

Digital Public Diplomacy in Africa

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INTRODUCTION



Importance of digital inclusion in Africa



Overview of China's and EU's digital engagement



Strategies, impacts, and KPIs



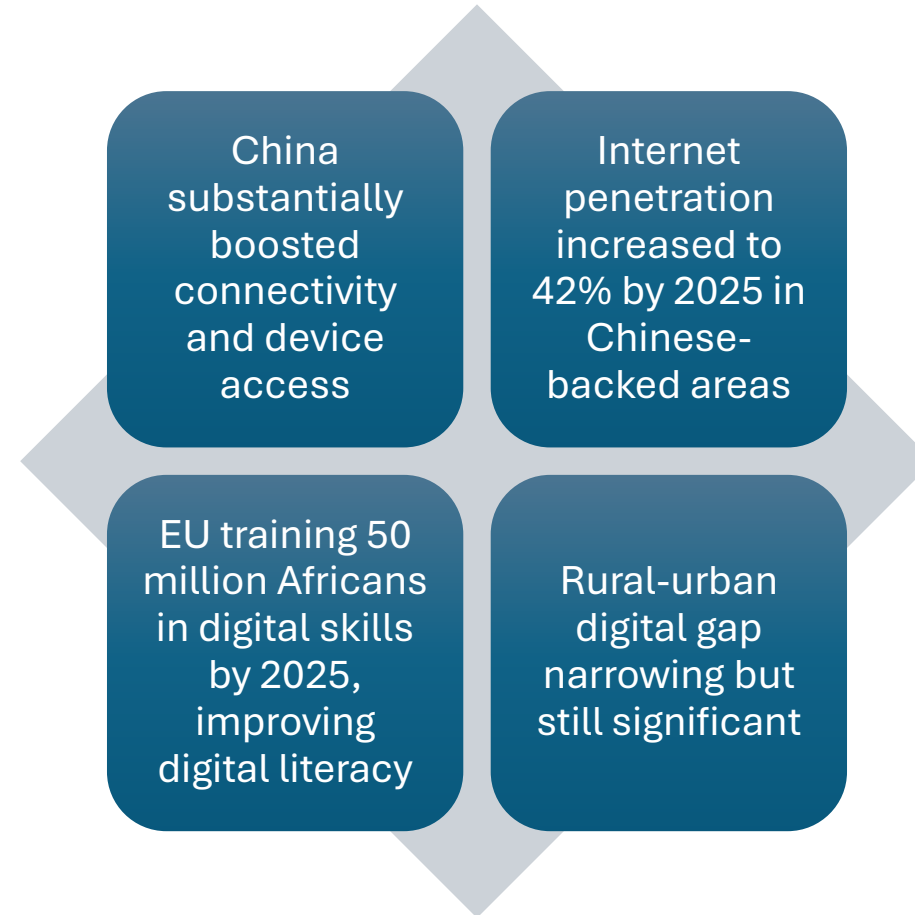
China and EU's Digital Policy for Africa

- Comparative Table

Aspect	China	EU
Approach	Infrastructure-heavy, fast rollout	Regulation, capacity building, inclusion
KPIs Focus	Coverage, network km, users, devices	Broadband %, skills trained, MSMEs digitally enabled
Human Rights Focus	Low	High, core concern
Financing Model	Rapid, state-driven, turnkey	Grants/loans, conditional



Impact on Digital Divide: Quantitative Highlights





Challenges vs. Benefits of China's Digital Diplomacy in Africa

Aspect	Challenges	Benefits
Digital Rights & Privacy	Concerns about surveillance and limited data privacy frameworks	Provides rapid digital infrastructure enabling connectivity gains across urban and rural Africa
Regulatory Alignment	Weak alignment with local regulatory standards or African data sovereignty frameworks	Chinese firms deliver affordable devices and telecom services to millions of low-income Africans
Affordability	Costs remain high for rural & low-income users despite infrastructure growth	Massive infrastructure investments (fiber, mobile towers, data centers) boosting digital economies
Local Capacity & Skills	Limited focus on sustainable local digital skills development in some projects	Offers widely accessed technical training, scholarships, and ICT skill-building initiatives
Economic Development	Risk of digital dependency and limited local ownership	Supports e-commerce, fintech, smart city initiatives that spur entrepreneurship and diversification
Operational Speed	Concerns over transparency and project terms	Known for rapid decision-making and timely project delivery compared to other donors
African Agency	Some risk of over-reliance on China potentially limiting African negotiation power	African governments increasingly negotiate better terms and diversify partnerships
Complement to Other Actors	Seen as geopolitical rival rather than partner	Complementary to EU/US efforts, filling critical infrastructure gaps quickly



Strategic Insights & Recommendations

China's approach delivers fast access

EU offers sustainable inclusion but needs to accelerate infrastructure support

Importance of African agency, local capacity, and multilateral partnerships

Need for balancing rapid access with rights, affordability, and regulation



Conclusion

1

Both China and EU
play vital,
complementary roles
in Africa's digital
future

2

Closing the digital
divide requires
combining rapid
infrastructure with
inclusive policies

3

Future success
depends on African
leadership and
diversified
international
cooperation

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THANK YOU!

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