

# BUILDING URBAN RESILIENCE IN AFRICA

African cities are on the frontline of climate risk... and climate solutions

## Why urban resilience matters in Africa

African cities face rising **climate shocks** alongside **rapid urban growth**, **service backlogs**, **inequality** and **constrained municipal resources**. These pressures do not occur in isolation: they interact to create compound and cascading risks across urban systems.

### Rising climate shocks

Floods, heatwaves, cyclones, drought, coastal erosion and landslides.



### Rapid urban growth

Infrastructure, housing and services are under growing pressure.



### Compound risks

Climate shocks drive infrastructure failure, food & water insecurity, health risks, displacement & fiscal stress.



## 5 systemic barriers

**Governance:** Fragmented institutions and siloed decision-making.

**Finance:** Reactive funding and limited access to direct climate finance, particularly at municipal and community scales.

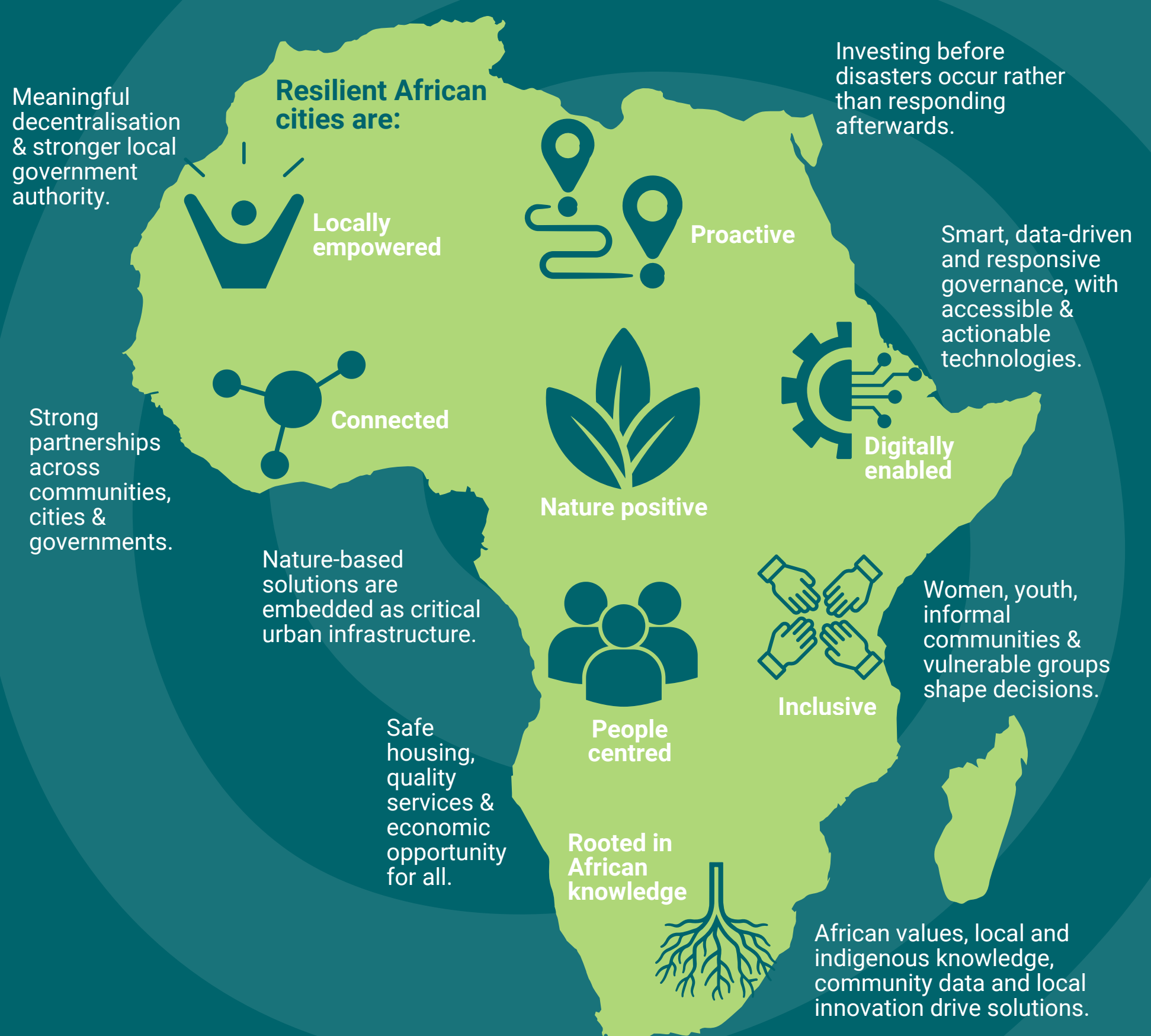
**Infrastructure, informality and service delivery:** Rapid urbanisation is outpacing service provision; informal sectors generate innovative resilience solutions but these receive insufficient attention.

**Climate, environmental and compound risks:** Multi-hazard risks are compounded by ecosystem degradation, infrastructure deficits and inequality.

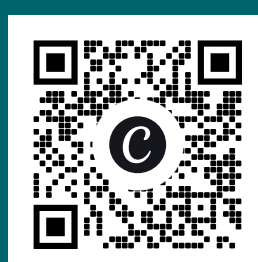
**Data and capacity:** Insufficient data, technology, and locally maintained systems.

## The African vision for resilient cities

African cities already have many innovative solutions. What is needed is investment, coordination and political commitment.



This project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, through the regional project Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA). The project is implemented by ICLEI Africa in partnership with the African Union Commission and GIZ.



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# 8 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

## Governance and planning

Mainstream resilience across all city functions, with clear implementation responsibilities.



## Finance & investment

Shift from disaster response to anticipatory, risk-informed resilience investment.



## Capacity & skills

Build and retain resilience skills, capacities and roles within local government.



## Tech & data

Invest in inclusive early warning systems, community-generated data and locally maintained tools.



## Community resilience & informality

Upgrade informal settlements and communities with locally led innovation and social infrastructure at the forefront.



## Equity & inclusion

Women, youth, informal workers and vulnerable groups at the centre of decision making.



## Learning & exchange

Strengthen African city-to-city learning networks, shared tools and communities of practice.



## Nature-based solutions

Treat nature-based solutions as critical infrastructure.



## The shifts African cities are calling for

### From

reactive disaster response

### To

anticipatory resilience

### From

centralised decision making

### To

meaningful decentralisation and local empowerment

### From

imported solutions

### To

African knowledge, African innovation and African leadership

### From

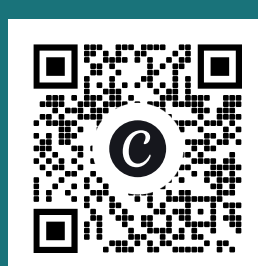
seeing informality only as vulnerability

### To

recognising informal settlements and informal economies as sources of adaptive capacity, social infrastructure and locally led resilience



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