Africa.

### Conceptual framework

Casa Africa's work is carried out within the framework of Spanish public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is a branch of international relations that during the last decade has gained



ground internationally as a tool for foreign action of many developed countries. Although the term does not have a single agreed definition with clear limits, a common approach to the concept identifies it as the transparent actions by which a country communicates and creates contact networks and alliances to achieve greater acceptance of its values, interests and positions on the global scene. We are talking about mutually beneficial relationships that seek new solutions to shared challenges.

#### **Annex I: The new public diplomacy and the Spanish public diplomacy**

#### **Annex II: Hypothesis of the Casa Africa's diplomacy and its general objectives**

In this conceptual framework, the Casa Africa purpose is to improve the relationship between Africa and Spain with the goal of promoting social, economic and security development in both sides.

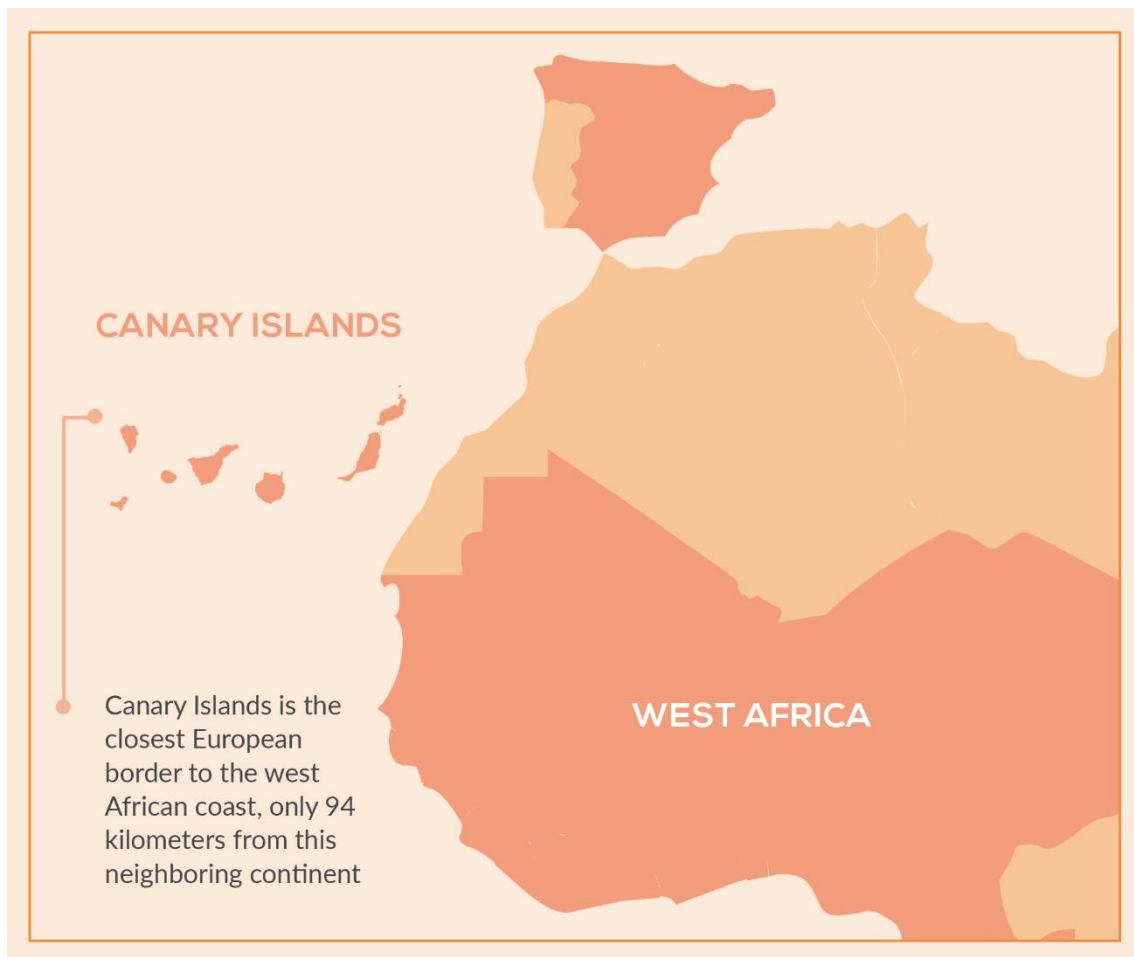
At an institutional level, the aim is to continuously improve the quality of services and, therefore, the benefits generated for Spanish and African societies and the relations between them.



## Geostrategic situation

The Casa Africa head offices are located in an emblematic building in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria that is on loan from the Government of the Canary Islands. The archipelago of the Canary Islands occupies a privileged geographical location just 100 kilometers off the northwest coast of Africa. The islands sit on the

African plate and form part of the natural region of Macaronesia. This proximity, together with the historical and geographical links with Africa, means that the Canary Islands act as a nexus with the African continent and Spain, offering opportunities to build bridges between neighbours.



The Canary Islands have been recognized as a European Union outermost region (OR) by the Treaty of Amsterdam and in Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). As such, the

Canary Islands are covered by specific measures and derogations provided for in EU legislation that help address the main challenges it faces due to its remoteness,



insularity, small size, difficult climate and topography, and economic model. The European Commission is working on updating the Outermost Regions' (OR) partnership relations in order to adapt the conditions of this strategic partnership to the EU's new priorities. Stated by the European Commission in the report on strengthening the partnership with the outermost regions of the European Union in July 2021, which proposes to place the ORs not on the periphery, but at the centre of European public action. Taking advantage of this aid and the advantages of their proximity to the African continent to definitively become a platform that serves as a bridge to the continent is a priority for Casa Africa. Within this framework, we also seek to strengthen ties with other outermost regions and move forward together.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning Casa Africa's active participation in the Territorial Cooperation Operational Programme Interreg Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC) 2014-2020. This programme, which is still active, is the main instrument for the Spanish and Portugal outermost regions (Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands) to cooperate between them and with the countries of their geographical area, with the purpose of offering an effective response to the common challenges. The programme allows the participation of African countries (Cape Verde, Senegal and Mauritania) and during the next period in force will be extended the relation between possible participants (Ivory Coast,

Ghana, Gambia and São Tomé and Príncipe).

## **The current socio-economic context**

Casa Africa now faces the drafting of this new strategic plan in a context in which migration has once again become a key issue on the public agenda, both in Europe and in Spain and the Canary Islands. There has been an upsurge in the arrival of African immigrants to the Canary Islands by sea, on a dangerous route that has claimed many lives and the reactivation of which has created a certain amount of social and media alarm. The situation of irregular migrants has led to episodes of racism and xenophobia in a traditionally welcoming society in which some of the most vulnerable sectors have felt more vulnerable as a result of an additional crisis. Casa Africa has become involved in this issue by facilitating bridges between citizens, fighting against stereotypes and racism and planting seeds of knowledge and harmony. This task was also a priority at the time of the Casa's creation, which coincided with what was known as the "Cayuco crisis" in 2006.

The coronavirus crisis has hit the entire planet and has had a profound effect on economies and societies worldwide. In the case of Africa, it has led to the collapse of sectors such as tourism and trade, the destruction of jobs, the growth of poverty and the extreme vulnerability of large sectors of the population, while its societies



struggle with a lack of vaccines, weak health and education systems, rising debt and other circumstances that make them vulnerable, such as climate change, conflicts and many other factors that offer a complex scenario full of challenges. For this reason, the pandemic has influenced, and will keep influencing, in every Africa's aspect.

### **Annex III: Casa Africa interventional origins and its historical context**

#### **Priorities of the consortium stakeholders**

As a tool for External Action for Africa, Casa Africa has aligned this Strategic Plan with the most relevant MAUC priorities, while taking into account the strategic priorities of the other consortium partners: the Government of the Canary Islands and the City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and, always in its natural context, Spanish public diplomacy for Africa.

It also assumes the main international commitments made by the Government of Spain, such as the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) contained in the United Nations 2030 *Agenda*, and those included in the *Paris Agreement on Climate Change* and the African Union's *Agenda 2063* (2013- 2063). These documents respond in a coordinated manner to the major global challenges of the coming years, and the international community is currently pinning its hopes on their capacity as useful tools for economic recovery once the

coronavirus pandemic has been overcome.

### **Annex IV: Alignment Scoreboard of themes priorities between Casa Africa and the Main axes of the Government of Spain Strategy for External Action 2021 – 2024, UN's Agenda for sustainable development objectives 2030 and the African Union Agenda's objectives 2063.**

#### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation**

At the beginning of 2021, the Government of Spain approved the new *Foreign Action Strategy 2021-2024*, highlighting the contribution to the shared prosperity shared by Spain and Africa as a strategic priority. The strategy articulates foreign policy around **four main lines** of action: i) Human rights, democracy, security and feminism, ii) Integrated, fair and equitable global economy and society; iii) More sustainable, habitable and green planet; iv) Regional integration and strengthened multilateralism.

For its part, foreign policy for Africa is defined in the *III Africa Plan* published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in 2019 under the title *Spain and Africa, challenge and opportunity*. It identifies four strategic objectives: i) Peace and security; ii) Sustainable development, inclusive and resilient economic growth; iii) Institutional strengthening; iv) Regular and safe mobility.



The III Plan Africa is developed through the operational programme *Foco Africa 2023*, aligned with the SDGs of the *2030 Agenda* and the objectives of the *2063 Agenda* of the African Union, which adapts foreign action to a response scenario against Covid-19 and a transformative recovery consistent with the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. Among its most prominent priorities we find boosting Spanish business presence and investment, and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of African women and girls. Regarding geographic priorities, Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa are considered "anchor countries" due to their demographic entity, political-economic projection and influence on the stability of their sub-regions and Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Angola as "priority countries".

In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation has approved its *Strategic Grant Scheme for the period 2021-2023*, in which the following are defined as strategic objectives: promotion of the planning, analysis and dissemination of the foreign policy of Spain and the European Union, promoting the participation of civil society; promotion of Spanish development cooperation; promotion and development of cultural and scientific relations with other countries; strengthening of the Spanish system for the protection of human rights, and safety of Spaniards abroad.

## **Government of Canary Islands**

At the time of preparing this plan, the Government of Canary Islands is working on a *Strategic Plan 2021-2023* of the General Directorate of Economic Affairs with Africa. This plan establishes economic diplomacy, territorial cooperation, training and transfer of knowledge, Canary Islands-Africa innovation, and strategic information as priority areas.

In order to search for other correlations, we must take into account that, from the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, the efforts of political, social and economic agents have materialized in an exceptional and extraordinary agreement against covid-19 health emergency: *the Pact for Social and Economic Reactivation of Canary Islands*. This pact has been reflected in the *Agreement for the Social and Economic Reactivation of the Canary Islands 2020-2023*, focusing on the maintenance of essential public services, the reinforcement of health and socio-sanitary capacities, caring for the most vulnerable people, the maintenance and recovery of employment, the promotion of economic activity, and streamlining, simplification, cooperation and coordination in administrative procedures, among others.





## City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

On its behalf, the City Council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria has adopted the *Sea City Strategy 2030*, whose vision includes making Las Palmas de Gran Canaria an international benchmark for local governance in sustainability and competitiveness of the blue economy, with values such as participation, transparency, innovation and, once again, sustainability. In our opinion, these are priorities that must be aligned with the interests of the different African partners in order to generate shared agendas.

## Other relevant Casa Africa priority actions

Apart from aligning its action with the priorities of the consortium entities, Casa Africa intends to take into account other strategies relevant for its activity. This summary does not intend to be exhaustive, but includes some of the mentioned documents.

To begin with, as a member of the European Union, Spain must launch the new European strategy for Africa. The strategy was approved by the European Parliament in March 2021 under the title *EU-Africa Strategy: An association for sustainable and inclusive development*. It proposes to build a true partnership between equals beyond the donor-recipient relationship reflecting the new priorities of African countries and it places human development in the heart of the strategy, with specific

initiatives to fight against poverty and inequality, as well as empowering young people and women.

Likewise, it identifies as a priority to reduce Africa's dependence on imports, reinforce intra-African trade, investments in infrastructure and the ecological and digital transition; as well as promoting sustainable agriculture and the modernization of the agricultural sector, the transition towards a clean and circular economy and an immigration policy based on solidarity and shared responsibility.

On the other hand, the *V Master Plan of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation* (2018-2021) is another key element in building Hispanic-African relations, and also for Casa Africa. This plan includes fighting against poverty while coherently integrating the transversal principles of Spanish Cooperation, such as the approach based on human rights and fundamental freedoms, gender equality, respect for cultural diversity, environmental sustainability and the fight against climate change.

The commercial and financial strategy *Horizonte Africa* is also relevant, created by the Spanish government in 2020 with the objective of supporting the internationalization of Spanish companies in the African market and promoting a growing and solid Spanish presence on the continent. The strategy identifies the following as key investment sectors:





water and sanitation, transport (mainly railway) and energy infrastructure. They are sectors in which Spanish companies have extensive international experience and can contribute to favouring the economic and sustainable growth of the countries.

## Strategy 2022-2024

### Mission, vision, values and motto

The *Mission* and *Vision* configure the framework from which the rest of the strategy is defined, showing the way to follow and its final goal. The *Mission* defines the identity of the organization, while the *Vision* offers the image of the desired future. In the case of Casa África, both of them come from the principles of the institution (defined in the Articles of Association), while the *Values* reflect the heart of the organization, ethical principles or qualities adding value to the services and give meaning to the people developing the activity.

#### Mission

Our reason for being.

To create mutually beneficial relationships between Africa and Spain within the framework of Spanish public diplomacy via the creation of reciprocal knowledge and trust that, in turn, promote the social, economic and cultural development of Spain and Africa and the creation of a better world.

#### Vision

How do we want to be recognized?

As a catalyst for sustainable, inclusive and fair change that contributes to solving the great challenges of our time. Known and recognized for the real value that we, African women, bring to Spanish society, seeking excellence from our strengths, permanent learning and innovation.

#### Motto

It summarizes the mission, vision, and values.

***Africa and Spain,  
ever closer***

#### Values

They differentiate us and provide quality.

**Public responsibility:** we promote an ethical commitment to citizenship that materializes in the transparent management of public funds, citizen participation, social and environmental commitment, and gender and opportunity equality.

**Professionalism and teamwork:** we are committed to the quality of the services we offer, permanent training and openness to innovation and continuous improvement, as well as collaboration in multidisciplinary teams.

**Mutual respect:** it is the basis of our coexistence, since we work in



culturally diverse scenarios in which mutual respect is essential to create relationships of trust and cohesion with society. It also extends to defence of diversity and respect for the individual, and especially for the rights of vulnerable groups.

**Shared benefit:** mutual benefit must always be the result of our actions. To this end, we defend and enact a two-way model of symmetric engagement in which the parties listen to each other, dialogue and seek common ground.

**Dynamism:** we are promoters of a proactive behaviour that assumes the constant evolution and transformation of the environment as a starting point for progress and development.

## General Objectives:

Casa África seeks to "Improve the relationships between Africa and Spain in order to promote social, economic and security development on both sides". For this reason, its action, which is defined within the framework of Spanish public diplomacy, focuses on *Two General Objectives*:

- 1) Creation of mutual knowledge.
- 2) Creation of mutually beneficial contacts.

## Mutual knowledge

The creation of mutual knowledge is one of the key functions of public diplomacy, which includes actions

aimed at achieving a social and political climate favourable to the interests of the country at the national and international levels. In this case, it is about generating knowledge about Africa in Spain and vice versa.

We refer to **knowledge** based on authenticity and credibility, which generates trust and helps the actor to relate to "the other" and understand the environment around them. When actors have the knowledge, they consider necessary, they can make well-founded decisions, being understood as a tool for influencing society, its economy and security.

At Casa Africa we see the creation of new knowledge as a process through which the stimuli generated by the different actions of public diplomacy (for example, messages, images and interaction) are interpreted by individuals and integrated into their perceptions, ideas, images and previous experiences. The way in which this image is managed and the messages are projected plays, therefore, an essential role in current international relations and as a public diplomacy tool.

Casa Africa contributes to promoting a **positive image of Africa**, multifaceted, detailed and as a continent full of opportunities. A current image that moves away from stereotypes, generalizations and the narrative focused on the problems of the continent and its people in order to strengthen the idea of Africa as a diverse, rich and complex continent. Likewise, it is about making people



understand that the future of Spain depends, to a large extent, on the future of this neighbour and that the best way to progress and move forward is doing it together.

**In addition, Casa Africa projects the competence, excellence, values and, in particular, Spain's commitment to Africa.** To do this, it has important advantages, such as the Spanish diplomatic presence in Africa, the private sector with an interest in the continent, the history of Spanish cooperation, the solidarity of Spanish society, a universal culture and language and the commitment to peace and security. It seeks to create trust in Spain, its people and *know-how*, supporting institutions, companies and civil society in their relations with Africa.

Taking into account its geostrategic position, Casa Africa particularly strengthens the role of the **Canary Islands as a meeting point between Europe, Africa and America**. The recognition of the islands as an outermost region in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) implies recognizing the specific and often unfavourable conditions to which these regions of the planet are subjected, but also the opportunities they show. Casa Africa is aligned with the regional government and assumes the need to strengthen this strategic position as a crossroads between continents.

### ***Mutual benefit contacts***

Promoting the creation of mutually beneficial relationships between

Africa and Spain and facilitating contact methods between their peoples are other main functions of the public diplomacy carried out by Casa Africa. People must meet, get to know each other and relate. Preferably, it is about making face-to-face contacts, although virtual meetings or hybrid formats are gaining ground.

These contacts must build trust since it is the basis of all social, commercial or diplomatic relations, and influences decisions about which actors are welcome at the negotiation and collaboration tables around the world. It is considered an emotional resource that makes it possible for people and institutions to take risks, contribute with their own resources and seek peaceful and lasting solutions.

Casa Africa also promotes the creation of **contact networks**. Networks are structures that bring people together with the aim of finding synergies and transversal or interdisciplinary solutions. They are useful for understanding and managing international relations, but they are equally important as a social resource in the economy and in relationships between all kinds of agents.

It also seeks to favour **strategic alliances** between other entities. In this field, Casa Africa acts as an interlocutor to mobilize African agents around the agendas in which Spain can provide added value and where there is a common interest. As a collaboration model, alliances (or



associations) go beyond a specific collaboration and seek to ensure the continuation and sustainability of the commitment through co-responsibility in the generation and management of mutually beneficial solutions and the creation of an agreed vision of the future. For this reason, Casa Africa intends to ensure that alliances are formalized and their results are documented so that they last over time, thus increasing their impact.

### **Institutional goals**

As part of the public administration, Casa Africa is required to comply with its attributes as defined in its Articles of Association and in the applicable regulatory framework. At the institutional level, it is proposed as a goal to optimize the management of resources in order to improve the results of public intervention and the position of the institution. It also seeks coherence between strategic, operational and budget planning (strategic plans, annual operating plans and annual budgets).

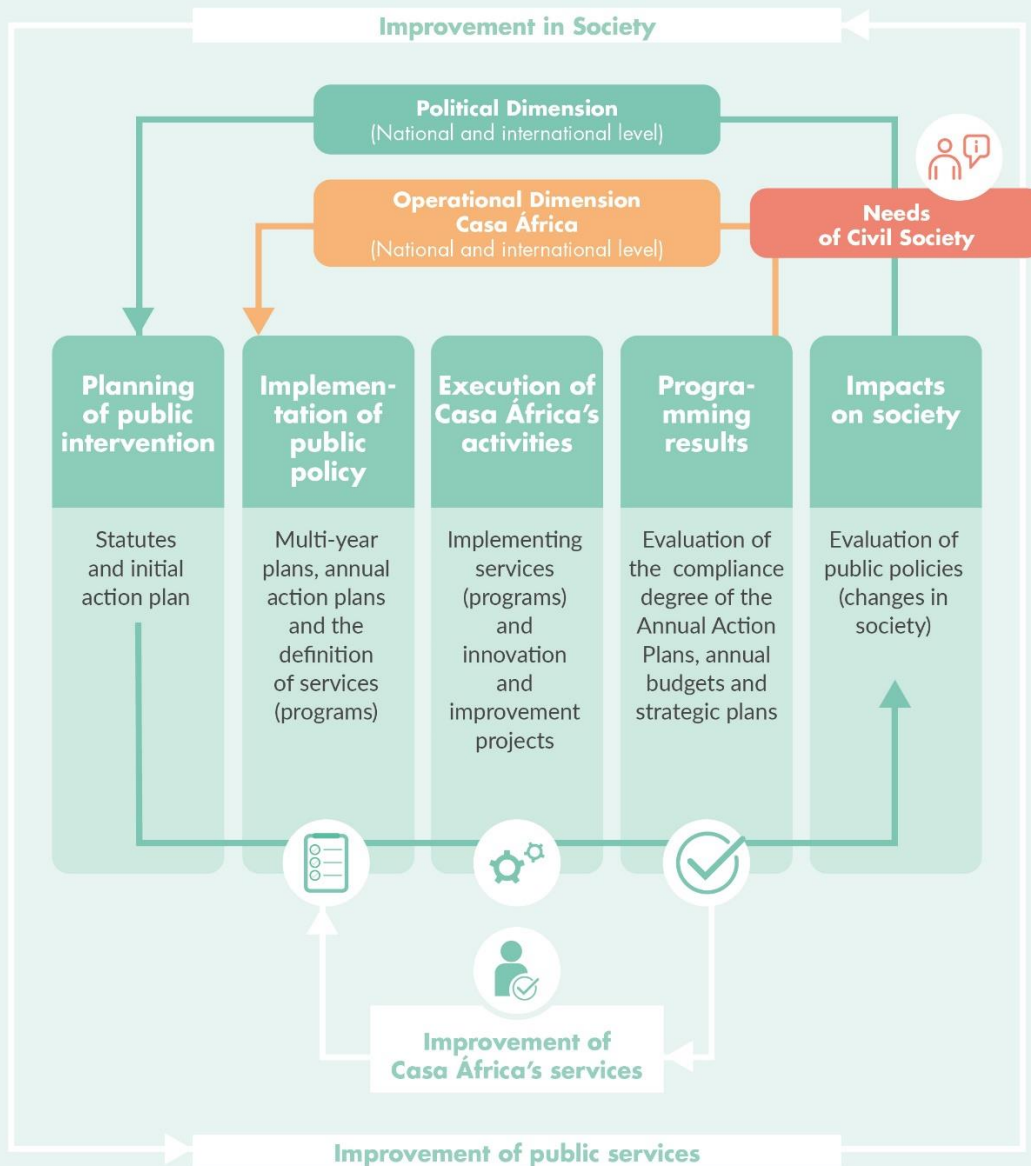
As a public organization pursuing excellence, Casa Africa considers the needs of citizens as its reason for being. For this reason, all external services are aimed at these beneficiaries and they are the final arbitrators of their quality. Promoting innovation and continuous improvement to address the continuous changes that are generated in practically all areas of society is also considered a key element.

Accordingly, its *institutional Goals* are defined as "Optimization of resource management through innovation and continuous improvement in order to improve the results of public intervention and the position of the institution":

- Optimal resource management
- Driving innovation and continuous improvement

## Casa África's Public Action Cycle

PLAN > DO > CHECK > ACT



## Main areas

The *Main areas* give an answer to the question “*what to do and deal with?*”. The priorities defined in these areas guide the design and production of services for external stakeholders.

Casa Africa defines its thematic priorities in its own field of action: public diplomacy. The areas chosen for the next triennium correspond to some of the most important challenges of our time and are considered especially significant for the relations with the neighbouring continent.

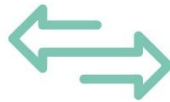
## Thematic Priorities

*Thematic Priorities* are those priority contents that will give meaning and coherence to our planning. They are broad and complex key issues and contents that can be dealt with from different perspectives.

It should be noted that, in a transversal way, priority will be given to new interdisciplinary approaches crossing the traditional boundaries between different issues that can give rise to new relationships between the economic, social and human development.



Climate change  
and ecological  
transition (SO 1.1)



Migration phenomenon  
and its consequences  
(OE 1.2)



Women role in  
development  
(SO 1.3)



**1. Climate change and ecological transition.** Climate change and the issues it generates constitute a top-level global challenge connecting spaces located beyond borders. It affects trade, transport, infrastructure, finance, the movement of people, ecosystems, geopolitics, security, etc. Within this framework - the ecological transition - the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, water and tourism are some of the issues of special interest. Therefore, the fight against climate change, solutions for its mitigation and adaptation measures will condition a newspecific roadmap for our programming<sup>1</sup>.

**2. Migratory phenomena and their consequences.** Migratory phenomena represent an important challenge for the EU, Spain and the Canary Islands. Casa Africa's approach focuses on publicizing the contexts driving the flows and the realities experienced by migrants, both in their countries of origin and in Spain. We defend human rights, inclusion and diversity in the construction of an open,

tolerant and racism-free society.

**3. The role of women in development.** Women are a source of vitality throughout Africa. However, discrimination limits the opportunities available to them. Aware of this reality, Casa Africa considers it essential to promote the role of women as promoters of economic, social and cultural development, making reference leading women well-known.

These priorities are aligned with the *Main Areas of the 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy of Spain*, with the Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 and with the 2063 Agenda of the African Union (see more Annex IV: *Alignment table between the thematic priorities of Casa Africa and the Main Areas of the 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy of the Government of Spain, the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Goals of the African Union Agenda 2063*). In this way, the aim is to ensure the highest level of coherence between the programming of Casa Africa and that of its main consortium entity, its international commitments and the interests of Spain and the African continent itself. This approach is also intended to facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Within public diplomacy, the so-called *Green Diplomacy* is making its way as a tool that promotes and

leads a more sustainable future and positions the country on the international agenda.





the monitoring and traceability of the results generated in relation to the objectives of the Spanish foreign action (see more Annex IV).

Casa Africa's commitment to the 2030 Agenda has been in place since 2018. The SDGs (see more Annex IV) are taken as the main reference, both because of their relevance for the development of the neighbouring continent and our own country. Casa Africa strongly advocates for this Agenda, its values and its usefulness as a unifying tool between multiple actors to overcome the current shared global challenges, with a clear focus on building a better world. Priority is given to topics of special relevance regarding the relations between Spain and Africa and capitalize on the comparative strengths of Spain and its values.

The priorities of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union are also integrated into the strategy (see more Annex IV) to ensure and make visible the presence of African interests. We are convinced that it is key to laying the foundations for a shared agenda that will generate benefits for Spain and Africa.

Annex IV: Alignment table between the thematic priorities of Casa Africa and the Main Areas of the 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy of the

Government of Spain, the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Goals of the African Union Agenda 2063.

## **Geographical Priorities**

In line with the *geographical priorities* of the *III Africa Plan* and those defined by the Government of the Canary Islands (Interreg-MAC 2021-2027 programme), Casa Africa will focus its action on the following countries: Angola, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania, as well as the Sahel and West Africa as a whole. These geographical priorities will be taken into consideration at the time of setting the content (themes) of the scheduled activities and defining the African participation and collaboration in them. That said, it should be noted that Casa Africa is located in the Canary Islands, a strategic enclave for the relations with Africa, taking care of a large part of its programming at its headquarters in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, although face-to-face activities are also held in the rest of the Spanish territory. To a lesser extent, programming is deployed in African countries but in this case, priority will be given to countries defined as prior countries.

### Priority Countries



## Transversal Axis

The *Transversal Axis* define how to act in order to generate the best results, understood as key to success. They answer the question “*how to provide the service?*”. These priorities influence the design and implementation of all services.

1. **Citizen participation.** As part of the Spanish public administration, the needs and

aspirations of citizens are the starting point of our action. It is the true protagonist of our work and must, therefore, transcend the role of a mere recipient to become an indispensable collaborator, both in the definition of services and in the generation of results. Citizen participation is an essential tool in a democratic society



and we therefore advocate for a service model aimed at generating dialogue, interaction and co-creation of projects with African and Spanish citizens. We want to be an open administration, capable of retaining our beneficiaries thanks to the real value generated for them.

**2. African contribution.** African participation in the activity of Casa Africa and its definition is essential in the appropriation of the agenda and generation of their own story, thus achieving a deeper understanding of their situation, needs, priorities and projects. No one can explain Africa better than African people and institutions - due to their knowledge and *know-how* - the reason why Casa Africa will promote intercultural dialogue as a way of deepening mutual knowledge. Making the African partners leading actors is also fundamental for the identification of trends and emerging actors in the continent.

**3. Academic and scientific collaboration.** Science diplomacy is called upon to play a prominent role in consolidating the relations between the African continent and Spain and, above all, in generating new solutions to the challenges we share. Scientific collaboration has proven to be an essential

element to promote integration and cohesion and, for this reason, Casa Africa emphasizes the coordination between academic and scientific institutions and the sharing of best practices.

**4. Presence of Spain in Africa.** In addition to the work already undertaken to spread a positive image of Africa in Spain, Casa Africa strengthens its projection of Spain as a country of trust among African people both in Africa and among the African diaspora in Spain. Spain's commitment to the continent, our culture, the Spanish language, sectors of excellence and other aspects representing a comparative advantage in the African continent serve as the basis for promoting the image of Spain as a modern, supportive, innovative country, creator of talent in Africa.

**5. Innovation and digital transformation.** Casa Africa promotes innovation as a tool to face new global challenges of shared interest between Africa and Spain. New technologies broaden horizons to share and generate ideas, values, solutions and alliances in a collaborative way, broadening the scope of our public action and increasing the spectrum towards new partners and less likely actors (radical collaborations). Likewise,



continuous improvement accompanied by digital transformation has become a necessity to ensure the relevance and continuity of our services.

## Assets and Instruments

*Assets and instruments* define how to allocate and manage resources so that they lead to the fulfilment of the *Mission and Vision* (they answer the question: *how to manage and allocate resources?*) They are grouped into three value drivers: internal processes, learning and growth, and financial resources.

### Internal processes

**1. Efficient, agile, accessible and transparent management.** In accordance with the values of the institution and with the aim of increasing the confidence of citizens and other interest groups, Casa Africa exercises an ethical and responsible administration paying attention to efficiency in the management and the use of resources. To get even closer to African and Spanish societies and place their needs at the centre of attention, it is considered essential to move towards an agile and dynamic entity, free from traditional bureaucratic models, and increase transparency by providing complete, useful and truthful information on the activity of the institution.

**2. Responsible and sustainable management.** As a public entity committed to sustainability and the 2030 Agenda, Casa Africa must be a model institution leading the ecological transition in its environment. This implies acting responsibly and sustainably in our own administrative and contractual activity, following the principles of rationality, necessity, suitability and efficiency.

### Learning and growth

**3. Continuous training.** In a changing context as the current one - a context of learning throughout life - it is necessary to keep the professional quality of the team and its motivation to contribute to a better service quality. For this reason, Casa Africa is committed to carrying out training actions and other training initiatives which promote personal and professional development, both through formal and informal training, focusing on the personal and work life balance of the team.

**4. Expansion of human resources.** The re-launch of the consortium's activity requires the adaptation of the workforce so that it is in line with the priorities of this strategic plan and the



demands of the consortium entities. The institution's trend towards greater professionalism and the increase in activities and fields of action must be accompanied by the necessary resources in order to fulfil the commitment with consortium entities. In addition, this expansion is in line with the objective of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of reinforcing the function of the "Houses" as entities belonging to the ecosystem of the State's foreign action.

## Financial Resources

- 5. Sustainability and financial strength.** The principles of sustainability and budget balance guide our actions, optimizing the resources. Likewise, greater co-financing of agents aligned with our objectives and financing from other external sources such as European, state or local funds are promoted. On the other hand, the achievement of our objectives requires stable means or resources which consortium entities must constantly ensure and guarantee for their future with a long-term vision.

## Operational framework

### Operational Activity

Casa África annually organizes some **450 activities** including events of all kinds, strategic communication actions and others. The activities are aimed at different audiences depending on the defined issues and objectives, both online and offline. Some examples are: professional meetings, conferences, training courses, cultural activities, competitions and publications. Strategic communication on the web and on social media is also very diverse and includes video editing, video infographics, publication of electronic books, awareness campaigns, etc. Casa Africa also acts as a facilitator of contacts through its events or other services. Internal services are provided with the aim of optimizing the management of resources and achieving constant improvement of the services addressed to its external stakeholders.

All the programming is carried out on an annual basis and contains programmes that have been consolidated over time due to their quality and good results and new programmes.

Finally, in order to achieve financial sustainability and strategic coherence in the schedule, it is linked to the annual budget, adapting the budgetary classification to the strategic planning.



## Services areas of action

Given that public diplomacy as a whole is a very broad concept, the establishment of areas of action as conceptual subcategories allows for a greater efficiency to be achieved at the operational level, including the management, organization and communication of services. A difference is made between the areas corresponding to external services: public, economic, cultural, digital and institutional diplomacy; and internal services, all grouped in the area called "Management".

- Public Diplomacy
- Economic Diplomacy
- Cultural Diplomacy
- Digital Diplomacy
- Institutional
- Management

## Programmes

Within each area of action, different **programmes** are developed and have been established as a result of the good practices developed. Programme management offers advantages such as greater efficiency in its management, organization, communication and evaluation of results.

Most of Casa Africa's programmes aim to offer one or more services to the different external interest groups of the organization. On the other hand, there are internal service programmes, whose general purpose is to optimize the management of public resources.

In addition, there is programming grouped under "Other activities" for each area of action, which include funds that are reserved for collaborations with other entities which do not fit within the framework of Casa Africa's programmes but require the necessary flexibility to explore new ways of collaboration and to innovate together with other entities.

### PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (PD):

- PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS
- #AFRICAESNOTICIA
- 2030 AGENDA FORUMS
- CASA AFRICA IN AFRICA
- TEACHING ABOUT AFRICA
- COMPETITIONS AND CASA AFRICA AWARDS
- ACADEMY AND SCIENCE COLLABORATIONS
- CASA AFRICA COLLECTIONS
- RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE MEDIA
- CASA AFRICA GUIDED TOURS
- AYOKA FELLOWSHIP
- #PERIODISMOAFRICA
- AFRICAN LANGUAGES
- MIGRATION AWARENESS
- Other public diplomacy activities

### ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY (ED):

- AFRICA GROWS
- WOMEN ADVANCE
- AFRITURISM
- TRAINING IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD
- EUROPEAN PROJECTS
- Other economic diplomacy activities

### CULTURAL DIPLOMACY (CD):

- VIS A VIS
- EXHIBITIONS
- AFRICA LIVES
- AFRICAN LETTERS
- MOVIES
- AFRICA ON THE MOVE





- AFRICAN WEEK IN LA GOMERA
- Other cultural diplomacy activities

- Team and Management of Casa Africa

#### **DIGITAL DIPLOMACY (DD):**

- INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITE  
CASAÁFRICA.ES
- CASA AFRICA MEDIA LIBRARY
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- DIGITAL PUBLISHING RESOURCES
- MEMORY PROJECT
- CASA AFRICA ANSWERS
- Other digital diplomacy activities

#### **INSTITUTIONAL SCOPE (IN):**

- TIPS FROM CASA AFRICA
- INSTITUTIONAL EVENTS
- INSTITUTIONAL IMAGE
- Other institutional activities

#### **MANAGEMENT (GE)**

- ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
- SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT
- ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTING
- Human Resources
- ASSET MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL EXPENSES
- PROGRAMMING COORDINATION
- TRANSPARENCY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE
- TRAINING
- STRATEGIC ALLIANCES
- ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY
- ADMINISTRATIVE MODERNIZATION
- Other management activities

### **Casa Africa Stakeholders**

Casa Africa defines the following main groups of interest:

- Beneficiaries of the services
- Collaborators
- Consortium entities

#### **Beneficiaries of the services**

The main beneficiaries of the institution's services are Spanish citizens, with the African diaspora and afro-descendants occupying a prominent place, inevitable bridges between Spanish and African realities. Given that our motto speaks of a rapprochement between Africa and Spain, African communities are also, obviously, beneficiaries of the action and, in fact, more and more activities aimed at these audiences are being carried out.

Casa Africa directly addresses Spanish and African citizens to influence their attitude towards Africa and Spain, their people and the relations between both of them. Among these beneficiaries are representatives of institutions, companies and their different associations, universities and learning centres, NGOs, the media and other relevant actors.

Each of Casa Africa's programmes has one or more defined target audiences. It is key to define in detail who they are, differentiate them and identify their needs and communication consumption patterns in each case in order to offer services and establish a two-way relationship.

#### **Collaborators**

Collaboration with other public and private entities is the *modus operandi* of Casa Africa. To do this, specific





agreements and general action protocols are signed seeking to consolidate alliances with other organizations that share strategic objectives with Casa Africa. This allows for a better use of available resources and greater efficiency in management, with a multiplier effect that benefits the signatory parties. In this way, Casa Africa manages to mobilize significant additional efforts and resources to fulfil its mission and vision. In addition, and given that Casa Africa is the only public institution devoted exclusively to improve the relationships with sub-Saharan Africa, it is logical that it assumes a facilitating role between different actors, seeking synergies and avoiding duplication between different areas and actors in Spain and Africa.

In an increasingly complex context, the diversification and expansion of these strategic alliances are necessary, not only for the organization of the activity and its scope, but also for innovation and digital transformation.

Following the established in its Articles of Association, it collaborates, for example, with **universities and think tanks, chambers of commerce, associations, NGOs, festivals, the media, island councils and municipalities, but also with international organizations such as the UN, African Union, OECD, African Development Bank and the World Bank.** In the case of initiatives with an impact on the African continent, Casa Africa collaborates with actors from African civil society

and the Spanish actors making up the ecosystem of foreign action in Africa.

On the other hand, the activity of Casa Africa depends to a large extent on the active contribution of **experts, public figures, artists, journalists, professionals of all kinds and other people with the ability to influence** in different environments who add value to the programming activities through their knowledge. In this regard, thanks to global interconnection, non-official or non-governmental actors have more and more influence over public opinion and international relations. In fact, in terms of specialized audiences, they often have greater credibility than other actors, such as authorities or government agents. The most successful agents are those that seek dialogue, negotiation and innovation between groups of people, organizations and individuals from different communities.

For this reason, the **African actors** who are invited to participate do not necessarily belong to the structures of government or power, as in the case of traditional diplomacy. We are talking about intellectuals, university professors and researchers, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, journalists and members of the civil society who work both inside and outside their countries to create knowledge, disseminate it and generate thought, debate and development. Many of them are **opinion leaders** who give voice or mobilize a certain group of people, raise awareness about certain issues or promote agendas in line with the objectives of Casa Africa.



The **media** - given their impact on public opinion and wide reach - are also key contributors. The media have shown a growing interest in coverage and in the open and sensitive approaches to Africa, paying special attention and support and facilitating

a different communication about the African continent and its realities. It is not only about traditional media, but also alternative media, including a wide spectrum of actors active in social networks.

## **ANNEX I: Casa Africa Organizational Chart 2022- 2024**

### **ANNEX I: New public diplomacy and Spanish public diplomacy**

The so-called “new public diplomacy” adopts a broad and multidirectional approach including a wide variety of actors. It points to the democratization of networks of information and relationships through new media and communication technologies. It is a channel of direct contact with the community and for the empowerment of non-state actors. Public diplomacy has reinforced its role and legitimacy as part of the foreign action of States and as part of international relations as a whole.

We must also note that foreign policy is increasingly linked to the internal policy of each State and foreign policy is, in this regard, a variable of internal policy. International, political, strategic, commercial, financial, social, demographic, scientific-technological, cultural and communication processes can negatively or positively influence the efforts of a government to consolidate democracy and the rule

of law, advancing in the transformation.

According to the Spanish model, public diplomacy seeks to publicize and project the reality of our country with greater efficiency and scope and explain Spanish foreign policy and the country's positions in relation to the

main international issues to a wide variety of recipients.

That said, it is true that the network of organizations of Spanish public diplomacy carries out a large part of its work in the national territory to make their respective geographical areas known to Spanish people and show their cultures, communities and business opportunities. Key actors from the economy, society, culture and academia, among others, are invited to participate in different forums in Spain, making known by first-hand their historical and current realities and their plans for the future. But in the case of Casa Africa, its work does not end internally; it is also projected abroad through these actors and directly addressed to African civil society.

In addition to the network of organizations, the Ministry of Foreign



Affairs and Cooperation identifies *Instituto Cervantes*, Cultural Offices, *Fundación Carolina*, the Foundations-boards and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation as public diplomacy entities. Embassies and cultural centres (Malabo and Bata on the African continent) also carry out activities in this field of work, primarily addressed to civil society.

## **ANNEX II: Hypothesis relating to Casa Africa's public diplomacy and its General Objectives**

### **Hypothesis of Casa Africa's public diplomacy**

The underlying theory of public intervention is that there are **needs** or issues in society that individuals cannot solve on their own, so the **solution** is defined and assumed as the responsibility of the State, financed by public funds. For each public intervention there must be a hypothesis and a causal model between political priorities, their programmes, the desired results and the impact sought to be generated in the community as a final goal.

Given that Casa Africa is part of the Spanish foreign action and public diplomacy, it does not only watch over Spain's interests in the national territory, but also aims to promote the country's position and values on the global agenda. Its action makes this institution a conciliatory instrument between national and global interests. It promotes

particularly the values and interests shared with Africa and mutually beneficial relations in search of a better world.

Casa Africa's hypothesis on the cause-effect relationship between needs and their solutions in its field of action (public diplomacy) is defined as follows:

- **Need:** Hispanic-African relationships include missed opportunities in terms of economic, social and cultural development for both sides, as well as in terms of risk and conflict prevention. This situation is due to: 1) lack of knowledge and trust towards the other and their abilities and 2) absence of personal and collective contact networks which would facilitate the development of collaboration projects between Africa and Spain.
- **Solution:** Generate mutual knowledge and contact networks between Africans and Spaniards through public diplomacy actions with Africa. These knowledge, social and mutual trust resources are considered necessary to generate benefits to Spanish and African society and take advantage of the potential that could be generated from the relations between Africa and Spain.



### **General objectives of Casa Africa**

Based on this hypothesis, the General Objectives of the activity are defined as fostering trust-based relations between Africa and Spain through 1) the creation of knowledge about Africa in Spain and vice versa and 2) the promotion of relations by generating lasting contact networks in order to promote social, economic and security development on both sides.

### **ANNEX III: Origin of Casa Africa's intervention and its historical context**

In 2001, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation decided to create Casa Africa based on the accumulated experience of Casa de America. During the years prior to the creation of the institution, intense contact was kept between the consortium administrations and similar Spanish institutions and European and African governments with an eye toward public diplomacy regarding sub-Saharan Africa. Likewise, the path towards the creation of defined national strategies regarding sub-Saharan Africa in the form of "*Africa Plan*" started as a common objective of the Spanish administrations at the national, regional and even municipal and local levels.

In 2006, Spain launched the first *Africa Plan 2006-2008*, a specific national foreign policy for the continent that considered as national interests - apart from irregular

migratory flows - the political, economic and development cooperation, justified in the co-responsibility in global issues such as poverty, the terrorist threat or the preservation of the environment (it must also be noted that there is a prior "*Africa Plan*" 2001 - 2004).

In this context, and in the same year, Casa Africa was born. Its location in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria was also motivated by the so-called *Crisis of the cayucos* in 2006. During that year, 37,108 immigrants arrived in the Canary archipelago by sea, a situation to which the Government reacted by launching its own rescue operation and subsequently another one with the help of the European Union. The EU deployed the first maritime mission of the European Border Control Agency (Frontex), which was in charge of coordinating surveillance work on the African Atlantic coast (with French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish troops) to prevent these boats to go to sea. Another key to managing the situation was the agreements with Mauritania and Senegal, which allowed the Spanish Military Police (*Guardia Civil*) to work together with the respective countries on their own coasts, as well as the mechanisms that guaranteed repatriation.

Among the priorities of the first *Africa Plan* are democracy and peace, social and economic wealth, promoting education, expanding political, diplomatic and institutional presence and cultural exchange. In *Objective number 6. Strengthening of cultural and scientific cooperation and*



cultural projects at the service of development, Casa Africa and its function are defined: "One of the reasons explaining the traditional lack of a true global and concerted foreign action of Spain regarding Africa arises from the lack of knowledge of African cultural realities on the part of Spanish society, and vice versa, since the same could be said in relation to the diversity of the Spanish culture. The ease of communication and transmission of information, the increase in Spanish tourism to African countries, and the growing presence of African citizens or those of African origin in Spain make it an urgent need for the Spanish Government to consider the rapprochement of Spain and Africa through the promotion of mutual knowledge and appreciation as an objective of its action abroad towards the sub-Saharan region. Therefore, the opening of Casa Africa in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in 2006 constitutes a central vector within this section". Later, in addition, reference is made to the importance of developing activities aimed at the integration of the African diaspora in Spain.

In this first *Africa Plan*, public diplomacy is defined as "a way of foreign action that the Spanish Administration has decided to promote as one of the essential functions of our foreign service. Just as traditional diplomacy deals primarily with relations between governments, public diplomacy addresses public opinion in third countries, the business sector and civil society in general. Public diplomacy is of great importance in the relationship between Spain and sub-Saharan countries, given the great ignorance of

our current realities. In addition, the phenomenon of immigration, both legal and illegal, is promoting a distorted or enormously limited image of various sub-Saharan countries in Spain and vice versa".

Subsequently, on June 26, 2006, Casa Africa was created, under the figure of a public consortium, as a Public Law Entity of an inter-administrative nature, with legal personality and full capacity to act. Its operation and activity are governed by the provisions of its Articles of Association, where its object is defined as follows: "[...]management of socio-cultural, training, institutional and support services for development and economic cooperation [...]", with the aim of improving relations between Spain and Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, Casa Africa is a meeting and exchange space seeking to promote the global development of Spain-Africa relations through the promotion of institutional, economic, scientific, cultural, educational, academic and cooperation activities.

After a few years of operation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation launched the second *Plan Africa* (Government of Spain, 2009), where Casa Africa is defined in the following terms: "Casa Africa, created within the framework of the *Africa Plan 2006-2008*, is consolidated in this Plan as an essential instrument of Spanish and European public diplomacy in African countries. Casa Africa, given its high potential and its ability to be a privileged space for meeting, dialogue





*and mutual understanding between Africa, Europe and Spain, acquires a greater importance and content within the Africa Plan 2009-2012”.*

During the years of the Spanish economic crisis of 2008, Casa Africa received instructions from its consortia to give more importance - within public diplomacy - to economic diplomacy and to strengthen public-private collaboration. Between 2012 and 2014, Casa Africa made an effort to create new collaboration networks, including *think tanks*, non-governmental organizations and foundations or associations with which it had not previously worked. It is considered that it can only expand its scope in alliance with them and through networking in general, and in social media in particular.

Also in 2012, Spain launched the *Marca España* project which, as in other countries, seeks to improve the image of the country in order to position its companies and improve its position at the international level, damaged as a result of economic problems. As explained in the *Foreign Action Strategy* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, 2015): *“The starting point was to bridge the gap between the reality of the country - its economic, cultural, artistic and creative potential, its historical heritage, its technological level, a supportive civil society, its human capital, the weight of its multinationals, just to mention some variables - and their representation - their “image” or “stereotype” -”.*

In this document, along with the traditional priorities of Spanish

foreign policy, the communication aspect was strengthened (including public diplomacy). It focused on four areas, all with implications for such communication: i) coherence, efficiency and transparency of foreign action, ii) promoting and projecting our values and interests, iii) placing the citizen at the centre of foreign policy, and iv) projecting ourselves globally as an advanced country. According to this document, both *Marca España* and public diplomacy are considered essential instruments to promote national interests towards public opinions from third countries, using mutual knowledge and alliances with the ultimate goal of achieving greater influence in the world.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation defines different entities as instruments of Foreign Action in general and of Spanish public diplomacy in particular: the Network of Organizations, *Instituto Cervantes*, Cultural Offices, Fundación Carolina, Foundations-Boards and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation. These are entities that in many cases, have other additional functions apart from public diplomacy. From that moment, communication, alliances and influence are consolidated as key concepts for Casa Africa’s activity, along with its role as interlocutor with the civil society both in Spain and abroad. Casa Africa incorporates this aspect in its programming and it is also integrated it in its second *Strategic Plan 2015-2017*.



At this time, another document entitled *Public Diplomacy as a Foreign Policy Challenge* (2014) was published as a result of a seminar organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Diplomatic School, together with the think tank *Real Instituto Elcano*. They explain that the Network of Public Diplomacy Organizations has become a “solid and innovative instrument of public diplomacy whose activity aims to cover virtually all regions of the world. The programming of the organizations includes activities of a cultural, scientific and economic nature, with a clear role for civil society. These organizations, furthermore, are not only an example of collaboration between the different levels of government in Spain, they are also an example of public-private collaboration”. The importance of networks and the influence of digital transformation is also emphasized in this work.

Another publication, *Spanish diplomacy facing the digital challenge*, by the Diplomatic Information Office (2016), places the focus on the inevitable implications that technological development has on Foreign Action and also on public diplomacy, given that social networks allow actors to bring foreign policy closer to citizens in an agile and simple way and it makes it easier to know the opinion of the citizens. All this means a continuous learning and a key element of the so-called *Digital Diplomacy*, the most powerful tool of public diplomacy. In addition, they explain that the impacts of the new digital age:

“go beyond reflections on our soft power. They also have to do with the

*ability to quickly adapt to the future, to modernize our methods and mentalities and to make ourselves more flexible in order to continue being relevant drivers of an increasingly democratized, event-sensitive and horizontal foreign action”.*

In 2017, Casa Africa intends to agree on and document the definition of its own public diplomacy. This need arises from the absence of such a definition in the Articles of Association of the entity. Such description details the creation of: 1) relationships, 2) knowledge and 3) goodwill (as collected below in its third Strategic Plan). Together, the three objectives seek to influence their audiences (African and Spanish) so that they can take better advantage of the opportunities offered by Africa and promote sustainable development on the continent (which, as our direct neighbour, has a direct impact on Spain). Although this definition helped specify the type of work that would be carried out and its purposes, they were still very general and non-quantifiable objectives.

In 2019, the *III Africa Plan* was approved under the title “*Spain and Africa, challenge and opportunity*”. In its Section 3.1.3. *Institutional Strengthening*, there is a reference to Casa Africa and its work: “*We aspire to a two-way communication: in Spain to promote knowledge of the realities, opportunities and changes that occur on the African continent, and in Africa about Spain, and Spain as a bridge with Europe and Latin America. An important asset is the intense work of public*





*diplomacy carried out by the organizations, both Casa Arabe and especially Casa Africa, based in the Canary Islands, which in 2017 celebrated its tenth anniversary. Casa Africa is one of the most emblematic projects of the new African policy of Spain and has five fundamental fields of action: public, economic, cultural, digital diplomacy and the institutional field. Casa Africa contributes to creating trust in Spain and the know-how of its institutions, companies and civil society and its activities intend to show Spanish citizens a positive image of Africa, more multifaceted, detailed and full of opportunities, an innovative, creative and entrepreneurial vision of the continent”.*

For the elaboration of Casa Africa’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021, the priorities of the *III Africa Plan* of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (with the collaboration of Casa Africa) were used as a starting point. In addition, the United Nations 2030 *Agenda* and its Sustainable Development Goals were established as the highest reference for its international commitment (document signed by Spain together with the other UN members in 2015). Finally, the organization incorporated the priorities of the other consortium entities to promote relations with Africa (Government of the Canary Islands and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria City Council), the indications Casa Africa’s management, its own accumulated experience and *know-how* and the needs of citizens.

During the preparation of this Plan, an attempt was made to correct the deficiency detected by the Court of Auditors in relation to the objectives of the previous Plan as *“excessively generic and unquantifiable”*. As a Strategic Plan of the entity, the *Mission* and *Vision* were defined and the activity and economic resources addressed to three *Strategic Objectives*: 1) supporting the processes of the 2030 Agenda and those of shared economic growth, 2) promoting Casa Africa and the Canary Islands as a meeting point between Spain and Africa and 3) favouring the creation of contact networks.

In addition, four *Transversal Priorities* and six *Institutional Objectives* were included. Additionally, a list of services of the institution was detailed for the first time: the *Casa Africa Programmes*.

## ANNEX IV: Alignment table between the thematic priorities of Casa Africa and the Main Areas of the 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy of the Spanish Government, the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Goals of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union

THEMATIC PRIORITIES OF CASA AFRICA 2022-2024	MAIN AREAS OF THE 2021-2024 FOREIGN ACTION STRATEGY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS OF THE UN 2030 AGENDA	OBJECTIVES OF THE AGENDA 2063 OF THE AFRICAN UNION
Climate change	More sustainable, liveable and green planet	ODS 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15	Objective 6 and 7
Migratory phenomena and their consequences	Integrated, fair and equitable global economy and society	SDG 8, 9, 10 and 16	Objectives 4, 5, 9 and 20
The role of women in development	Human rights, democracy, security and feminism	ODS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10	Objectives 1, 2, 3, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19

### Main Areas of the 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy of the Government of Spain

- More sustainable, liveable and green planet
- Integrated, fair and equitable global economy and society
- Human rights, democracy, security and feminism
- Regional integration and strengthened multilateralism

<http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/es/SalaDePrensa/ElMinisterioInforma/Documents/Proyecto%20Estrategia%20Accio%cc%81n%20Exterior%202021-2024.pdf>



### **Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda**

- End of poverty
- Zero hunger
- Health & Wellness
- Quality Education
- Gender equality
- Clean water and sanitation
- Affordable and clean energy
- Decent work and economic growth
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- Reduction of inequalities
- Sustainable cities and communities
- Responsible production and consumption
- Climate action
- Submarine life
- Life of terrestrial ecosystems
- Peace, justice and strong institutions
- Alliances to achieve the objectives

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/en/>

### **Objectives of Agenda 2063**

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens.
2. Well-educated citizens and a skills revolution based on science, technology and innovation.
3. Healthy and well-nourished citizens.
4. Transformed economies.
5. Modern agriculture for higher productivity and production.

6. Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth.
7. Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities.
8. A united Africa (Federal or Confederate).
9. Continental financial and monetary institutions established and functioning.
10. World-class infrastructure traverses Africa.
11. Democratic values, practices, universal human rights principles, justice and the rule of law are reinforced.
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place.
13. Peace, security and stability are preserved.
14. A stable and peaceful Africa.
15. A fully functional and operational APSA.
16. The African cultural revival is paramount.
17. Total gender equality in all areas of life.
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children.
19. Africa as an important partner in world affairs and peaceful coexistence.
20. Africa takes full responsibility for financing its Development Goals.

<https://au.int/en/agenda2063/sdgs>