

A weekly digest of the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD news and information

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Top Stories



Tackling Illicit Finance



Ending cross-border TB in SADC region



16 Women Restoring the Earth



Positive Culture—Right on Time

Landmark High-Level Panel to Tackle Illicit Finance



New York, USA – Thought leaders from across the globe joined an independent panel tasked with making recommendations to fix a financial system that allows trillions of dollars to be lost and hidden via tax evasion, tax avoidance, money laundering, and corruption. The panel will build on existing work and ongoing efforts.

The High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda (FACTI Panel) was created jointly by the President of the United Nations General Assembly and the President of the United Nation Economic and Social Council – the leaders of two of the three main charter bodies of the UN. The Panel consists of 15 members drawn from policymakers, academia, civil society, and the private sector “The money that is being hidden in offshore tax havens, laundered through shell companies and outright stolen from public coffers should be put toward ending poverty, educating every child, and building infrastructure that will create jobs and end our dependence on fossil fuels,” said Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki, co-chair of the panel and former prime minister of Niger.

“The systems that governments use to address different types of financial corruption are fraying and do not yet effectively deal with the new ways that are used to game the system,” he continued. “We aim to help change that.”

The panel will explore what further action is needed by governments and financial institutions in the following areas: financial and beneficial ownership transparency, tax matters, bribery and corruption, confiscation and disposal of the proceeds of crime, money laundering and the recovery and return of stolen assets.

The United Nations’ Member States have committed to an agenda of 17 global goals aimed at achieving a fair, equitable and safe planet. Good governance at all levels and democratic and transparent institutions responsive to the needs of the people are necessary to achieve these goals. And mobilizing financial resources is critical to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). An additional annual investment needed to achieve just a few of the SDGs is estimated at over \$2.5 trillion by 2030.

Insufficient financial integrity – including tax evasion and avoidance, money laundering, and corruption,– is hindering governments from collecting their fair share of taxes. It also creates uneven playing fields that harm small- and medium-sized businesses and undermine equity and inclusiveness in our economies.

“In a world of cross-border trade, investment and finance often via digital platforms, there are limits to what countries can do on their own,” said Dr. Mayaki. “Illicit finance is a global problem that requires global cooperation in order to achieve effective solutions.”

Panelists will meet several times over the course of the next year in regional consultations, convene experts and stakeholders from across all sectors and explore new analyses of the issues and solutions. The work of the panel will be supported by a secretariat based in New York. An interim report will be issued in July 2020 and a final report in February 2021.

Source: FACTI Panel communications

Ending cross-border Tuberculosis in SADC region



Tuberculosis is an air-borne communicable disease and the leading cause of death from infectious diseases (ranking above HIV/AIDS). Globally, an estimated 10.0 million people fell ill with TB in 2018. Southern Africa has the highest TB incidence in the world, around 400 cases per 100 thousand persons (against a global average of 132). The mining sector remains one of the worst affected by the TB scourge. Miners bear 5 to 10 times more TB than the general population, with poor treatment outcomes.

In the last decade, there has been substantial partner support and stakeholder engagement to support implementation of regional commitments to end TB in the mines and stop cross-border spread. During the inception of Southern Africa TB and Health System Support Project (SATBHSS), countries conducted an assessment to ascertain the status of domestication of SADC regional harmonised policy frameworks at all levels of health care, aiming to shed light to additional actions and synergies required to strengthen regional efforts to tackle cross-border spread of the disease.

At governance level, vibrant political commitment and partner support translated into the establishment of cross-border agreements for disease surveillance, and awareness of staff at central level. However, lack of efficient formal channels for cross-border communication, uncertain legal frameworks and care provisions for undocumented migrants, and scarce domestic funding remain key challenges.

At service delivery level, TB and occupation health disease screening for cross-border miners and ex-miners is established in specialized centres. Despite this, care across some borders remains in an infancy stage because of the lack of standardized channels for referrals and the slow integration in cross-border committees.

Recommendations

At SADC secretariat level, call for action to develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks for regional commitments and progress should be addressed at ministerial and NTP level.

Establish regional minimum standards for cross-border TB management: Regional health organisations and SADC member states should develop, endorse and divulge operational guidelines and tools to harmonise standards of care. Standards should address quality continuity of care, cross-border referrals, language barriers, and be widely divulged to health providers and patients.

Integrate and harmonise electronic and paper-based health information systems: Regional organisations and country teams should expedite the rollout of electronic cross-border systems, develop and implement complimentary paper-based systems for use, while awaiting universal coverage of digital technologies; and use affordable digital communication channels to optimise cross-border collaborations.

Africa's restoration maven among 16 Women Restoring the Earth



Bonn, Germany – From Lina Pohl, former environment minister in El Salvador, to young Indigenous water activist Autumn Peltier of Canada, to Ugandan organiser Constance Okollet, the Global Landscapes Forum's (GLF) inaugural list of 16 Women Restoring the Earth is packed with energy, enthusiasm, and experience.

The list of 16 outstanding women activists was released by GLF to mark International Women's Day on 8 March 2020, acknowledging and celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women and their unceasing efforts for gender equality.

Worldwide, women are working hard each day to feed their families in the face of devastating climate change, said Okollet, chairperson for the Osukuru United Women's Network (OWN) in Eastern Uganda.

"Being included on the GLF list is an honour and a chance to talk about how climate change is hurting so many women and families," said Okollet. "But if we keep talking, things will change slowly and we will have food, year in, year out. The children will eat."



Drawn from the worlds of finance, landscape restoration, food, and livelihoods security – and from across generations, communities, and regions – these 16 Women Restoring the Earth are at the forefront of efforts to confront the world's climate crisis and to restore the ecosystems that are at the very base of the well-being of hundreds of millions of families and women and girls.

The four African restoration maven women being honoured on the GLF list are; Joselyn Dumas of Ghana, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim of Chad, Wanjira Mathai of Kenya and Constance Okollet of Uganda (click on each woman's name to read her biography).



Since 2013, over 7,000 women experts in their field have participated in and attended the Global Landscapes Forums (not including online participation). The AUDA-NEPAD implemented AFR100 Initiative was launched at the GLF during COP 21 in 2015 in Paris.

Why I joined the AUDA-NEPAD Positive Culture Team



By Millicent Kgeledi

Ever since I joined that African Union Development Agency-NEPAD Positive Culture team, a famous quote has been going through my head for some reason: “Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.” — Leo Tolstoy

Sometimes I walk through the corridors and hear the excitement and questions about Positive Culture Committee and what we are planning next and who is expected to participate, etc. the questions are many. But one aspect stands out throughout all these conversations- everyone knows about Positive Culture; everyone has embraced this concept in one way or another.

In the beginning, it started off at a slow pace with some people even mistakenly calling it “positive change” instead of “positive culture.” I think it all stemmed from the thinking that it must be associated with the transformation from NEPAD Agency to the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD. Well, in essence, one could be forgiven for thinking in that manner because we started almost during the time of the transformation. It seemed like we saw positive culture as a campaign to encourage change and adaptation to the AUDA-NEPAD.

The AUDA-NEPAD mandate gives the organisation a wider role in providing knowledge-based advisory support to AU member states in terms of strategic and capacity development. So in this bigger mandate, one would also conclude that there must be a change of mindset, attitude and a renewed commitment to ensuring that our vision is achieved.

However, for me, it is a bit different. I see the formation of the Positive Culture Committee as a commitment to say, ‘We are ready for a new but not very different journey’. So, every time I sit in the planning meetings of the Committee, I think about the mindsets that I need to personally embrace while letting go of old, unnecessary mindsets. Some of these new mindsets are strongly aligned to the Kaizen approach of adapting to change and making the best of it. I think about how I as an individual can contribute to this slightly different journey. I smile to myself as I think about the ‘meet and greet’ we recently hosted, the smile on colleagues’ faces as they walked through the office doors were priceless!”

About the AUDA-NEPAD Positive Culture Committee

During the transformation process of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the AUDA-NEPAD CEO, Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki requested that a Working Group on positive culture change is established to drive the process of promoting a positive culture in the workplace.

The positive culture change, an open group that comprises any staff member who wishes to be actively involved in this culture change process.

Thought to ponder

“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.”

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