

Africa Growth Report

Editors:

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2015



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Foreword

If one is to rely solely on media reports, 2014 was the year of terrorism and disease for the African continent. News of the Ebola epidemic dominated headlines, as did Boko Haram. The repercussions of this is that tourism figures plummeted and investment dissipated as geography was ignored – Ebola infections may have been limited to Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Mali, a mere 5 out of 47 countries, but countries as far south as Botswana were affected by the contagion effect of this ‘fear reporting’. Likewise, every good story requires a ‘bad guy’ and the Boko Haram gunmen replaced the Somali pirates in this narrative on Africa. With all this Hollywood fodder, it is difficult to gain an accurate and un-sensationalistic view of Africa. It is also just as difficult to decide whether Africa alone is the victim of ‘bad news’ reporting, or whether it is symptomatic of a broader trend of global reporting. If the former, how does this continent shake off decades of bad news, and create a new identity, one that speaks of economic development and social cohesion? And why are these questions even relevant, much less important? Because as students of media, whether journalists, researchers or armchair critics, we can gain much from some periodic reflection. A chance to pick apart those threads that may lead to us telling a different African story in future. And the Africa Growth Report (AGR) attempts to do just that. The AGR was created to track growth, improvements, progress – all those adjectives which are often buried beneath many lines of bad news stories – and was centred around the African Growth Index by Media Tenor, which measures individual African countries improvement relative to each other, on key reputational factors such as ‘safety and rule of law’ and ‘participation and human rights’. This scoring crystallises which factors, and indeed, which countries, are building Africa’s reputation, and which are placing it at further risk. The AGR has subsequently evolved to become a place of reflection, where we attempt to look at the African continent from different narrative angles. Africa is a continent with great economic and societal opportunities. To realize them, as shown in the contributions provided with the AGR progress, a modern industrial development inclusive, namely the ‘green and blue revolutions’ and a greater global integration between Africa and the developed world is needed.

Mastetshaba Motshekga & Tobias Thomas

Media Perceptions of Africa

The African Growth Index

Introduction

Representations of Africa have been challenged in the past by movements such as pan-Africanism; Thabo Mbeki's proclamation of the African Renaissance can be regarded as another attempt to challenge existing perceptions of Africa (Okumu, 2002). An African Renaissance has the potential to transform the lives of Africans who have been ravaged by the legacy of colonialism (Okumu, 2002). The slow, yet incremental growth of a small number of African countries such as South Africa, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique as well as Tanzania in recent years, however, does not seem to warrant excitement or represent a solid indication of the beginning of an African Renaissance (Cheru, 2002).

Over the past decade, coverage focusing on Africa has predominantly been negative. The international focus has primarily been on countries marred by socio-political problems, e.g. Zimbabwe and Sudan. It could be argued that Africa is seen as the world's "problem child", as extensive reporting on negative issues such as personal safety and political unrest hampers its reputational progress. Notably, it is negative perceptions of this magnitude that lead to strained foreign relations for Africa's 54 countries.

Methodology

To ensure that comprehensive and in-depth insights are achieved, Africa's reputation cannot be reviewed in isolation. Therefore, the coverage of the continent has been assessed within the context of the broader media environment. An analysis of general media trends has been incorporated so as to enhance understanding of the degree to which the bigger picture impacts on international perceptions pertaining to Africa.

The study of general media trends has been conducted using computer assisted content analysis. The content analysis methodology applied is that of the International Media Tenor Institute for Media Analysis (2014), which

is based on Berelson's (1952:18) definition: "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (see also Stempel, 1989: 124-136).

A total of 1,634,508 reports were analysed between 1 January 2011 and December 2014. Data utilized for this analysis included ABC World News, Al Arabiya, Al Jazeera, Al Manar, ARD Tagesschau, ARD Tagesthemen, BBC World Service, BBC1 10 o'clock, BBC2 Newsnight, CBS Evening News, CCTV, CNN International Desk, Dubai TV, FOX Special Report, ITV News at Ten, LBC, NBC Nightly News, RAI TG1, RTL Aktuell, SAT.1 18:30, SF Tagesschau, TF1 Le Journal, TRT Ana Haber Bülteni, TVE1 Teleradio 2, ZDF Heute, ZDF Heute Journal, eNews Prime Time, SABC 3 English News, SABC 2 Afrikaans News, SABC Zulu News, SABC Xhosa News, SABC Sotho News as well as SABC Venda News.

Africa and beyond: coverage in the context of global media trends

This section examines Africa's foreign media profile, by comparing coverage of the continent to coverage of other regions. Four questions guide our discussion:

- Is Africa's image vulnerable to the bad news syndrome?
- Is Africa alone in facing reputational challenges?
- Which issues result in intensified negative perceptions for the continent?
- Which topics contribute to a more positive portrayal of Africa?

Is negative news bigger news?

Media Tenor's research finds that general media trends have contributed towards extensive negative reporting on Africa. In general, coverage since 2001 has been more negative, indicating that internationally, news broadcasters tend to be more critical in their analysis of stories and that newsrooms focus extensively on negative events.

Perhaps the numerous natural disasters during the decade have contributed to this mind-set. Consider the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami in Southeast Asia,

Hurricane Katrina, the earthquake in Haiti, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent war in Afghanistan, the global economic crisis in 2008, as well as the socio-economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe.

An increased tendency to evaluate news events more critically, combined with an intensified focus on negative stories may have set the stage for greater scrutiny of news events pertaining to Africa. To this effect, Professor Frank Go (Killelea & Schatz, 2010) argues:

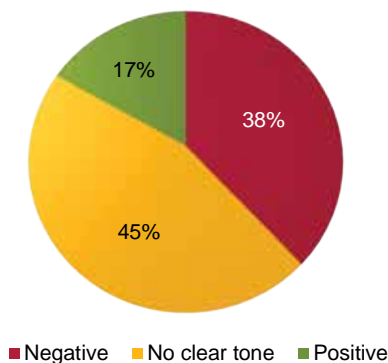
Only by virtually boycotting media is it possible to ignore the notion that we live in an age of crisis. The news is about contagious diseases, natural disasters, famine, rising unemployment, armed conflicts, food insecurity, terrorist attacks, environmental hazards, urban and rural problems threatening our safety and security.

Historically, various researchers including Gerbner & Marvanyi (1977), Atwood (1984) and Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) have analysed international news flow. The common thread lies in the conclusion that the Third World, and especially Africa, has largely been portrayed in a bad-news-syndrome fashion (see Glasgow University media Group, 1976; Cohen, Adoni & Banz, 1990; De Beer & Steyn, 1996). Stevenson (1997) and his colleagues conducted perhaps the largest ever news flow study, that involved researchers from more than 40 countries. Most studies show a remarkably similar pattern of global news coverage (Hamelink, 1994; Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1995; Mowlana, 1997):

- a) News about the West dominates international news flow.
- b) Western news agencies dominate international news flow.
- c) News topics are defined in terms of Western news values.
- d) International news flow is dominated by 'negative' news.

According to Galtung and Vincent (1992: 7) a certain criteria must be met for news to become part of the international flow process i.e. if it concerns elite countries and people; if it can be seen in personal terms, and if it can be perceived as having negative consequences. The more frequently this is met, the more likely that the event will become international news.

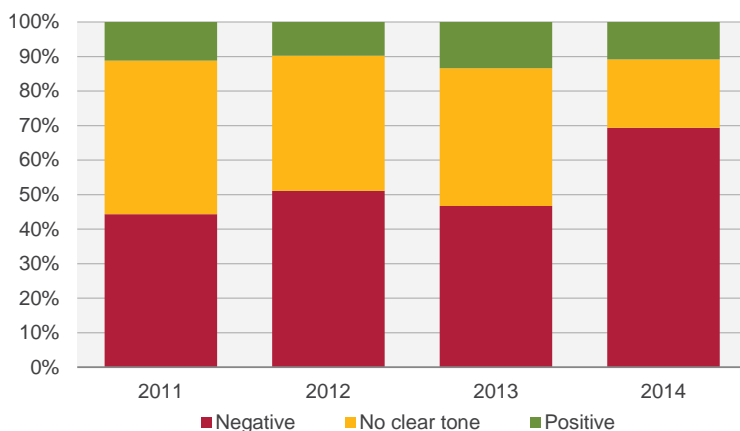
Rating of all news in international television news, 2011-2014



Basis: 529,134 reports on all issues in 35 analysed TV news media

In their overview of news flow studies, Cho and Lacy (1999) conclude that the cultural similarities, shared history and geographic proximity are related to international news coverage, as are ideological affinity, economic relationships, societal values, the nature of the gatekeepers and the organizational factors. The authors also find that coverage emphasizes conflict and disasters, that the bulk of international coverage focuses on political news, that the news tends to be hard news and that the international news agencies remain the source of international news.

Tonality of Africa 2011- 2014



Basis: 15,694 reports on Africa on 35 analysed TV news media

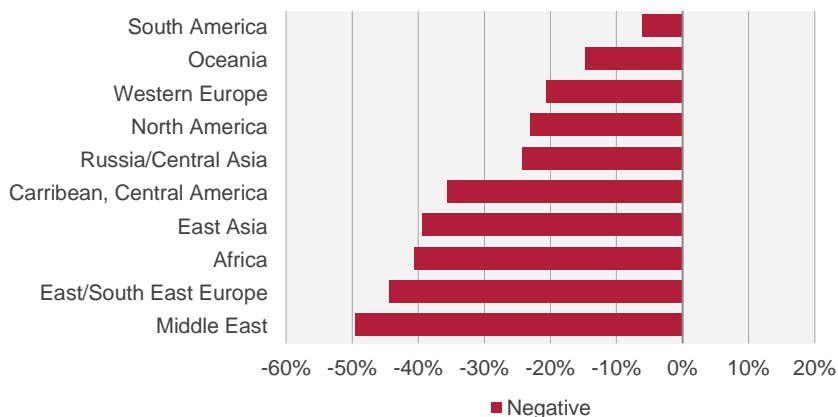
Is it just Africa?

An increased global trend of intensified negative reporting shows that Africa is not the only continent facing reputational challenges. Media analysis undertaken over time indicates that coverage of all continents, with the exception of Oceania, is mostly negative. Regions that have received the most intense negative focus are the Middle East, Central America and Asia. Even continents such as Europe and North America have been negatively portrayed by other regions.

International interest pertaining to regions receiving the most scrutiny is connected to “troubled countries”, which contributes towards inherent beliefs of a specific region. These countries are also associated with issues that serve to sustain existing beliefs and stereotypes. Countries or regions with the most international coverage are the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan. It is hardly surprising that the top issues under the spotlight relate to conflict and terrorism.

Foreign perception of continents

Average tonality of continents



Basis: 158,778 reports on all non-domestic issues on 35 analysed TV news media

As stated earlier, Africa's reputation is marred by intensified interest pertaining to countries such as Zimbabwe and Sudan. Zimbabwe came under media

investigation due to land grabs of white owned farms since the year 2000, as well as political friction between the ruling Zanu PF and the opposition MDC. Sudan garnered increased interest because of ongoing conflict in Darfur, with the secession vote being the most recent point of deliberation in international media.

Which topics result in intensified scrutiny?

An analysis of each continent's top issues over the past ten years (detailed in Table 1) indicates that regions perceived more negatively are regarded as being politically volatile and prone to conflict.

Table 1: Top 10 issues associated with individual continents

| Continent | Top issues | Ranking of top issues | No. of reports | Weighted ratings |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Middle East | Warfare | 1 | 6430 | -69% |
| | International conflicts | 2 | 6054 | -46% |
| | Domestic policy | 3 | 4596 | -56% |
| | Domestic security/crime | 4 | 4221 | -75% |
| | Foreign policy | 5 | 2630 | -21% |
| | Military, defence | 6 | 1456 | -22% |
| | Personality | 7 | 1055 | -38% |
| | Party politics | 8 | 865 | -17% |
| | Religion | 9 | 736 | -34% |
| | Elections | 10 | 635 | -9% |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----|------|--------|
| Central America | Domestic security/crime | 1 | 419 | -78% |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 2 | 299 | -83% |
| | Foreign policy | 3 | 244 | 4% |
| | Justice | 4 | 126 | -45% |
| | Personality | 5 | 118 | -37% |
| | Society in general | 6 | 84 | 37% |
| | Domestic policy | 7 | 71 | -32% |
| | Elections | 8 | 57 | -7% |
| | PR/Image/Scandals | 9 | 57 | -37% |
| | Culture | 10 | 49 | 49% |
| East Asia | Accidents, catastrophes | 1 | 3013 | -84,9 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 2 | 2084 | -77,83 |
| | Foreign policy | 3 | 1712 | -8,88 |
| | International conflicts | 4 | 1497 | -46,89 |
| | Warfare | 5 | 1466 | -51,43 |
| | Domestic policy | 6 | 912 | -46,16 |
| | Sports | 7 | 809 | 51,17 |
| | Military, defence | 8 | 661 | -25,42 |
| | Personality | 9 | 604 | -33,11 |
| | State of the economy | 10 | 556 | -11,15 |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--|----|------|--------|
| Africa | Domestic security/crime | 1 | 2435 | -73,34 |
| | Warfare | 2 | 2101 | -35,17 |
| | International conflicts | 3 | 1374 | -33,11 |
| | Personality | 4 | 1159 | -14,5 |
| | Domestic policy | 5 | 844 | -39,34 |
| | Diseases/ Health (NOT health policy) | 6 | 760 | -74,87 |
| | Foreign policy | 7 | 676 | -11,39 |
| | Elections | 8 | 355 | -0,56 |
| | Society in general | 9 | 340 | 13,82 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 10 | 326 | -86,2 |
| South America | Sports | 1 | 1679 | 27,99 |
| | Personality | 2 | 409 | -1,71 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 3 | 406 | -68,97 |
| | Domestic policy | 4 | 390 | -57,18 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 5 | 307 | -83,71 |
| | Elections | 6 | 221 | 3,17 |
| | Foreign policy | 7 | 206 | 1,94 |
| | Society in general | 8 | 125 | 22,4 |
| | Party politics | 9 | 111 | 24,32 |
| | Religion | 10 | 111 | 42,34 |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----|------|--------|
| Western Europe | Sports | 1 | 6251 | 48,5 |
| | Budget | 2 | 4495 | -64,56 |
| | Personality | 3 | 3412 | -6,65 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 4 | 2814 | -70,93 |
| | Currency/ EURO/Monetary policy | 5 | 2751 | -23,45 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 6 | 2520 | -77,62 |
| | EU | 7 | 2471 | -16,19 |
| | State of the economy | 8 | 1767 | -58,12 |
| | International economy | 9 | 1765 | -39,21 |
| | Party politics | 10 | 1615 | -8,73 |
| Russia/ Central Asia | Sports | 1 | 917 | 42,64 |
| | Foreign policy | 2 | 484 | -22,52 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 3 | 363 | -82,09 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 4 | 343 | -72,3 |
| | Personality | 5 | 328 | -25,91 |
| | International conflicts | 6 | 308 | -50 |
| | International economy | 7 | 250 | -48 |
| | PR/Image/ Scandals | 8 | 237 | -43,88 |
| | Domestic policy | 9 | 211 | -34,6 |
| | Justice | 10 | 189 | -47,09 |

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|----|------|--------|
| Oceania | Sports | 1 | 483 | 34,58 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 2 | 345 | -73,91 |
| | Society in general | 3 | 120 | 22,5 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 4 | 93 | -81,72 |
| | Foreign policy | 5 | 86 | 12,79 |
| | PR/Image/ Scandals | 6 | 54 | -66,67 |
| | Production | 7 | 51 | -98,04 |
| | Environment | 8 | 45 | -46,67 |
| | Personality | 9 | 43 | 25,58 |
| | Culture | 10 | 29 | 65,52 |
| North America | Domestic security/crime | 1 | 2643 | -65,08 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 2 | 1767 | -80,08 |
| | Budget | 3 | 1105 | -55,75 |
| | Personality | 4 | 989 | -9 |
| | Party politics | 5 | 946 | 3,28 |
| | Sports | 6 | 941 | 39,32 |
| | Society in general | 7 | 816 | 22,92 |
| | Culture | 8 | 808 | 60,64 |
| | Foreign policy | 9 | 577 | -0,35 |
| | PR/Image/ Scandals | 10 | 569 | -34,45 |

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|----------------|-------------------------|----|------|--------|
| Eastern Europe | International conflicts | 1 | 2080 | -58,65 |
| | Domestic policy | 2 | 1990 | -66,13 |
| | Sports | 3 | 1202 | 25,62 |
| | Warfare | 4 | 1148 | -78,66 |
| | Elections | 5 | 548 | -29,01 |
| | Foreign policy | 6 | 546 | -18,5 |
| | Accidents, catastrophes | 7 | 519 | -82,85 |
| | Domestic security/crime | 8 | 382 | -80,63 |
| | Party politics | 9 | 322 | -2,48 |
| | Personality | 10 | 275 | -36 |

158,778 reports on all non-domestic issues on 35 analysed TV news media

The Middle East is a case in point. Of the top ten issues most frequently reported on for the region, the first six pertain to politics. All of these issues have been reported on very negatively. Central and South America, Asia and Africa have also been closely associated with political issues, with scepticism driving the news agenda around these continents' political climates. War has been a prominent issue for the Middle East, Central America, Asia as well as Africa.

What is concerning is the fact that of the top ten issues associated with Africa, six pertain to political conflict and violence. Following the Middle East, Africa received the most expansive media attention relating to political turmoil. An extensive focus on crime and violence that was not politically motivated enhanced perceptions of an unsafe continent.

What issues contribute positively to perceptions of Africa?

There is a considerable upside to Africa's prominence on the global news agenda. Positive aspects in the popular media that pertain to the continent not only strengthen perceptions, but subsequently international ties.

Considering that Africa is the only continent to achieve positive international media appraisal, albeit moderate positive attention, with regard to economic development and growth. Not only was the issue rated positively, but as the second highest reported topic it received much prominence.

Africa is widely considered to have a wealth of business opportunities. It has even been said that Africa has buffered the world economic crisis to a certain extent. Kuseni Dlamini, former CEO of mining company, Anglo American said: "Now there is a great era of opportunity for Africa to rise and shine in the global scheme of things and be met as an economic giant"

Recently, international banks such as Barclays, ICBC and HSBC have been looking to Africa to expand their businesses. Major retailers such as Wal-Mart have also entered business ventures on African soil. Executive vice-president of Wal-Mart, Andy Bond stated: "South Africa possesses attractive market dynamics, favourable demographic trends and a growing economy" (Toronto Star, 28/09/2010). UBS analyst, Neil Currie reportedly agreed and was quoted saying: "We believe that South Africa represents an attractive growth market" adding that South Africa has relatively strong infrastructure and a well-developed legal system" (The Globe and Mail, 28/09/2010).

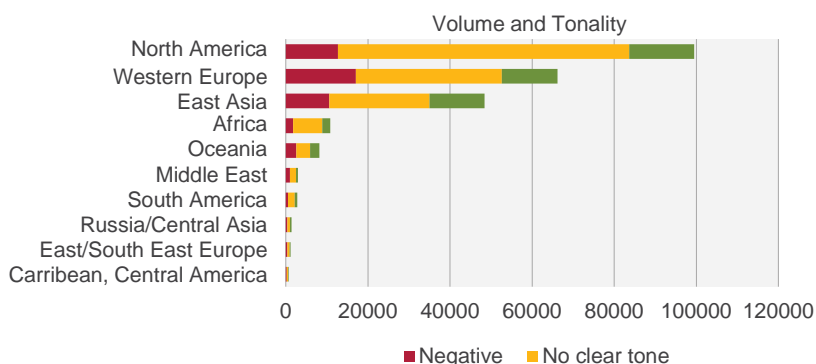
What do the financial analysts say about the African economy?

Financial Analysts' opinions often inform broader media debate. It is therefore important to examine the way in which this influential community perceives the African economy.

Based on analyst opinion in print media, Europe and North America are regarded as the global financial powerhouses. Volume of coverage pertaining to Africa is not comparable to these continents. Although Africa does not gain the same consideration as Europe and North America, it could be argued that it is a leader amongst developing economies, as it is the second most prominent emerging market receiving interest. A rapidly growing Asia dominates coverage on emerging markets.

The dominance of European, North-American as well as Asian economies resulted in a shortage of in-depth analysis of the African economy. Not only was there a lack of critical debate pertaining to African economies, but Africa and North America were the only continents receiving mostly negative reviews. The negative analyst discussion pertaining to African economies contrasts a more favourable outlook by the popular media.

Volume of coverage on different regions in financial analyst quotations, 2011 - 2014

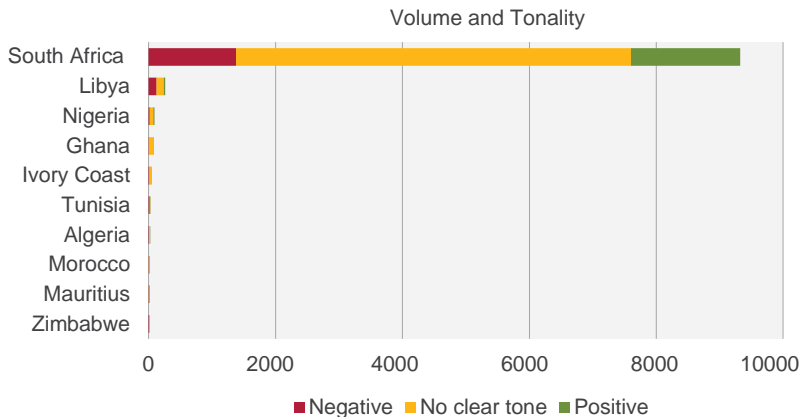


Basis: 242,000 statements made by financial analysts on foreign countries in 8 financial print media 2011 - 2014

Of the various African economies, South Africa was the country that secured the most international debate. Frankly, there was a lack of interest pertaining to other African economies. Media Tenor data suggests that this lack of media discussion serves to further undermine awareness of the development of the continent. It could also result in sustained interest in socio-political problems facing the continent.

Perhaps the reason as to why Africa receives such little interest is because discussion of Africa is commodity driven. Less focus is applied to the actual growth of economies and the positive stories driving this. There is no coherent, clear messaging relating to the African economy. A dearth of coverage pertains to goals made or goals achieved.

Volume of coverage on different regions in financial analyst quotations, 2011 - 2014



Basis: 9,923 statements made by financial analysts on foreign countries in 8 financial print media 2011 - 2014

To say that economic growth alone will be the solution for Africa may be somewhat of an exaggeration. The World Cup was the third highest issue covered by the media, with coverage being largely positive. However, other than economic growth and soccer, there was minimal interest pertaining to positive issues on African soil. The inherent risk in this context is high given that:

1. South Africa was most closely associated with the 2010 FIFA World Cup™. Although the mega event was hosted on the continent, it delivered few benefits for countries other than South Africa.
2. The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ is over. Africa needs to focus the international community's attention on other positive aspects.
3. Media Tenor data indicates that the impact of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ on African soil was compounded by negative news events such as the strike by civil servants in South Africa, immediately after the tournament.

The absence of positive stories leads to unbalanced perceptions of any given continent. The Middle East is a prime example of how a tendency to report

only on negative aspects, such as conflict and war results in crystalized international perceptions of, and attitudes towards the region- and mostly noticeably, Muslims.

Agenda setting theorists suggest that media reportage sets the public agenda and subsequently informs the dominant discourses at a given time (McCombs, 2004). The effects of the tendency of the international media's continual scrutiny of the Middle East extends to popular culture, depicted through film and literature. Films depicting the Middle East such as "The Hurt Locker" (Bigelow, 2008) as well as "Brothers" (Sheridan, 2009) portray the region in an intensely negative way. Novels such as "The Stoning of Soraya M" (Sahebjam, 1990), "The Kite Runner" (Hosseini, The Kite Runner, 2003) and "A Thousand Splendid Suns" (Hosseini, A Thousand Splendid Suns, 2008) further perpetuate negativity.

Are there positive stories that are being neglected by the international community, or is the Middle East so overwhelmed by constant political turmoil and conflict that there are no positive stories to tell? Could Africa suffer similar consequences to that of the Middle East, due to a lack of international interest in positive stories?

If popular culture is indicative of the news media's role in shaping perceptions of the continent, then this may well be the case. Africa has been featuring in a number of commercial films such as "Hotel Rwanda" (George, 2004), "Blood Diamond" (Zwick, 2006) and "The Last King of Scotland" (Macdonald, 2006), that depicted the continent as being politically volatile and prone to violence.

Signs of negative international sentiment towards Africa are not only visible in mainstream news media and popular culture. The fact that debate by hard-hitting financial media such as The Financial Times and The Wall Street Journal is in line with broader trends of reporting on Africa is telling of dominant conversations. On January 2011, the Wall Steer Journal reported:

The history of Sudan is of the fight for independence. "We have wanted our independence since before day one in 1955 [when civil war broke out]," says Peter Kor, 48, a southerner who assisted military training camps in Ethiopia for 16 years as part of a war effort in exile.

A vote for separation in the referendum will lead to a new country being established six months later. The nascent state has 18 near-embassies scattered about the globe and even a committee given the task of creating a national anthem. Posters in Juba declare a vote for “separation” is a vote for “freedom”. A street jamboree urges people to vote in the poll, which requires a 60 per cent turn out for it to be valid.

A vote for separation will by no means spell the end of instability. The new country’s borders remain unclear. Sudan’s middle belt harbors both oil and a mix of northern and southern groups. So controversial is one border territory, Abyei, that a separate referendum to decide whether it should join the north or the south has been shelved.

The nascent state is also grappling with extreme poverty, illiteracy, debt and often violent competition among its ethnic groups, problems which may undermine its existence.

Some predict tension with the north could erupt into violence, partly spurred by competition for oil largely located in the south that makes up half the North’s income. The UN confirmed a bombing raid last month on the southern border province of Western Bahral-Ghazal but the north denies responsibility.

Some fear disaster. The UK has allotted emergency aid in anticipation of southerners leaving the north. Oxfam, the UK aid agency, has also launched emergency programs in the border area pending a humanitarian crisis. The UN says 143,000 have left the north in the past few months and 2,000 are returning daily.

To a large degree, negative perceptions such as these tarnish each of Africa’s countries’ standing in the international community. For every negative sentiment, published or broadcasted, countries must at least double their brand building investment and efforts.

Perception versus reality

In the previous sections we briefly touched on the words such as “agenda setting”, “public agenda”, “dominant discourses” as well as “perceptions”. In this section we add the word “reality”. It is difficult to reconcile the word

“reality” with concepts such as “dominant discourses” and “perceptions”, because perceptions may be different to reality. This sections interrogates whether media perceptions are in line with reality, by focusing on the major deal maker’s i.e. economic growth and deal breakers i.e. conflict and violence, for different regions. Conclusions are based on a comparison of Media Tenor research with the following reports:

- a) The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011: This report is considered to be the most comprehensive assessment of its kind; it contains a thorough profile for each of the 139 economies analysed, as well as an extensive section of data tables with global rankings covering over 100 indicators.
- b) The Global Peace Index for 2010: “This index is a ground-breaking milestone in the study of peace. It is the first Index ever to rank 149 nations of the world by their peacefulness (or absence of violence) and to identify potential drivers of peace” (Killelea & Schatz, 2010).

WEF Global Competitiveness Report

In line with economic theory of stages development, this Global Competiveness Report assumes that in the first stage, the economy is factor-driven and countries compete based on their factor endowments, which are primarily unskilled labour and natural resources. Countries then move into the efficiency-driven stage as they become more competitive, productivity increases and wages rise. At this time, a country must begin to develop more efficient production processes and increase product quality, because wages have risen and they cannot increase prices.

As countries move into the final stage, i.e. the innovation-driven stage, wages will have risen to such levels that they are able to sustain those higher wages and the associated standard of living only if their enterprises are able to compete with innovative and unique products. On reaching this stage, countries must compete by producing new and different goods using the most sophisticated production processes and by applying innovation.

Are media perceptions of economic development in line with the reality?

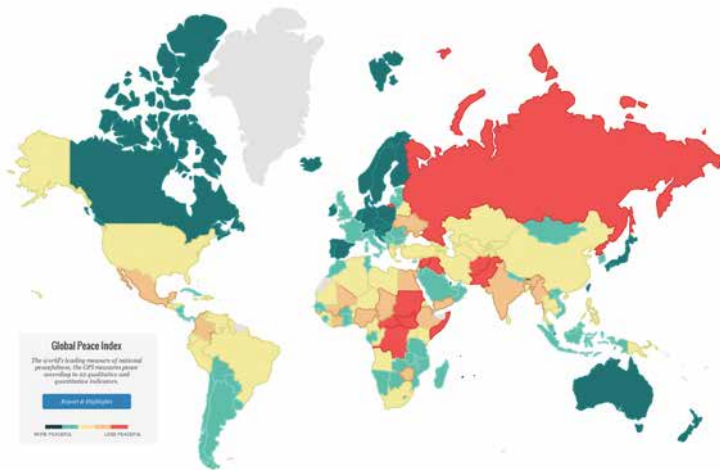
When considering the list of economies at each stage of development in the WEF Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011, European countries, North America, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan as well as Oceanic countries all fall into the third stage of development (GDP per capita in US\$ is more than 17,000 and the economies are innovation driven).

Currently, no African countries fall within this developmental stage, with the majority of countries either being in stage one (less than 2,000 GDP per capita, factor driven) or in transition from stage 1 to stage 2 (2,000 to 3,000 GDP per capita, efficiency driven). Discussion of economic trends by analysts in the media is indicative of the reality. More interest is given to continents that are considered to be highly advanced. In continents that receive much scrutiny and criticism, such as the Middle East, countries such as Saudi-Arabia as well as Israel are evaluated positively based on progressive economic development. Although Africa has a lot of business potential and room for economic development, it has a long way to go before it will be considered to be advanced.

South Africa, which has received the most international media focus relating to business and economic development, was also considered by the Global Competitive Index to be one of the most economically advanced of African countries. Namibia and Mauritius, also considered to be in the second stage of development as per South Africa, received little foreign media coverage. As argued earlier, reportage of Africa is influenced by the “bad news syndrome” to an extent, making it Africa’s responsibility to showcase development and thereby, to enhance international perceptions of the continent. The ultimate result would be both the securing of foreign partnerships and investment and strengthening of international ties.

Global Peace Index for 2014

State of peace according to the GPI



Sometimes a picture speaks louder than words. The above figure indicates the degree to which countries are peaceful. Interestingly, with the exception of six African countries, the state of peace in Africa seems to be medium, low and mostly very low.

In light of this, the extensive focus that Africa receives relating to political conflict, violence and crime mirrors reality. This is the case for most of the other regions, leading us to conclude that the media are not exaggerating the problems being faced.

The Global Peace Index for 2014 indicates that Sub-Saharan Africa has a combination of medium, high and low peace rate. Media Tenor data indicates that the foreign media closely associate Sub-Sahara with political conflict and violence.

According to the GPI “four war-torn: Somalia, Sudan, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continue to occupy the lowest ten positions in the index and each experienced deteriorations in their scores”. Notably, these countries, especially Somalia and Sudan attract significant international media focus.

Botswana fares best in the Global Peace Index for 2014. A reduction in the proportion of its population in jail contributes to a slight improvement in its score. Although this country's homicide rate is high, its military capability is limited and it is free of internal conflict. Low scores for most measures of safety and security point to a relatively harmonious society. Botswana also receives little foreign media interest.

Conclusion: Africa in Context

Africa has a lot of groundwork to do. International media portrayal of Africa is largely matched by existing global perceptions of the continent. The two issues that are central to foreign perceptions and those that mould international relations, namely the African economy and political conflict, are the issues that attract the most international media.

The international community is undoubtedly more focused on the many problems facing African countries. On the review of the 2010 Global Index, perception sadly matches reality to a greater degree. Although, the reality seems to be amplified by:

1. The fact that with the exception of South Africa, international scrutiny pertained primarily to problem areas such as Zimbabwe and Sudan.
2. The fact that there is not sufficient in-depth analysis of growing African economies.
3. The absence of positive issues to profile resulted in an intensified focus on problems.

The reputational challenges facing the continent are similar to the problems that other regions experience. For Africa to successfully enhance its international reputation, the reality needs to change.

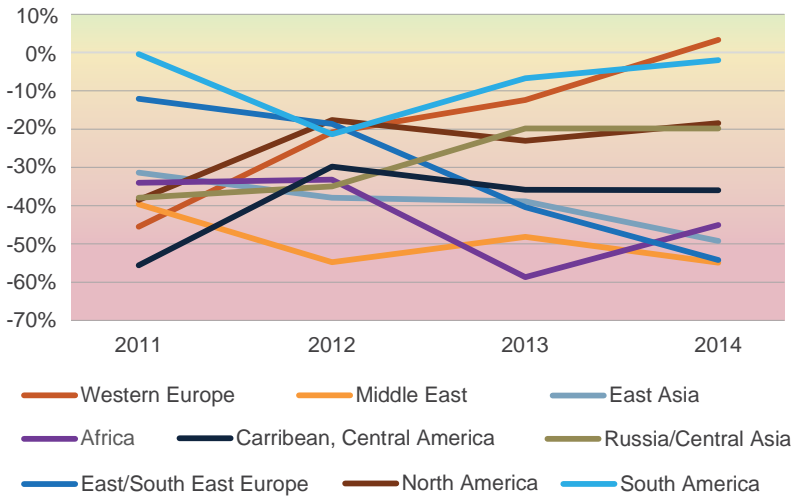
In this section, we drew on various researchers to prove that international media perceptions are mostly factually based. For Africa to enhance international perceptions and thereby, improve its reputation in the international community, the following should be addressed:

- a. Africa must win back international trust. For global perceptions of the continent to improve, the international community's experience therefore must improve.
- b. Nation brand expert, Simon Anholt (2010) talks about two types of trust. The first being trust gained through direct experience. The second is formed in others, which is then used as proxy for earned trust. The media plays a pivotal role in the latter, or what Anholt calls "trust taken on trust". It is, to a large extent the gatekeeper of "trust taken on trust" and may influence perceptions ranging from the man-on-the-street to the informed elite responsible for decisions pertaining investment.
- c. For Africa to regain international trust, it must generate a new identity. To do this, its behaviour has to change (Anholt, 2010). However, a new identity without change is a false identity. A new identity can only be achieved by changing the way that things are. The answer is simple, but there is no fast fix.

The research finds that Africa is not the only global "problem child". Over the past decade, other continents have withstood far more scrutiny.

Since 2008, Africa has been portrayed in an increasingly positive light, to the extent to which it received similar ratings to that of Europe, North America and South America. Increased positive interest, mostly pertaining to the successful hosting of the 201 FIFA World Cup™ presents Africa with a window of opportunity to enhance international perceptions and strengthen foreign ties.

Weighted tonality of coverage in continents



Basis: 158,778 reports on all non-domestic issues on 35 analysed TV news media

In addition, Africa has many countries that could contribute towards enhanced continental perceptions. Rapidly growing, peaceful countries such as Namibia and Mauritius have positive stories to profile, yet require the context and investment to tell these. Media Tenor's analysis indicates that the international media's negligence of such countries strengthens the negative perceptions of the continent.

If foreign interest in emerging African markets increased, perceptions of growth could change, provided that international attention is given to countries undergoing rapid growth and showing potential. Statements such as: "As Africa gets richer and does more trade with Asia, foreign banks are becoming more interested. That was the logic cited in 2007 when China Development Bank bought a stake in Barclays, which owns a big African business, and a few months later when ICBC, China's biggest bank, bought a 20% stake in Standard Bank, South Africa's largest, which has operations in some neighbouring countries" (The Economist, 28/08/2010) signal that dialogue pertaining to Africa is subject.

However, the responsibility lies with these emerging economies to evoke foreign media interest, which can be achieved by increased branding efforts. Should individual branding efforts be too costly, alternatives such as regional branding, e.g. SADC could be pursued.

The unabridged African story – one that mirrors both the good and bad realities – must be told.

In Part I, analysis was aimed at endeavouring to understand international perceptions of Africa, by placing the continent in a broader context. It evaluated Africa's media reputation compared to other continents, as placed against the backdrop of global media trends. Part II focuses on how individual African countries' media coverage contributes towards perceptions of Africa through the proposed African Growth Index, which will allow for the ongoing and continuous tracking of the 'performance' of African countries on the basis of the 'real' variables of the Mo Ibrahim and Doing Business Indices.

Introduction to the African Growth Index

In the previous section, Africa's reputation was considered within the context of general media trends. The similarities and differences existing between Africa and other continent's reputation were explored and debated. The primary aim of the African Growth Index is to identify and discuss specific African countries that impacted on the continent's reputation, in terms of governance and economic development. A secondary aim is to assess whether media reporting is compatible with the reality, by comparing the Index to other research and to debate possible corrective action that could lead to enhanced foreign perceptions and subsequently, strengthened international ties.

Index score calculation (Review)

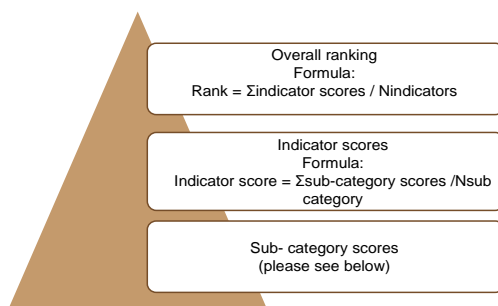
The aim of the African Growth Index is to examine African countries that impact on the continent's reputation. This is done by comparing media coverage on the indicators for the 2014 Ibrahim Index of African Governance pertaining to various African countries. The time period for analysis of the Index coincides with the Ibrahim Index, thus research is based on the 2011 to 2014 data.

The African Growth Index (AGI) measures the delivery to citizens of public goods and services, by government and non-state actors (Mo Ibrahim Foundation). It draws on four indicators: Safety and Rule of Law; Participation and Human rights; Sustainable Economic Opportunity; and Human development as proxies for the quality of the processes and outcomes of governance. These indicators have been leveraged in the African Growth Index. The Ibrahim Index, funded and led by an African institution (Mo Ibrahim Foundation) is the most comprehensive collection of qualitative and quantitative data assessing governance in Africa.

To deliver a comprehensive analysis, variables measured in the World Bank Doing Business Index (Doing Business) are included as an additional assessment category. The Doing business Project provides objective measures of business regulation and the enforcement thereof across 183 economies and selected cities at a sub-national and regional level. It assesses domestic small and medium-size companies, measuring relevant regulations. Furthermore we have drawn on information contained in the Global Peace Index and the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report.

The African Growth index that forms the core of this chapter relies on the ranking system comprising scores and is calculated as follows.

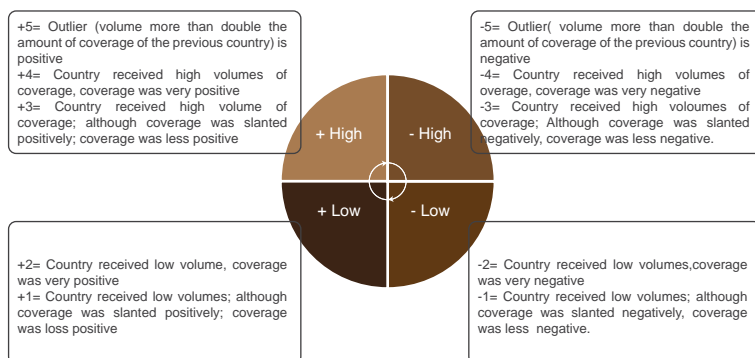
Diagram 1: Methodology formulae



Each main category has a range of sub-category, with these scores based on visibility and tone. Countries were sorted into four categories: + High (tone is positive, visibility is high); + Low (tone is positive, visibility is low); -High (tone is negative, visibility is high); and -Low (tone is negative, visibility is low). Each country was assigned a value based on criteria detailed in Diagram 2. Countries receiving five or less reports were assigned a value of 0.

The Africa Growth Index

Diagram 2: Media article categorization matrix



Media included in the analysis

This Index is based on 175406 reports sourced from the above mentioned media, for the period 1 January 2011 – 31 December 2014 (in alignment with the Mo Ibrahim Index).

Only data from foreign television media was analysed for the Index, as the aim was to understand how African countries have been portrayed in this community of influencers. Therefore, no African media was included in the analysis. Table 2 provides the media source list.

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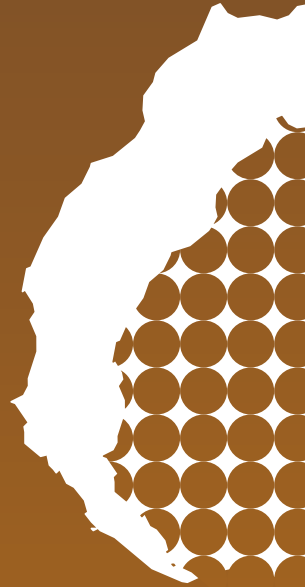


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Globalisation is an increasingly important element of international economic relations in regards to its implications for trade, productive investment as well as finance. As Africa entered the 21st century, the continent faced mounting challenges; poverty, sickness, rapid population growth, ecological degradation, rising unemployment, fragile political institutions, militant group activities on the rise as well as weak administration still hampers the continents economic and social transformation. The continent is faced with certain things that impede on its competitiveness in the global economy, but the international media emphasise on its prevailing problems later contributes to the foreign concern; various researchers analysed international news flow and concluded that the third World, and particularly Africa was being portrayed in a bad-news-syndrome.

The featured 2015 Africa Growth Index in this report is looking at the perceptions created about the continent. Rather than measuring actual growth, the index, which will be published annually, compares how media coverage on individual African countries reflects reality. It draws from the reputable Mo Ibrahim Index, which contains a wealth of information on the democratic progress of African countries. This index allows for a detailed assessment of the African context and of particular importance, provides historical data.



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