



NEPAD NEWS

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Intra-African trade remains a priority

by Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency

While the BRICS heads of state (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) met recently in South Africa for their tenth summit, it seems essential to me to recall why the issue of intra-African trade is crucial if we want to assert ourselves as a continent of equal playing with the other big emerging countries of the South. It is encouraging to see that for the first time in our Pan-African history, we have achieved a major political breakthrough on this subject. In March, 44 African countries signed the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) agreement, a giant leap forward for our continent, whose economic and political integration is still far too weak.

In its latest report on the state of African trade [1], Afreximbank points out that while intra-African trade is worth \$ 128.25 billion, up 5.6% between 2016 and 2017, its share in the total volume of the continent's trade remains weak. In 2017, this share fell to less than 15% of all trade on the continent, amounting to \$ 907.63 billion.

However, with the establishment of the CFTA, experts estimate that we can expect a growth of more than 50% in the intra-African trade by 2022. This aspect of African countries' trade is all the more important to develop that it is often better balanced than our trade outside the continent. Indeed, between 2012 and 2016, intra-African trade consisted of 43% manufactured goods against only 20% to the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, the concrete and effective implementation of the free trade zone of the African continent will not be an easy task. First of all, a signature does not mean ratification, and the agreement will have to go through this stage of ratification in a large number of countries. Moreover, the huge disparities between countries will not fail to cause harmonisation difficulties.

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But above all, there are still missing signatories! Countries like Nigeria, Namibia, Burundi, and Benin have not yet joined the agreement. Each of these states expresses reluctance due to pressure from certain economic sectors, fearing a sudden increase in competition caused by a CFTA membership. But we must convince the different governments of the importance of joining this project with long-term gains for all. In addition, accompanying measures are planned in the short term to prepare the economic sectors that will be weakened by the agreement.

The road towards the integration of the continent is therefore still long because, despite the advances in the fields of customs and regulation that the CFTA will enable, the obstacles remain numerous. How can one imagine making Africa a free trade zone, with flows that can circulate easily, if the continent is still struggling with its infrastructure deficit? We invest \$45 billion a year in infrastructures [2], but twice as much is needed. It would indeed be time for the Bank created by the BRICS to take a greater interest in regional infrastructure projects on the continent.

In addition, to be able to trade and export, businesses need financing. However, only one-third of African trade is supported by banking institutions, and it is estimated that \$ 90 billion of funding demands by African companies are not satisfied. Finally, this project of a more integrated Africa requires the support of Africans themselves. We need all the forces within our nations, as well as our diasporas, to carry out this project that can change the dimension of our continent in global economic and political affairs.

By uniting as Europeans have done, despite the difficulties they are facing today, we can radically change the weight of Africa in international institutions like the WTO. If the African continent spoke with one voice, our influence would be much stronger than 55 voices trying to be heard on their own. It is only by working together that we can change the course of events and weigh in the affairs of the world, especially in the new forums that give pride to the voices of the South.

NEPAD Agency signs MoU with South Africa's National School of Government

Midrand, July 26, 2018 - The NEPAD Agency signed a memorandum of understanding with the South African National School of Government*, at a signing ceremony took place on 26 July at the Agency's Midrand offices in South Africa.

Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency, remarked that the MoU will deepen reforms pertaining to open government, with some collaborative projects envisaged within the Open Government Partnership (Africa Chapter).

The Open Government Partnership is a global initiative dedicated to strengthening the principles of open and accountable government, citizen engagement and fighting corruption. The initiative also fosters innovation in public service delivery.

The modalities of the MoU include the implementation of regional projects and programmes in the agreed areas of cooperation. They also include the mobilising and fostering of dialogue with African Union Member States and Regional Economic Communities towards their support in defining and implementing strategies outlined in the development agenda of the African continent.

The two institutions agreed to collaborate in the capacity enhancement of professional and technical personnel of Governments of AU Member States, as well as key African institutions and private firms.

"We need African countries to also benefit from capacity development initiatives which are central to our partnership," said Prof Richard Levin, Principal of the National School of Government.

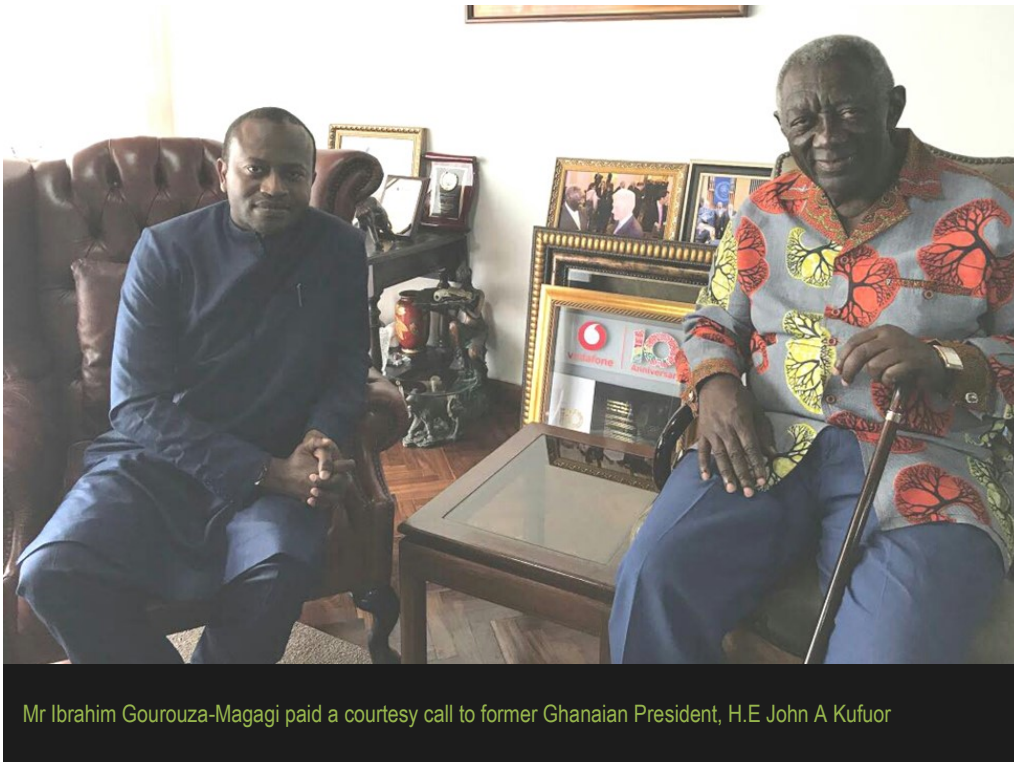
"We would like to see NEPAD Agency involved in thought leadership and to build the capacity of public servants which will eventually lead to capacitated leaders who focus on a broader approach to African development," Prof Levin added.

Both organisations will jointly participate in the mobilisation of resources for development projects and programmes in AU Member States.

*The mission of the South African National School of Government reads as follows:

"The NSG is responsible for learning and development programmes in a uniform public sector with the objective of developing a professional, responsive and capable public sector, driven by the imperative of a developmental state. A culture and ethos of service will be imbued throughout the public sector, meeting the expectations of stakeholders and communities, and based on policy commitments of government."





Mr Ibrahim Gourouza-Magagi paid a courtesy call to former Ghanaian President, H.E John A Kufuor

According to the former President of Ghana, H.E Kufuor, Grow Africa should play a key role towards the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Rice Offensive Programme

Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework kicks off in Ghana

Accra, July 30, 2018 - The rolling out of the Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework (CAP-F) in the selected pilot countries is proceeding at a commendable pace, with Ghana being the latest country added to the list.

On 30 July 2018, Mr Ibrahim Gourouza-Magagi, Grow Africa's Head of West and Central Africa/CAP-F Coordinator officially kicked off Ghana's Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework (CAP-F) implementation with a briefing to the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Dr Owusu Afiyie Akoto.

The briefing in Accra, Ghana, centred on CAP-F and its national structures that are to be established, as well as its potential to unlock private sector investment in agriculture through the creation of partnerships that align private sector commitments to Ghana's National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP) priorities. This is in order to collectively achieve the country's agricultural transformation goals. The high-level briefing, whose key output was to obtain buy-in from the country's high level officials, officially marks the CAP-F kick-off in Ghana.

Minister Akoto believes that a CAP-F Secretariat anchored within the Ministry of Food and Agriculture will certainly assure better follow-up of private sector commitments in support of the Ghana Planting for Food and Jobs programme.

The next step in the CAP-F process in Ghana entails the conducting of a stocktaking exercise, aimed at evaluating the existing agriculture sector landscape and to determine the level of in-country resourcing required for CAP-F implementation. This process will also produce an implementation roadmap to guide ongoing country CAP-F processes.

Whilst in Accra, Mr Gourouza also paid a courtesy visit to former Ghanaian President, John Kufuor Chairman of the John A Kufuor Foundation (JAK Foundation), which works to promote effective leadership as the catalyst for good governance, and socio-economic development through advocacy, programmatic interventions and strategic partnerships with likeminded organisations and institutions.

Grow Africa works with the JAK Foundation in the area of advancing rice self-sufficiency in the ECOWAS region. This includes increasing rice production and yield; promoting a regional local rice market as well as improving policy within the rice environment. All of these measures are geared at reducing to zero, by 2025, rice imports into the region.

According to the former President Kufuor, Grow Africa should play a key role towards the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Rice Offensive Programme. The former president concluded by stating that, "The rice self-sufficiency issue in ECOWAS should be tackled in a more integrated manner, solving the problem in only one particular country will not solve the problems in the entire region."



Strengthening
coordination
of cross-
border
disease
surveillance

Zambia and DRC to tackle cross border disease challenges

Chililabombwe, Zambia, July 12, 2018 - Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have come together to establish the first cross border disease surveillance committee under the Southern Africa Tuberculosis and Health Systems Support (SATBHSS) project. The main aim of this is to strengthen coordination of cross-border disease surveillance, conditions and events of public health importance, as well as joint response to disease outbreaks and emergency preparedness across borders using One Health Approach.

This first meeting of the surveillance committee took place from 9 -12 July 2018 in Chililabombwe, Zambia. During the meeting, Zambia and DRC identified three common cross-border challenges: uncontrolled and/or illegal crossing points (in Bilanga), transshipping, and poor sanitation in market places in and around the border areas.

It was agreed that the two countries will develop a roadmap on how these challenges will be addressed.

It was further agreed that the two countries will conduct regular (quarterly) cross-border meetings to address issues of common interest with particular emphasis on disease surveillance and outbreak management, based on the One Health Approach model. The first meeting is proposed for November 2018.

The cross-border disease surveillance committee was established between Chililabombwe district of Zambia and Sakania district of the DRC as zone one.

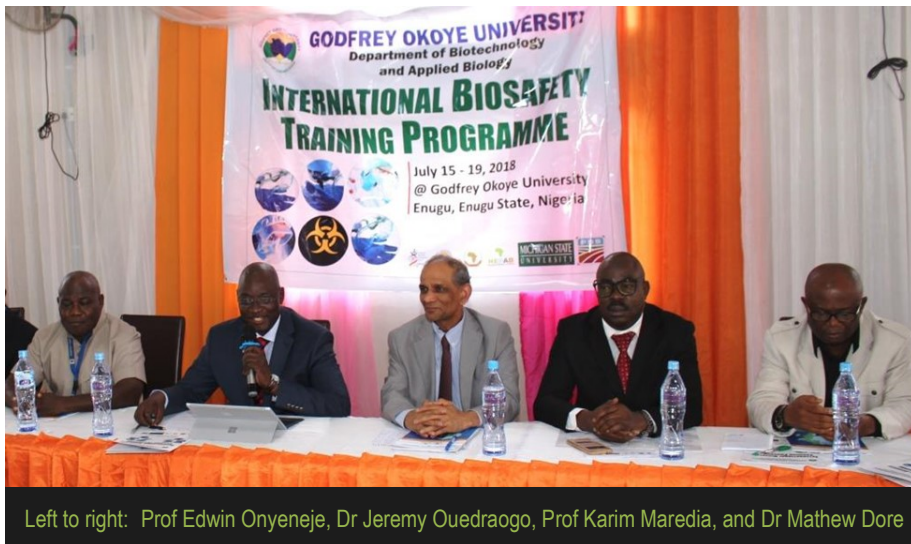
The inaugural meeting was officially opened by the District Commissioner of Chililabombwe, Mr Paul Mulenga.

Terms of reference for the committee were developed and adopted during the meeting and the 2018 annual work plan was developed with clear agreed activities for implementation. In addition to zone one, two other zones were identified during the meeting between the Zambia–DRC border for possible operationalisation. The zones are Mufulira (Zambia) – Sakania (DRC) and Ndola and Masaiti (Zambia) – Sakania (DRC).

The cross-border disease surveillance committee between Zambia and DRC is being established based on the recommendation that came out from the inaugural Community of Practice on Laboratory and Surveillance regional meeting held in Maputo, Mozambique in 2017. The two countries made some recommendations during the meeting which include establishing information sharing platforms that are in line with both countries data and information sharing policies and conduct simulation exercises at least once every year to test the emergency preparedness plans.

A total of 35 participants drawn from Zambia and DRC attended this meeting from varied disciplines and functions of surveillance, animal health, environmental affairs, immigration, customs, authorities, laboratory, clinicians, District Medical Officers, security and communication. A table top simulation exercise was conducted and identified areas of improvement in the two countries preparedness plans.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sli0R7BThRI&feature=youtu.be>



Left to right: Prof Edwin Onyeneje, Dr Jeremy Ouedraogo, Prof Karim Maredia, and Dr Mathew Dore

Key topics addressed in the course included an introduction to modern biotechnology and biosafety, myths and misconceptions about GMOs

First international biosafety short course implemented in Nigeria

Enugu, Nigeria, July 18, 2018 - NEPAD Agency's African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE,) in partnership with the National Biosafety Management Agency of Nigeria (NBMA), the Godfrey Okoye University (GOUUni), Michigan State University and the Programme for Biosafety Systems (PBS), successfully implemented an international biosafety short course at Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu, Nigeria, from 16 – 18 July, 2018.

Participants were drawn from various relevant stakeholder institutions such as biotechnology and biosafety agencies, academia and research institutions, as well as the media and women groups.

The main objective of this short course was to empower important stakeholders with current information on the safe management of biotechnology for socio-economic development. It also sought to provide a platform for networking among key actors to foster inter-agency collaborations and to increase awareness among key actors on their role, and the significance of having functional regulatory systems for biotechnology.

Official welcome and opening remarks were given by Prof Edwin Onyeneje, Deputy Vice Chancellor of GOUUni; Dr Rufus Ebegba, Director General of NBMA; Prof. Karim Maredia, Director of the World Technology Access Programme at Michigan State University; Dr Mathew Dore, Nigeria Country Leader for PBS; Dr. Ojuolape Solanke, West African Health Organization (WAHO); Dr Jeremy Ouedraogo, Director of NEPAD Agency ABNE; Prof Uche Ebe, Enugu State Commissioner for Education; and Prof Engr Patrick Ikpenwa, Enugu State Commissioner for Science and Technology.

All interveners welcomed participants to the biosafety short course and congratulated GOUUni for this important feat. Prof Edwin Onyeneje said that GOUUni was particularly honoured to host such an important event and thanked all partners who contributed to

make this happen.

“Through this activity, the NEPAD Agency would like to reiterate its commitment to continue supporting Nigeria to build a functional biosafety regulatory system and build human capacity of high quality and thus fulfil the mandate of the ABNE,” Dr Jeremy Ouedraogo said.

“I wish to say that Enugu State is open to partnerships in this area and wish you a successful implementation of this programme,” Prof Engr Patrick Ikpenwa said, officially declaring the short course open on behalf of his Excellency, Rt. Hon Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, Governor of Enugu State,

In the course of the day, Rev Fr Prof Christian Anieke, Vice Chancellor of GOUUni, who had been unavoidably absent at the opening ceremony, welcomed all participants. He was pleased that the course was hosted by the University.

“I am very happy the short course has taken up and is happening at GOUUni for the first time in Enugu State and for the first time in Nigeria. Nigeria needs this kind of program, not for only training but also new ideas. So note that I, as Vice Chancellor of this University, am hundred per cent behind you in this course,” he said.

The short course was facilitated by NEPAD ABNE and Nigerian experts in the biosafety sector. Key topics addressed in the course encompassed an introduction to modern biotechnology and biosafety, myths and misconceptions about GMOs and how they are addressed, national and international frameworks for regulating biotechnology, public participation in biosafety processes, and biosafety resources and experience sharing.

Food safety issues were particularly raised and experts reassured the audience that available scientific evidence shows that GM food is as safe as its conventional counterpart. Participants particularly appreciated the organisers for such an initiative, which is a real eye-opener on biotechnology and biosafety. The sustainability of such a training programme was also emphasised and participants suggested that relevant stakeholders help to develop innovative ways of reaching out to all segments of the population from school children to farmers and the academia, who are not familiar with modern biotechnology and biosafety.

Upcoming Events

- 11 Aug 2018: *Embracing food-based approaches in national and regional agriculture and nutrition policies, strategies, programmes and investment plans. Cairo, Egypt*
- 26 - 28 Aug 2018: *3rd AFR100 Annual Partnership Meeting. Nairobi, Kenya*
- 20 - 21 Sep 2018: *1st Africa Environment Partnership Platform. Nairobi, Kenya*

For more events visit: www.nepad.org/events

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Announcements



Policy Brief: Priority Action for Effective Engagement of Women in Agribusiness

Women account for a significant proportion of the agribusiness workforce along the agricultural value chain; providing inputs and functions that are critical to business performance.

Below are the links to the policy brief:

English version: <http://www.nepad.org/resource/policy-brief-priority-action-effective-engagement-women-agribusiness>

French version: <http://www.nepad.org/resource/policy-brief-women-agribusiness-french>

Proverb

“A lie has many variations, the truth none.”



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