



Tackling global racial
injustices across Africa
& Europe.

Annual Report 2024



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Executive Summary



2024 was a year of growth, learning, and powerful collective action for African Futures Lab. Across Africa and Europe, we stood alongside communities whose experiences of racial injustice and historical harm are too often ignored, and we worked to make their demands visible in public debates, policy spaces, and global forums.

Much of our work this year centered on deepening partnerships and creating spaces where affected communities could strengthen their strategies and shape their own advocacy. Through three Mobilization Labs (MobLabs) focused on restitution of human remains in West Africa, justice for the Métis of the Great Lakes, and climate reparations in East and West Africa, we brought together activists, researchers, and community organizations to advance shared agendas. These MobLabs reminded us of the power of collective thinking and the importance of grounding our work in the realities and priorities of those most impacted.

We also launched our first major advocacy campaign on justice and reparations for Métis children abducted by the Belgian colonial administration and for their African mothers. Developed closely with Métis organizations, the campaign opened new conversations in Geneva, Brussels, and beyond about the rights of mothers whose voices have been silenced for decades. The testimonies shared in these spaces reaffirmed why this work matters and why reparations must remain a global priority.

On climate justice, we continued to push for a clearer public understanding of climate reparations by publishing a policy brief, producing a dedicated season of our podcast Future Perfect - *Futur Antérieur*, and hosting six online debates on the topic. These efforts brought together thinkers, activists and organizers to place climate reparations within a broader history of extraction, inequality, and resilience, making the issue both accessible and urgent for wider audiences.

Throughout the year, we strengthened ties with civil society partners, movement leaders, and allies committed to advancing justice for African and Afro-descendant communities, with a strong focus on deepening South to South collaboration. Our work in 2024 laid the foundation for the next stage. In 2025, we will open our first regional office in Nairobi to anchor our presence on the African continent and strengthen connections with movements across the Global South.

This new chapter unfolds alongside historic milestones: the first Pan-African Festival on Reparations in Nairobi, the UN Climate Conference (COP 30) in Belém where African and Latin American movements will push jointly for climate justice, and the One Million Black Women's March in Brasília which will deepen South to South feminist collaboration.

As we enter 2025, we remain guided by the principles that shaped our work this year: solidarity, accountability, and the conviction that reparative justice is essential for a fairer and more inclusive future.



1. Introduction

The global political landscape in which struggles for equality, racial justice, and reparations are unfolding has grown increasingly polarized. In 2024, far right and fascist parties gained ground across several countries, particularly in the Global North, directly challenging the core themes of our work; racial justice at the intersection of climate justice and gender justice. These agendas are systematically under attack.

At the same time, the circle of allies committed to advancing justice and reparations for both historical and contemporary racial violence is widening. More international organizations are recognizing the importance of this agenda and integrating it into their work, and global forums that had long ignored these issues are finally beginning to engage.

It was within this polarized landscape that we launched two major campaigns in 2024: one on the abduction of mixed-race children from their African mothers in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi; and another focused on climate reparations. Through public events, strategic advocacy, and digital mobilization, we brought demands for justice and reparations into civil society spaces as well as national and international arenas. We also rolled out a public awareness campaign on climate reparations, featuring a series of podcasts and online debates aimed at broader public engagement.

Across both campaigns, our goal has been to influence public discourse in Africa and Europe by placing racial justice and reparations – rooted in the intersecting inequalities of gender and climate – at the forefront of political conversations. Our aim is to embed within the public consciousness in both regions the understanding that, regardless of the headwinds we face, we cannot cease amplifying the voices of those demanding justice and reparations for historical and contemporary racial violence. This has been the guiding purpose of the African Futures Lab throughout 2024, and it is a commitment we will continue to uphold in the years ahead, even in the face of intensifying political hostility.



2. Research and Impact

In 2024, we advanced our mission with renewed determination to close persistent gaps in knowledge and expertise on global racial injustice. These gaps continue to constrain civil society actors and public and private institutions, limiting their ability to pursue justice, articulate demands for reparations, and implement urgent structural reforms.

To tackle this, we built on tools developed in previous years, drawing on field-based research, practitioner-led publications, and collaborative spaces that bring experts and activists together. This work not only deepened understanding of pertinent issues but also produced practical, strategic solutions that equip our partners to drive real and lasting change.

2.1 Research Reports

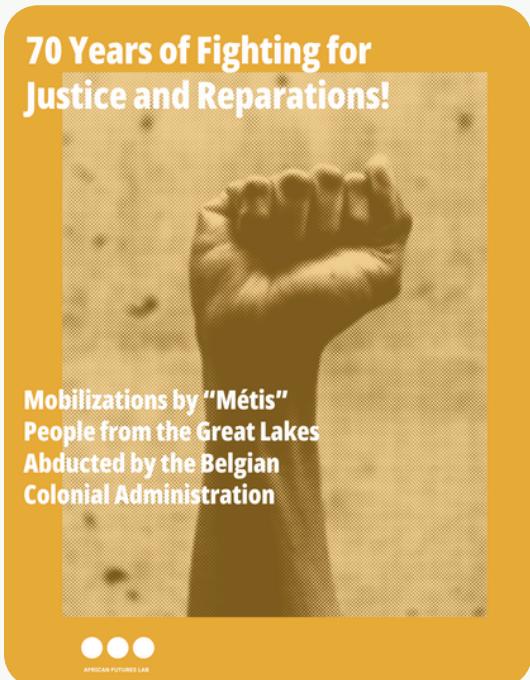
In 2024, we continued our series of research reports under the project “Pursuing an African Agenda for Reparations for Colonial Crimes and Slavery”. This project supports longstanding African demands for reparations as a critical step toward addressing the multiple crises facing contemporary African societies.

We published two major reports in 2024. The first focused on Métis children from the Great Lakes region of Africa who were abducted by the Belgian colonial administration. The second examined reparation demands related to the cancellation of Southern African states' sovereign debts and the decolonization of multilateral financial institutions.

In line with our commitment to advancing knowledge on global racial injustice, we also released a policy paper on a particularly urgent topic: climate reparations.



- **70 Years of Fighting for Justice and Reparations! Mobilizations by “Métis” People from the Great Lakes Abducted by the Belgian Colonial Administration**



Released on 4 April 2024, exactly five years after former Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel issued an official apology, this [report](#) analyzes the efforts of Métis children abducted by Belgium's colonial administration and their families to secure justice and reparations. It traces struggles waged in both the Great Lakes region of Africa and Belgium since 1950, highlighting progress achieved in recent years.

These crimes were perpetrated against African mothers living in the Great Lakes region and their Métis children, some of whom were forcibly displaced to Belgium. As affected individuals are situated both in Belgium and the Great Lakes, and their demands for justice and reparations have been expressed in both territories, these crimes are transnational.

This report also shows that the fate of African mothers whose children were abducted has never been adequately considered by the Belgian state. Furthermore, measures adopted by Belgium, such as the project to identify family origins, pose significant obstacles and limitations for both the Métis who remained in the Great Lakes region and those relocated to Belgium.

- **Debt cancellation is not enough! Repairing Economic Colonial Injustices through Radical Reform of the International Financial Architecture**

Published in July 2024, this [report](#) examines demands for reparations in connection with the cancellation of Southern African states' sovereign debts and the decolonization of multilateral financial institutions. These demands are not new and have been raised by states and regional institutions since the 1960s. In Southern Africa, governments have long called for reforms to undo the legacies of colonization, though they have not always framed these demands explicitly as reparations.

This report demonstrates that these demands are not simply about addressing the past; they are aimed at ending contemporary injustices that continue to shape the socio-political and economic future of these societies.

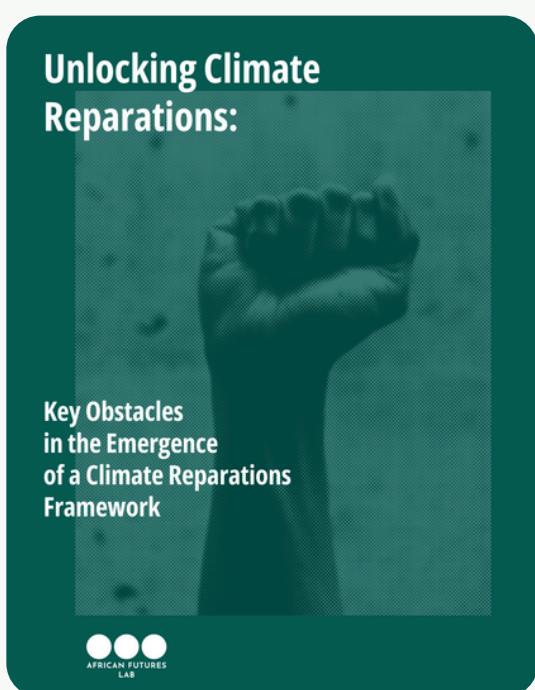


The research also highlights that civil society organizations in Southern Africa do not share a unified approach on how to end these colonial injustices or on how responsibility should be shared between states and international financial institutions. Most actors interviewed argue that debt cancellation can only serve as a form of reparation for colonial injustices if it is accompanied by a fundamental overhaul of the international financial architecture.

Others maintain that, while debt cancellation and financial institutional reform are necessary, states must also assume responsibility for their own populations, addressing domestic debt management decisions and persistent racial inequalities.

2.2 Policy Papers

- **Unlocking Climate Reparations: Key Obstacles to the Emergence of a Climate Reparations Framework**



Published in September 2024, this [policy paper](#) represents a significant step in our ongoing commitment to shifting the narrative around the climate crisis, highlighting the urgent need for climate reparations, particularly for African countries.

This paper aims to identify key obstacles that hinder the development of an effective climate reparations framework within the international policy response to the climate crisis.

Overcoming these obstacles is essential to unlocking the transformative potential of this new narrative and enabling climate justice advocates in African countries to challenge the status quo in international climate policy.

The paper is intended as a conversation starter, designed to explore, through dialogue among affected communities, civil society organisations, and government representatives from around the world, how a climate reparations framework for African countries can be further developed.

3. Strategic Mobilization & Advocacy

The year 2024 was marked by the implementation of three important Mobilization Labs (MobLabs), each focused on a specific theme. The first brought together Métis organizations based in the DRC, Burundi, and Belgium that are engaged in the pursuit of justice and reparations. The second equipped organizations from Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya to work on climate reparations. Finally, the third convened a group of West African organizations mobilized for the repatriation of the human remains of an ancestor kept in Togo.

3.1 Mobilization Labs

In 2024, we strengthened our commitment to transformative change by expanding our MobLabs. These are collaborative spaces that bring together subject-matter experts, activists, and organizations from across sectors.

These labs have become hubs of strategy and innovation, enabling participants to sharpen their approaches and advance reparations demands more effectively. Through MobLabs, movements gain the strategic tools and guidance needed to achieve concrete progress and influence policy and public discourse.

1. Restitution of Human Remains MobLab

Launched in December 2023 and coordinated by Dr. Amah Edoh, co-founder of AfaLab, the West Africa MobLab focused on the restitution of an ancestor's remains from a Togolese village, held in a German institution for over a century.

Over five working sessions, participants engaged with leading experts to examine restitution processes and learn from past repatriation efforts by European institutions.

These discussions directly informed the group's strategy, strengthening their capacity to advance effective claims for the return of cultural and human heritage.

Invited Experts



Dr. Njabulo Chipangura
Curator of Living Cultures,
Manchester Museum, UK



Prof. Patrick Emery Effiboley
Art Historian and Head of the
History Department, Université
Abomey-Calavi, Benin



Karen Ijumba
Researcher, Open Restitution
Africa, South Africa



Syokau Mutonga
Researcher, Open Restitution
Africa, Kenya



Phumzile Twala
Researcher, Open Restitution
Africa, South Africa

Impact of the MobLab

The session enhanced the strategic knowledge and advocacy capacity of participants, contributing to more effective efforts to secure restitution of human remains and cultural heritage across West Africa.

2. Métis of the Great Lakes MobLab

Since 2022, AfaLab has been working with a coalition of Métis organizations to demand justice and reparations from the Belgian State, for Métis children abducted by its colonial administration in the Great Lakes region (Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda).

Building on insights from our [report](#), “70 Years of Fighting for Justice and Reparations!”, we launched our second MobLab: “The Métis of the Great Lakes MobLab”, dedicated to developing a strategy for an advocacy campaign targeting justice and reparations from the Belgian State.



Held between January and April 2024 and coordinated by AfaLab's Advocacy and Policy Officer, Geneviève Kaninda, the MobLab served as a collaborative platform for individuals and three organizations forming the “Collectif Métis”: Association des Métis des Grands Lacs, Association des Enfants Belges Laissés au Congo and the Collectif Metis based in Belgium.

Participants



Jacqui Goegebeur
Collectif Métis



Claudine Jadot
Collectif Métis



Rachel Kapombo
Association des Enfants des Belges Laissés au Congo, DRC



Yanine Karapatakis
Collectif Métis



Issa Niyongere
Association des Métis des Grands Lacs, Burundi

Impact of the MobLab

The participants' experience strengthened coordination among Métis across the Great Lakes region and Belgium, enabling the development of a unified advocacy strategy and enhancing their capacity to advance justice and reparations claims against the Belgian state.

3. Climate Reparations MobLab

Led by our Policy and Advocacy Officer, Hélène Himmer, this mobilization lab aimed to equip civil society organizations in Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya with a stronger understanding of climate reparations and the tools needed to engage with this agenda effectively.

The MobLab strengthened capacity of participants through a four-session working group based on the African perspective towards climate reparations addressing the following:



1. Climate reparations concepts, contexts and challenges from an African perspective.
2. How to advocate for climate reparations at COP29 and other international summits.
3. Climate reparations: International Law, Loss and Damage Fund, and Litigation.
4. Unpacking what the lessons and identifying small practical actions to be implemented.

Participants

- Ahmednoor Bashir, COO, The Kesho Alliance, Kenya.
- Charles Kirui, The Kesho Alliance, Kenya.
- Aron Sanga, Program Officer, Climate Hub Tanzania, Tanzania.
- Mary Magiri, Environmental and Natural Resource Economist, Climate Hub Tanzania, Tanzania.
- Patricia Bekoe, Administrative Secretary, 350 Ghana Reducing our Carbon, Ghana.
- Portia Adu-Mensah, National Coordinator, 350 Ghana Reducing our Carbon, Ghana.
- Eric Eyram Kojo Lumor, Campaign and Outreach Team, Ghana Youth Environmental Movement (GYEM), Ghana.
- Rosalyn Ocran, Admin & Finance Officer, Ghana Youth Environmental Movement (GYEM), Ghana.

Impact of the MobLab

The participants were empowered to analyze local case studies and integrate climate reparations into their advocacy. The working group enhanced understanding of climate reparations by addressing barriers such as colonial legacies and the inefficiency of current mechanisms. MobLab sessions prepared participants to advocate for climate reparations at COP29 (one session was specifically dedicated to this), equipped participants with skills to craft narratives, leverage legal frameworks, and take practical actions, while fostering collaboration and networking.

3.2. Public Campaigns

As part of our mission to raise awareness of overlooked global racial injustices and their impact on racialized populations in Africa and Europe, African Futures Lab organized and participated in multiple public events throughout 2024.

This year marked a significant milestone with the launch of our first full-scale advocacy campaign.

1. The Métis Campaign

In April 2024, we launched a major advocacy campaign demanding justice and reparations for the Métis children abducted by the Belgian colonial administration and for their African mothers.

The campaign was informed by our [report](#) “70 Years of Fighting for Justice and Reparations!” and took place against the backdrop of the Belgian regional and federal elections, as well as the European elections.

The campaign aimed to:

- Highlight the demands of the Métis and their families forced to remain in the Great Lakes region.
- Draw attention to the forgotten predicament of African mothers whose children were abducted.
- Expose the limitations of the Belgian state’s current mechanisms for addressing the needs of Métis living in Belgium.



Co-created with Métis organizations in both the Great Lakes region and Belgium through the Métis of the Great Lakes Mobilization Lab, the campaign strategy combined social media outreach, traditional media coverage, on-site events in Geneva and Brussels, and an online debate.

• Geneva Conference

Theme: Biracial Children, African Mothers and Colonization: A Global Case for Reparations

Geneva, April 18, 2024

Hosted by Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, Switzerland

The Geneva conference held as a side event during the Third Session of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent, was the first event in our advocacy campaign.

Drawing on cases of biracial child abduction in Africa and Europe, the conference explored the experiences of African mothers and biracial individuals seeking justice and reparations over the past decades.

Representatives of Métis organizations shared poignant testimonies, highlighting the psychological impact of these abductions on the children and their mothers and the obstacles faced in pursuing justice. They reaffirmed their determination to secure recognition and reparations from the Belgian State for themselves and future generations.

Speakers

- Geneviève Kaninda, African Futures Lab.
- Rachel Kapombo, Association des Enfants des Belges Laissés au Congo - AEBC.
- Yanine Karapatakis, Le Collectif Métis.
- Conrad Bryan, The Association of Mixed Race Irish.
- Rym Khadhraoui, Amnesty International.
- Adwoa Coleman, Adviser, Office of the Chairperson, African Union Commission.
- Barbara G. Reynolds, Chairperson, UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.



The event was organized jointly with the Geneva Academy and Amnesty International, in partnership with the Association des Enfants des Belges Laissés au Congo (AEBC), the Association des Métis des Grands Lacs (AMGL Burundi), the Association of Mixed Race Irish, the Collectif Métis, and Justice Initiative.

• Brussels Conference

Theme: African Mothers and their Métis Children Abducted by the Belgian Colonial Administration
Brussels, May 29, 2024

What Progress Towards Justice and Reparations?

Our second advocacy event, organized with the Groupe de Recherche sur les Relations Ethniques, les Migrations et l'Égalité (GERME), and in partnership with AEBLC, the Association des Métis des Grands Lacs (AMGL Burundi), and the Collectif Métis, examined the challenges faced by African mothers and Métis born during the Belgian rule in pursuing justice and reparations.



Speakers

- Geneviève Kaninda, African Futures Lab.
- Assuman Budagwa, Researcher.
- Rachel Kapombo, AEBLC.
- Claudine Jadot, Collectif Métis - Belgium.
- Kalvin Soiresse, Former President, Brussels Francophone Parliament - Ecolo.

Two key conclusions emerged:

- The invisibility of African mothers: Burundian, Congolese, and Rwandan mothers, often rendered invisible, remain critical victims of the colonial abduction policies. Their absence from current governmental initiatives represents a major blind spot in Belgium's reparations framework.
- Implementation of the 2018 Métis Resolution: The Resolution applies to all Métis born of Belgian colonization, whether residing in the Great Lakes region or in Belgium. Effective reparations require the systematic inclusion of Métis abandoned in Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

2. The Climate Reparations Campaign

Building on the policy brief we published on the obstacles to climate reparations, we launched a campaign to raise public awareness about the issue of climate reparations. As part of this effort, we produced a six-episode season of our podcast Future perfect - Futur Antérieur dedicated to climate reparations and hosted six online debates exploring the same theme.

- **Future Perfect - Futur Antérieur: Season 3 - Climate Reparations**

The third season of our podcast focused on the issues outlined in our policy paper on climate reparations, examining the intersection between racial justice and climate reparations. We hosted a series of thought leaders guests who addressed pressing topics, including the responsibility of international financial institutions, the role of youth activism, and the inclusion of reparations for biodiversity loss.

Episode 1 - Joshua Castellino: From responsibility to reparations of the climate crisis

Why must the biggest polluters pay up for climate damages?

Professor Joshua Castellino, Co-Executive Director of Minority Rights Group International and Professor of International & Comparative Law at the University of Derby, UK, discussed why the largest polluters must pay for climate damages. He highlighted how marginalized racial groups, particularly in Africa, bear the heaviest burdens of the global ecological crisis.

The conversation traced the colonial roots of the climate crisis, emphasizing how European colonialism established extractive systems that commodify nature, driving environmental destruction and extreme wealth inequality.



Episode 2 - Ineza Umuhoza Grace: Activism, Narratives & Media

Representation: What is the climate reparations movement missing to emerge and be a priority at the international agenda?

Hélène Himmer, Policy and Advocacy Officer at African Futures Lab, and Brigitte Perenyi, Storytelling Manager at Reform Initiatives, spoke with Ineza Umuhoza Grace, CEO of The Green Protector and founder of the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition. They explored how youth activism is shaping the climate justice and reparations movement, with a focus on amplifying the voices of vulnerable groups including women and Indigenous communities in Africa.



Episode 3 - Adrián Martinez Blanco: International Law, Regulations & Negotiations

Hélène Himmer and Patrick Toussaint, AfaLab's Climate Research and Policy Advisor, welcomed Adrián Martinez Blanco, Director of La Ruta del Clima, a Costa Rican NGO that promotes public participation in climate and environmental decision-making.

Martinez Blanco highlighted climate litigation as a tool to hold Global North states and corporations accountable for environmental harm. He called for greater unity among Global South countries to adopt a rights-based approach in international negotiations, prioritizing concrete reparations over abstract frameworks.



Despite structural challenges such as limited resources and personal risk faced by environmental defenders, he emphasized pragmatic, human-rights centred approaches and the importance of centering the experiences of affected communities.

Episode 4 - Chenai Mukumba: How to Finance Climate Reparations

Does the Framework of International Financial Institutions Facilitate Healing from the Past for a Better Future?

Liliane Umubyeyi and Hélène Himmer hosted Chenai Mukumba, Executive Director of Tax Justice Network Africa, to discuss the urgent need for financing climate reparations.



Mukumba unpacked the economic legacies of colonialism, which left African nations dependent on extractive industries and marginalized within global value chains. She analyzed how the international financial institutions, including the IMF and the World Bank, reinforce this dependency and lack the accountability needed for genuine economic reform.

She proposed progressive taxation on wealthy individuals, multinational corporations, and fossil fuel industries to fund climate adaptation and reparations.

Episode 5 - Fadhel Kaboub: International Financial Institutions Rooted in the Intrinsic Link between Colonialism and Capitalism

How to End a System of Domination Through Climate Reparations?

Liliane Umubyeyi and Hélène Himmer spoke with Professor Fadhel Kaboub, Professor of Economics at Denison University and President of the Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity.



Professor Kaboub called for decolonization of international climate frameworks and a radical transformation of the global economic system. He critiqued the US \$2 trillion annually flowing from the Global South to the Global North, exacerbated by IMF and World Bank loan conditionalities that perpetuate debt and dependency.

The episode underscores a central principle: climate justice cannot be achieved without addressing structural inequalities. Decolonizing the global economic system is essential for achieving both justice and decarbonization.

Episode 6 - Meghna Abraham: Biodiversity Loss and Reparations - Part 1

In the first part of this episode Liliane Umubyeyi and Hélène Himmer welcomed Meghna Abraham, an international human rights lawyer and expert on economic, social and cultural rights, to discuss the biodiversity crisis, its causes and possible solutions.

Meghna explains that the main drivers of the biodiversity crisis are land-use change, deforestation and extractive industries, largely fueled by overconsumption in high-income countries, which consume six times more resources than low-income countries.

She highlights how colonial legacies and trade policies continue to exploit the Global South, perpetuating economic inequalities and reinforcing destructive agricultural and industrial models. Despite growing awareness, international frameworks favor market-based solutions such as 'bio credits' which allow companies to offset environmental damage rather than stop harmful practices. She argues that true accountability requires a justice-based approach, including legal responsibility, reparations and stronger protections for indigenous and most affected communities.

Meghna calls on civil societies to challenge corporate control of biodiversity policies and advocate for a fundamental shift in global economic structures.



Episode 6 - Ruth Nyambura : Biodiversity Loss and Reparations - Part 2

In the second installement of episode 6, Liliane Umubyeyi and Meghna Abraham welcomed Ruth Nyambura, founder and convenor of the African Ecofeminists Collective as well as the No REDD in Africa (NRAN) Collective.

Nyambura explains that biodiversity loss is not just an environmental crisis - it is a political and economic crisis driven by industrial agriculture, extractivism and trade policies that prioritize foreign interests over local communities. Biodiversity loss directly impacts food security, water resources and traditional livelihoods, disproportionately harming local communities, especially women, who are often the primary stewards of land and ecosystems.

She criticizes false solutions such as carbon markets and biodiversity credits, which financialize nature while displacing indigenous and local communities. Instead of corporate-led conservation, she calls for anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and feminist approaches that empower communities to protect biodiversity on their own terms.



- **Online Debates on Climate Reparations Campaign**

In 2024, we launched a series of online debates on climate justice and reparations across Africa to deepen public engagement with the themes explored in our policy paper and podcast series.

These conversations brought together leading scholars, advocates, and community organizers who shared insights, elevated the demands of vulnerable communities, and called for fair and effective climate action.

Online Debate 1: Taking a Historical View of Climate Reparations Addressing Climate Debt

October 17, 2024

AFALAB CLIMATE REPARATIONS ONLINE DEBATES

Debate 1: Taking a Historical View of Climate Reparations: Addressing Climate Debt

GUESTS

 James Gondi
Africa Director of Stop Ecocide International

 Aditi Shetye
Environmental Lawyer

Date Thursday
October 17, 2024 **Time** 4:00 PM (UTC + 2) **Online streaming** (registration required)

REGISTER TO ATTEND!

AFRICAN FUTURES LAB

Panelists

- James Gondi, Human Rights Lawyer and Environmental Justice Advocate, Africa Director, Ecocide International
- Aditi Shetye, Environmental Lawyer and Lead of the Legal Advocacy and Academic Taskforce, World's Youth for Climate Justice (WYJCJ)

The discussion examined the urgency of addressing historic climate debt and its implications for global justice. Panelists emphasized that as recognition grows of industrialized nations' responsibility for the climate crisis, the demand for climate debt reparations becomes increasingly compelling.

Online Debate 2: Amplifying the Voices of the Most Vulnerable & Youth Mobilizing for Climate Reparations in Africa

October 31, 2024

AFALAB CLIMATE REPARATIONS ONLINE DEBATES

Debate 2: Amplifying the Voices of the Most Vulnerable & Youth: Mobilizing for Climate Reparations in Africa

GUESTS

 Hamira Kobusingye
Founder of Yanayi Haki Afriqya (Climate Justice Africa)

 Hyacinthe Niyitegeka
Coordinator at Loss and Damage Collaboration

Date Thursday
October 31, 2024 **Time** 4:00 PM (UTC + 2) **Online streaming** (registration required)

REGISTER TO ATTEND!

AFRICAN FUTURES LAB

Panelists

- Hyacinthe Niyitegeka: Water Scientist and Climate Negotiator and Coordinator, Loss and Damage Collaboration (L&DC)
- Hamira Kobusingye: Ugandan Climate Activist and Founder, Yanayi Haki Afriqya

Hamira Kobusingye highlighted the need for community engagement to better understand how global climate policies affect local realities. She highlighted the importance of accessible funding mechanisms and the meaningful participation of women, who are disproportionately affected by climate change.

Hyacinthe Niyitegeka underlined the importance of empowering young negotiators, building confidence among young activists, and using storytelling to connect policy discussions to lived experiences.

The debate concluded with a call for stronger intergenerational collaboration to support and elevate youth leadership in climate justice movements.

Online debate 3: Advancing Climate Justice. How to Leverage International Law and Litigation for Effective Climate Reparations?

November 14, 2024

AFALAB CLIMATE REPARATIONS ONLINE DEBATES

Debate 3: Advancing Climate Justice: How to Leverage International Law and Litigation for Effective Climate Reparations



Krishnee Appadoo
Senior Lecturer in Law
University of Mauritius

Joie Chowdhury
Senior Attorney
Center for International Environmental Law

Samira Ben Ali
Outreach Coordinator
World's Youth for Climate Justice Campaign

Date: Thursday November 14, 2024

Time: 4:00 PM (UTC +1)

Online streaming (registration required)

REGISTER TO ATTEND!

AFRICAN FUTURES LAB

Panelists

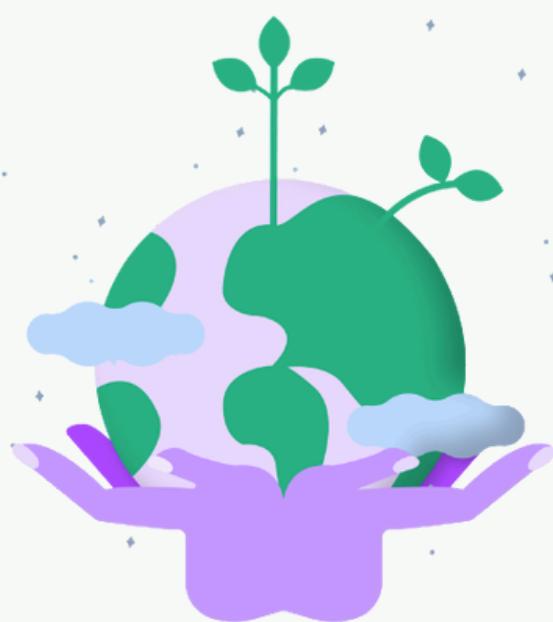
- Krishnee Appadoo, Senior Lecturer in Law, [University of Mauritius](#)
- Samira Ben Ali, Outreach Coordinator, [World's Youth for Climate Justice Campaign](#)
- Joie Chowdhury, Senior Attorney, [Center for International Environmental Law \(CIEL\)](#)

Panelists explored key obstacles to advancing climate reparations, including the absence of binding accountability mechanisms. They highlighted the growing importance of civil society action and innovative legal strategies.

Krishnee Appadoo emphasized the value of leveraging existing legal frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and the Loss and Damage Fund, while also underscoring the increasing influence of climate litigation and the critical role NGOs can play in advancing these efforts.

Samira Ben Ali examined the human rights dimensions of climate reparations, and the challenges that small island states face in seeking compensation for climate harm.

Joie Chowdhury highlighted the need for states to be held accountable under international law, noting the value of advisory opinions in clarifying reparations obligations and calling for legal frameworks that better protect the most vulnerable communities.



4. Shaping Public Debate on Racial Justice and Reparations

Through our presence and interventions in key public forums, we worked to shift global narratives on racial justice and reparations, ensuring that African voices and demands remain central to these discussions.

1. Third Session of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent

Geneva, April 16-19, 2024

During the Third Session of the Permanent Forum of People of African Descent, AfaLab's Executive Director, Liliane Umubyeyi, contributed to a panel on "Reparations, Sustainable Development and Economic Justice." In her statement, she underscored that:

- Many African demands for justice and reparations remain unaddressed, with the international development and human rights sectors having largely avoided these issues for more than six decades.
- Barriers to participation in international human rights spaces, including discriminatory visa regimes, continue to hinder African engagement. This was exemplified during the Forum, where a member of our delegation was denied a visa.
- The political emancipation of Black people requires dismantling the global system of racial domination and addressing the need for reparations for both colonial and ongoing neocolonial crimes.



2. Accra Roundtable Conference

Accra, June 10-12, 2024

Theme: The Role of Philanthropy in Advancing Racial and Reparatory Justice in Africa and the African Diaspora

Organized with Reform Initiatives and the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), this roundtable convened funders, scholars, and policymakers from across the world to examine how philanthropy can advance racial and reparatory justice across Africa and the African diaspora.



The event was informed by the findings of our report “[Multiple But Invisible: Reparations Demands for Colonial Crimes in the Great Lakes Region](#)”, which highlighted how donor ecosystems have largely failed to acknowledge the deep links between today’s political, social, environmental and economic inequalities and historical systems of racial domination.

The roundtable invited philanthropic actors to confront the limitations of existing funding models and to engage more meaningfully with structural injustices affecting African and Afro-descendant communities.

Emerging issues

- Participants called for urgent international action to dismantle global structures rooted in colonialism and for stronger transcontinental alliances.
- Discussions underscored the importance of coordinated action among African organizations, the African Union’s leadership on reparations, and integrating reparations into educational curricula.
- Philanthropic representatives noted the need to build a supportive ecosystem, addressing challenges such as competitive funding models, fragmented collaboration, and the sector’s own historical complicity in global inequalities.
- Youth engagement emerged as a priority, with emphasis on legal and financial support, countering misinformation, and nurturing alternative models of mobilization.
- The gender justice session stressed the importance for an intersectional approach to reparations, centering harms experienced by women and embedding feminist principles in reparations frameworks. Concerns were raised about the dilution of intersectionality and the ongoing erasure of Black women from historical narratives.

3. South Feminist Futures' Political Economy Teach-In Series

Online, July 17, 2024



AfaLab’s Executive Director Liliane Umubyeyi was invited by the South Feminist Futures to deliver a lecture on Racial Justice and Reparations as part of their Political Economy Teach-In Series.

She examined how international human rights frameworks have obscured historical and colonial racial violence, demonstrating that communities’ demands for justice and reparations have been repeatedly sidelined.

This sustained neglect, she argued, has produced a double injustice: African and Afro-descendant people have endured centuries of grave violations while also being denied access to the very institutions charged with protecting their rights.



4. Dekoloniale Berlin Africa Conference

Berlin, November 15, 2024



AfaLab, represented by our Advocacy and Policy Officer Geneviève Kaninda, participated in the 2024 Dekoloniale Berlin Africa Conference marking 140 years since the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885.

This gathering brought together participants from Africa and its diasporas to reflect on the enduring impact and consequences of this pivotal and devastating, moment in colonial history.

We also co-hosted a workshop with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch exploring reparative justice frameworks, lessons from past and current reparations campaigns, and strategies to strengthen global advocacy for equity and justice.

5. Forge

Accra, November 20-23, 2024



Our Policy and Advocacy Officer, Hélène Himmer, attended the FORGE convening event in Accra, Ghana. The FORGE convening brought together 20 creatives, civil society members, government representatives, and philanthropists, to advance the global reparations movement.

The convening aimed to create a transnational campaign based on narrative cohesion and grassroots connectivity.

Over four days, participants engaged in cultural grounding, collaborative workshops, and independent creative sessions designed to produce multimedia assets and solidarity statements. These outputs directly contribute to the Rising for Reparations campaign and align with the African Union's 2025 Year of Reparations agenda.

By producing narrative assets, solidarity statements, and a blueprint for future campaigns, the convening laid a foundation for amplifying the reparatory justice movement across Africa and the diaspora.

Key outcomes included the creation of narrative, artistic assets, solidarity commitments, and relationships for future reparatory justice campaigns. FORGE laid the groundwork for sustained transcontinental collaboration and impactful advocacy.

6. Global Europe on Trial Conference

Helsinki, November 26-27, 2024



At the Global Europe on Trial conference, hosted by the University of Helsinki's Centre of Excellence in Law, Identity, and the European Narratives, Liliane Umubyeyi, delivered a keynote speech titled "Putting Global Europe on Trial: A Necessary Condition to Addressing the Contemporary Challenges of Our Times".

She argued that Europe owes a debt of truth regarding its historical and contemporary crimes, and that its "false decolonization" has generated new forms of violence.

Without justice and accountability, she warned, the world risks perpetuating cycles of racial exploitation and harm. She called for bold action to expose the responsibility of states and private actors in maintaining global systems of racial domination and to advance meaningful reparations.

7. Belgium Condemned for Crimes Against Humanity

December 17, 2024



What Future for Reparations to the Métis of the Great Lakes Region and the Victims of Belgian Colonization?

Panelists

- Jehosheba Bennett, Lawyer for the five Métis women, Jus Cogens.
- Rachel Kapombo, Vice-President, Association des Enfants des Belges Laissés au Congo, AEBLC.
- Geneviève Kaninda, Advocacy & Policy Officer, African Futures Lab.
- Liliane Umubyeyi, Executive Director, African Futures Lab.

In 2021, five Métis women Monique Bitu Bingi, Léa Tavares Mujinga, Noëlle Verbeken, Simone Ngalula, and Marie-José Loshi, brought a case against the Belgian state. Their claims were initially dismissed with the court arguing that, at the time, the segregation and abduction of mixed-race children did not constitute crimes against humanity, and that the Belgian state could not be held accountable today.

On 2 December 2024, the Brussels Court of Appeal overturned this position and convicted the Belgian state of crimes against humanity for its colonial-era policies of abducting Métis children and enforcing racial segregation.

To reflect on the significants of this historic judgment, AfaLab convened an online discussion examining the implications for reparations and the ongoing struggle for justice led by survivors in Belgium and the Great Lakes region.



5. Our Partnerships in 2024

None of our work in 2024 would have been possible without the collaboration of a strong network of partners including human rights organizations, activist collectives, academic institutions, and philanthropic foundations.

Together, we built and strengthened a transcontinental alliance committed to advancing racial and reparative justice.



Key Partners and Collaborations

Association des Enfants des Belges Laissés au Congo (AEBLC)



We have collaborated with AEBLC since 2022 as part of our work on justice and reparations for Métis communities in the Great Lakes region.

African Union ECOSSOC



ECOSOC
Economic Social & Cultural Council

AU ECOSSOC partnered with us on two major reparations-related events in 2024: the Accra Roundtable on Philanthropy and Reparations and the Forge Conference on arts, cultures, and reparations.

Association des Métis des Grands Lacs (AMGL Burundi)



A long-term partner since 2022, AMGL Burundi has played a key role in advancing advocacy for Métis communities affected by Belgian colonial policies.

The Association of Mixed-Race Irish



The Association of Mixed-Race Irish participated as an invited partner at the Geneva Conference in April 2024, contributing comparative perspectives on mixed-race rights and historical redress.

Amnesty International

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



We partnered with Amnesty International to co-organize the Geneva Conference "Biracial Children, African Mothers and Colonization" in April 2024 and later collaborated with them during the Dekoloniale Berlin Africa Conference.

Deep South Solidarity Fund



Our collaboration with Deep South Solidarity Fund spanned two major initiatives exploring the role of philanthropy and the importance arts and culture in shaping the global reparations agenda.

**The Geneva Academy of
International Humanitarian
Law and Human Rights**

GENEVA ACADEMY

The Geneva Academy hosted our April 2024 conference in Geneva, providing an important platform for dialogue on reparations and historical accountability.

**Groupe de Recherche sur
les Relations Ethniques, les
Migrations et l'Égalité (GERME)**



Group for research
on Ethnic Relations,
Migration & Equality

GERME co-organized our Brussels Conference in May 2024, supporting research-driven conversations on racial and reparative justice.

Human Rights Watch

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

During the Dekoloniale Berlin Africa Conference in November 2024, Human Rights Watch co-facilitated a workshop with AfaLab and Amnesty International on reparative justice frameworks.

Justice Initiative



Justice Initiative partnered with us at the April 2024 Geneva Conference, contributing the exhibition "Shame – European Stories" which was presented at the venue.

Le Collectif Métis

Le Collectif Métis

We continued our engagement with Le Collectif Métis, one of our partners since 2022, as part of our broader alliance of Métis organizations advocating for recognition, justice, and reparations.

Noesya



Since 2021, the French cooperative Noesya has supported us by developing and maintaining our website.

Open Society–Africa



Open Society–Africa has supported AfaLab since 2022 and has contributed to multiple projects focused on reparations for slavery and colonial crimes.

Reform Initiatives



In 2024, we formalized our partnership with the Pan-African think tank Reform Initiatives and co-organized several key events, including the Accra Roundtable Conference.

West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)



WACSI was one of our principal partners in convening the Accra Roundtable Conference, in June 2024.

6. 2025-2026 Outlook

Transformations in the Reparations Landscape Following the AU Designation of 2025 as the Year of Reparations

The year 2025 (and the next 10 years) has been declared the Year of Justice and Reparations for Africans and people of African descent by the African Union. A series of major events will take place to mark this milestone, including the first Pan-African Reparations Festival in Nairobi. The festival will bring together more than fifty organizations from over twenty African countries and the diaspora .

Other major gatherings relevant to our agenda include the 5th African Conference on Debt and Development (AfCoDD V) in Accra, COP 30 in Belém, Brazil, and the One Million Black Women March in Brasília. These events will provide prime platforms to advance our work on climate justice, gender justice, and reparations, while also strengthening our South-to-South feminist collaborations, particularly with partners in Brazil.

Institutional Transformations

African Futures Lab will undergo important transformations in 2025. The first is institutional in nature.

We will open our first regional office on the African continent, located in Nairobi. Establishing this office will enable us to work more closely with African communities most affected by colonial and neocolonial violence. Nairobi was chosen for its vibrant civil society landscape, especially around two central themes in our work: climate reparations and gender justice.

The Nairobi office will also reinforce our mandate to strengthen South to South collaboration. Being headquartered in East Africa will improve our ability to build long-term, equitable partnerships across the continent and with other regions of the Global South.

The opening of this office will be accompanied by the arrival of new colleagues based in Africa, particularly in Nairobi. Strengthening mobilization for justice and reparations on the continent requires staff with deep local knowledge and grounded experience.

Alongside this expanded team, African Futures Lab will also launch a new cohort of African Futures Fellows. This cohort will include artists, researchers, and activists developing projects that address racial inequalities and contribute to a transformative reparative justice agenda.



7. Staff and Leadership

At the heart of African Futures Lab is a team of dedicated individuals whose expertise, creativity, and commitment drive our mission to advance racial justice, climate reparations, and gender equity across Africa and Europe.

Leadership

Liliane Umubyeyi, Co-Founder and Executive Director, leads AfaLab's strategic vision, guiding advocacy, partnerships, and programmatic priorities. Under her leadership, the organization has strengthened its capacity to influence global debates on justice and reparations while deepening collaboration with African and transcontinental partners.

Staff Updates

In 2024, AfaLab welcomed two Policy and Advocacy Officers, Hélène Himmer and Geneviève Kaninda. Hélène is a French national, of Guadeloupean descent and Geneviève, born in Belgium, is of Congolese origin. Their expertise has been crucial in expanding our research, advocacy campaigns, and transcontinental engagement with partners and movements.

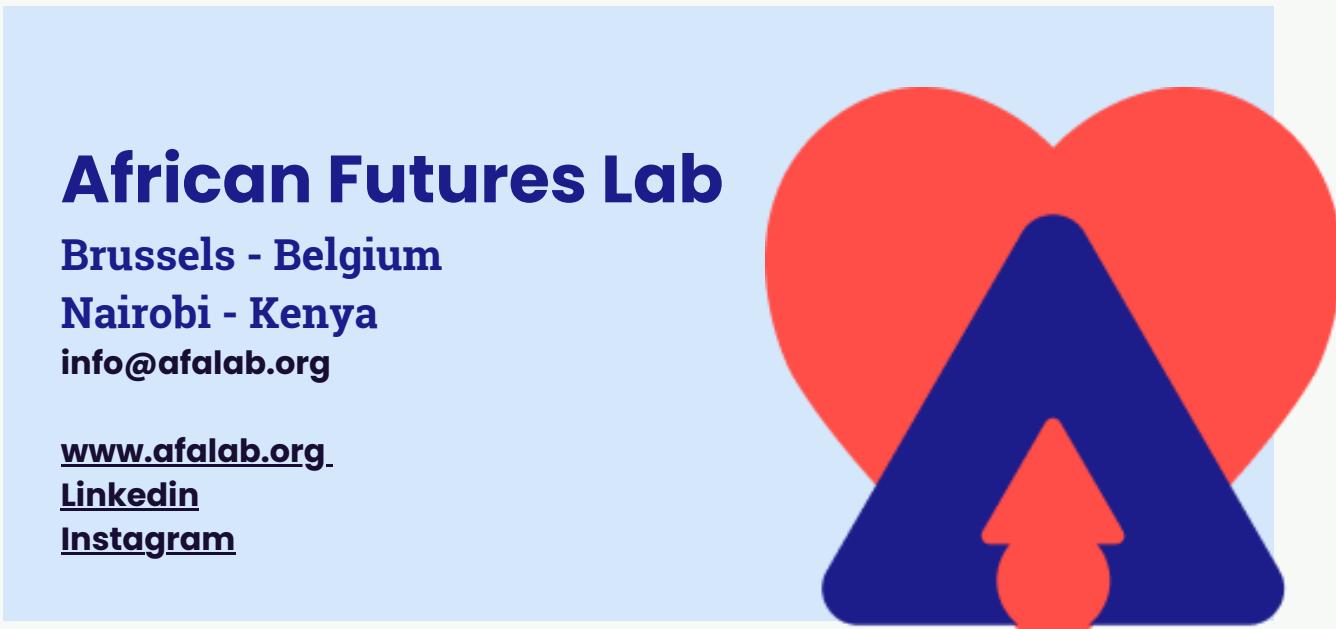
We also bid farewell to valued colleagues: Shaany N'sondé, who served as Program Administrator since 2023; Amah Edoh, co-founder of AfaLab; and Anita Munyaneza, Communications Officer. Their contributions laid essential groundwork for the organization's continued impact.

8. Acknowledgements

The milestones of 2024 would not have been possible without the dedication, expertise, and collaboration of our partners, including AEBLC, AMGL Burundi, Le Collectif Métis, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Justice Initiative, Open Society–Africa, Reform Initiatives, WACSI, Deep South Solidarity Fund, and the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. Your support has been essential in advancing our research, advocacy, and campaigns for justice and reparations.

We are immensely grateful to the Métis communities and African mothers whose courage and testimony guide our work, as well as to the scholars, activists, and legal experts who contributed to our Mobilization Labs, public events, and online debates.

Finally, we thank our staff and fellows whose tireless commitment drives our mission forward. To all who stand with African Futures Lab, your solidarity strengthens the fight for racial justice, reparations, and a more equitable future.





**African
Futures
Lab**

Contact
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