Deutsche Afrika Stiftung e.V.
Fondation Allemande pour l'Afrique
German Africa Foundation

Invitation

Urban Challenges as Business Opportunities: Building Sustainable African Cities

Side event at the German-African Business Summit 2026 in Accra, Ghana by the German Africa Foundation

Date

Wednesday,
25 November 2026,
9:30 – 11:00hrs

Venue

Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast City Accra, Ghana
Room: Palm Jumeirah

Please register here.

Africa's rapidly growing cities are facing pressing challenges in providing sustainable urban infrastructure, effective waste management and efficient resource use. Addressing these challenges will require substantial investment and innovative solutions to support sustainable urban development.

At the same time, Africa's urban transformation is driving growing demand for infrastructure, technologies, and urban services. This creates new markets and potential for closer economic cooperation between African and German partners. To tap into these markets and develop commercially viable solutions, German companies need to work with African businesses, cities, and municipalities, drawing on existing expertise and responding to local priorities. For African cities, such partnerships can help mobilise the necessary investment, expand access to infrastructure and services, and support more sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Where are the most promising business opportunities for German companies in Africa's urban markets? What conditions are needed for commercially viable business solutions and successful partnerships between German and African businesses and public-sector actors? What role do economic diplomacy and development cooperation play in mobilising investments, overcoming barriers to market entry and fostering German-African economic relations? And how can German-African partnerships deliver mutual returns while contributing to sustainable urban development?

Programme

Opening Impulse:	**H.E. Kai Baldow,** Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Senegal
Keynote Interview:	**Her Worship Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr,** Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone
Discussion:	**Her Worship Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr,** Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone **H.E. Kai Baldow,** Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Senegal **Nana Yaw Konadu,** CEO and Co-Founder of Electro Recycling Ghana
Q&A:	**Business opportunities & audience discussion**
Moderation:	**Sabine Odhiambo,** Secretary General of the German Africa Foundation

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Speakers



Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr
Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone and Winner of the German Africa Prize 2024

Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr OBE was Mayor of Freetown from May 2018 to February 2023 and was re-elected to serve for a second term in June 2023. A finance professional with over 25 years of private sector experience in strategic planning, risk management consulting and project management, Mayor Aki-Sawyerr has adopted an inclusive, data-driven approach to addressing challenges in the city. In her first term, she championed the 4 year "Transform Freetown" plan which detailed 19 concrete targets across 11 sectors. Mayor Aki-Sawyerr's notable achievements include the construction and operation of Freetown's first ever wastewater treatment plant, the digitalisation and expansion of the city's property rate system, the planting and tracking of 1.2m trees against #FreetownTheTreeTown's 1m trees target and securing the recently concluded feasibility study for the introduction of a mass transit cable car system for the city. Mayor Aki-Sawyerr's second term development agenda "Transform Freetown – Transforming Lives" is focused on the creation of 120,000 decent jobs for women and youth through climate action, the growth of heritage tourism and the digital economy underpinned by investments in human development. Mayor Aki-Sawyerr is the Laureate of the German Africa Prize 2024, she was listed in the inaugural Forbes Sustainability Leaders 2024 List, she was a Schwab Foundation Outstanding Public Social Innovator for the Year 2023, was featured by Time Magazine in the inaugural Time100 Climate List 2023, the Time100 Next 2021 List and by the BBC in the BBC 100 Women 2020 List. Mayor Aki-Sawyerr is Co-Chair of C40 Cities, a network of almost 100 cities committed to addressing climate change.



Kai Baldow
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Senegal and Guinea-Buissau

Kai Baldow has been the German Ambassador to Senegal since July 2025. He first became acquainted with the countrie between 2005 and 2008 whilst working as a desk officer at the German Embassy in Dakar. Other posts in the Foreign Service included the Western Balkans Division, the Personnel Division and the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations in Geneva. From 2013 to 2017, he was Deputy Head of the Foreign Service Academy. From 2017, he was in charge of protocol for Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the Office of the Federal President.

Kai Baldow was born in Berlin in 1972. He studied law in Berlin, Grenoble and Strasbourg and initially worked on cross-border cooperation between Germany, France and Switzerland.



Nana Yaw Konadu
CEO and Co-Founder of Electro Recycling Ghana (ERG)

Nana Yaw Konadu is CEO and Co-Founder of Electro Recycling Ghana (ERG), a leading e-waste recycling company in West Africa. With over 30 years of experience in the technology sector, including experience in Germany with industry leaders such as Toshiba, Mr. Konadu has dedicated his career to transforming the e-waste challenge into an opportunity for sustainable growth and a greener future. Since co-founding Electro Recycling Ghana in 2018, he has championed responsible e-waste management and the development of a circular economy in Africa. Under his leadership, the company has expanded its operations to process over 15,000 tonnes of e-waste annually, established partnerships with international technology companies, NGOs and local governments, and created over 350 jobs for local communities. Mr. Konadu's notable achievements include developing a circular economy business model focused on the refurbishment, resale and recycling of electronics, establishing advanced recycling facilities that meet international environmental and safety standards, and leading public awareness campaigns on the environmental and health risks of improper e-waste disposal. His initiatives have reached over 1 million people and created economic opportunities for women and youth through training and employment in e-waste collection, sorting and recycling.His contributions have been recognised through several awards, including the Global Circular Economy Leader Award 2022, the Environmental Excellence Award by the Ghana Waste Management Council in 2023 and the Sustainability Leadership Award at the West Africa Business Summit in 2023.