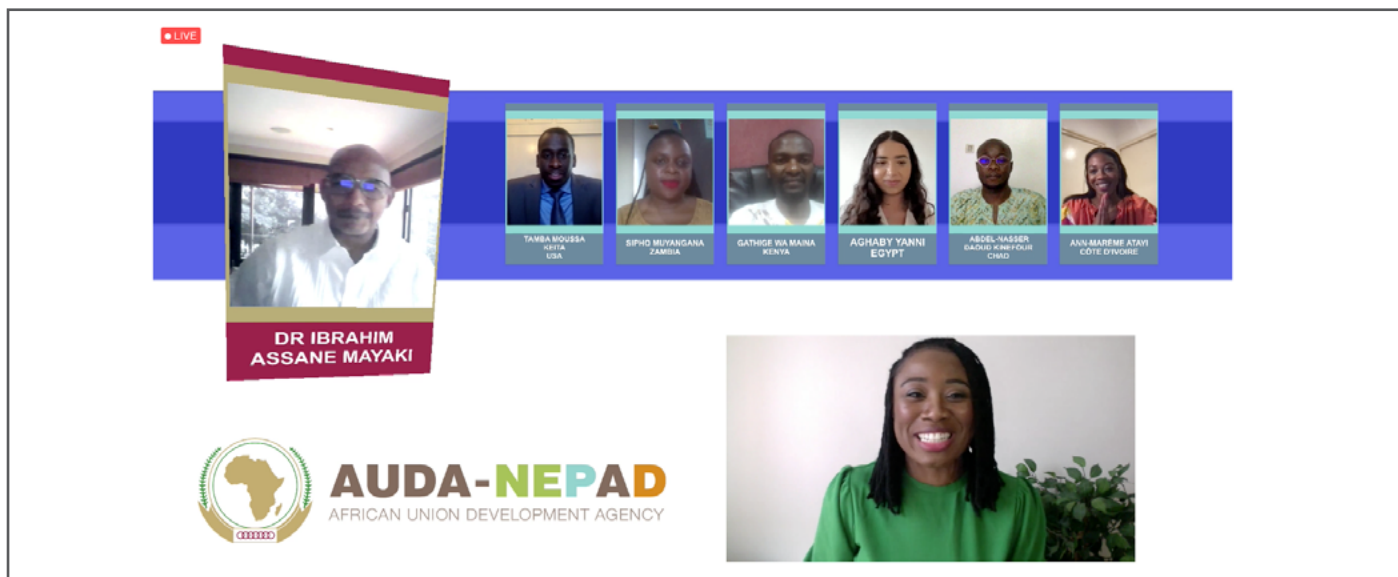




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March 2021 Newsletter

AUDA-NEPAD lends an ear to Africa's Youth



The CEO of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki participated in a webinar aimed at discussing key issues on Africa's development, with Africa's youth. The webinar themed, 'Lending an ear to Africa's youth, took place on Tuesday, March 16. It brought together six young people from six regions in Africa. The selected youth discussed with the CEO, their perceptions on the issues they face and the role they should play in Africa's socio-economic development. Through this event, Dr. Mayaki reiterated that it is essential to give voice to African youth to solve the continent's development challenges.

The webinar provided a space for students to express their ideas on issues of governance, regional integration, pan-Africanism, agriculture, the digital economy, and also learnt about AUDA-NEPAD's activities in the process.

This exchange is critical and timely, especially when one considers that young people under the age of 25 represent 75% of the African population and that by 2050, the continent will have 362 million people aged 15 to 24 (World Bank, 2014). A youth population which is waking up and wants to discuss with continental leaders on the type of political regime and model of society that the African population, especially the younger generation, wants to see emerge, is on the rise.

Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki said it was time to strengthen the confidence of young people in institutions, to reframe the

debate so that they [young people] are seen as part of the solution and not part of the problem. This, he deemed as crucial, especially since the new digital age makes the gap between the aspirations of young Africans and the socio-economic reality they face even more visible and less bearable. 'This situation', he said, 'increases the pressure on African decision makers to develop dynamic and concrete solutions to meet the growing demands of youth'.

During the discussions, the six participants emphasised the importance of accelerating youth empowerment and finding adequate channels for their voices to be heard in order to make them actors of the continent's transformation.

Participants were informed on how AUDA-NEPAD addresses development issues through its programs such as the Youth Training and Education Program, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) and the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

This exchange reaffirmed AUDA-NEPAD's commitment to put youth at the heart of sustainable development and to encourage political actors to involve African youth more in contemporary debates.

AUDA-NEPAD: Does money and focus equal ownership and trade?

With trading having officially started under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on 1 January 2021, the African Union (AU) and its member states are now under pressure to make this agreement a success. But as analysis of the agreement shows, most gains are not expected from tariff reduction but rather from reducing non-tariff barriers and from trade facilitation – where improving trade-related infrastructures is key.

The best laid continental plans...

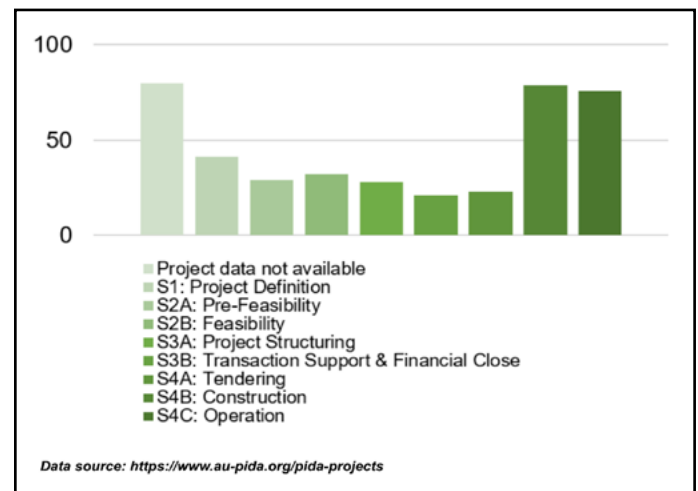
The AU has a continental plan covering trade-related infrastructures too – the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) was set up in 2012 precisely to help boost regional and continental infrastructure connections. It laid out a framework of ‘priority’ projects – a shortlist from country and regional submissions – which needed funding.

Past analyses frequently cite a financing gap of \$93bn per year for African infrastructure. With a more ambitious development goal in mind than the World Bank’s calculations, the African Development Bank (AfDB) estimated in 2018 that \$130-170 billion per year are needed to achieve universal access to power and water, extended ICT coverage, and improved transport infrastructure by 2025, while current commitments still leave a financing gap of \$68–\$108 billion annually.

Despite some progress, the first generation of PIDA was not a roaring success. Africa still lacks the necessary infrastructure to trade efficiently on the continent. Under NEPAD, the agency set up in the early 2000s as a ‘new’ effort to promote an ‘African renaissance’, the first generation of the PIDA priority action plan (PIDA-PAP1) saw only mitigated success.

Figure 1 below shows that though 76 projects successfully came to full operation (the last bar on the chart), another 333 identified by AU member states as priority projects in 2012 are still at various stages of project preparation – some are indeed still at the phase of project definition, which precedes ‘pre-feasibility’ work. This slow progress highlights a key challenge that will remain going forward: member states and regional economic communities (RECs) have a much stronger role in implementation of these projects than in other policy areas where the AU is active.

Figure 1 – Number of PIDA / Priority Action Plan projects by stage, January 2021



But neither was PIDA a failure. It helped pool and channel funding to help set up numerous One Stop Border Posts (such as that between Rwanda and Tanzania or between Benin and Nigeria), upgrade ports (such as in Kribi in Cameroon or port access in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), build cross-border roads (such as the Libreville-Brazzaville Road and the railway line linking Malawi and Mozambique), and lay fibre-optic cables across the continent.

AU reforms, new NEPAD

In the meantime, a set of wider reforms have been implemented at the AU, stemming from the influential Kagame Report of 2017. These include measures to improve self-financing, increase the focus of the AUC in the name of efficiency and effectiveness, better define the division of labour between AU structures, and ways to improve AUC management and recruitment.

But on top of that, the report proposed a reform of NEPAD into the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD). That transformation speaks to the spirit of defining a better division of labour: while the AU Commission Department of Trade and the AfCFTA Secretariat are to work on the policy side and the ongoing negotiations of the AfCFTA agreement, and the AU Department of Infrastructure and Energy is responsible for overseeing the PIDA framework, AUDA-NEPAD has an implementation-oriented mandate. That makes it a leader for ‘hard’ infrastructure development in Africa.

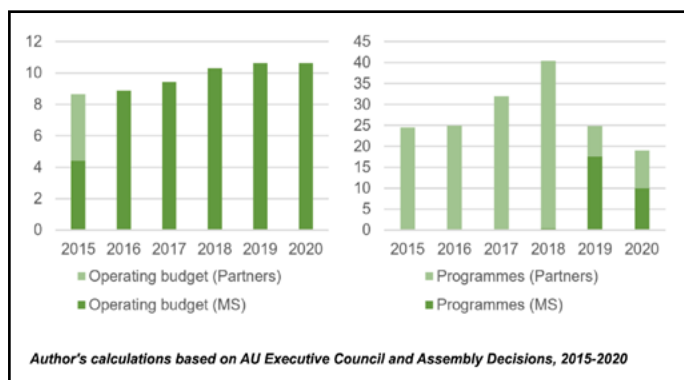
Successful implementation of PIDA Priority Action Plan 2 in support of the AfCFTA therefore presents a one-of-a-kind test for AUDA-NEPAD to demonstrate its effectiveness in carrying out this new mandate. The second generation of PIDA is conceived as a more realistic package of infrastructure projects. The need for trade-enhancing infrastructure, for example efficient transit corridors spanning several countries, is immense.

At the AU summit in February 2021, the assembly confirmed the new generation of PIDA projects, previously approved by member states' ministers in the Specialised Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism. Fifty completely new infrastructure projects were selected to "focus on key priorities with continental scope", ten from each of the five geographical regions, with at least one per sector from transport, energy, ICT and water. With this cut in the number of projects, AUDA-NEPAD is arguably applying the impetus of the AU reform to focus, while balancing this with regional representation.

Increased member state ownership?

The transformed AUDA-NEPAD has matured from an initiative underpinned by its initiating countries – Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa – to a fully integrated AU organ. This means that member state contributions to the AUDA-NEPAD budget have increased. As Figure 2 shows, member state contributions now fully cover the operating budget, while they have gone from no programme support to financing about half of the programme budget in the last two years.

Figure 2 – Member state and partner contributions to the AUDA-NEPAD budget, in USD million



Whereas NEPAD was financed and governed by its initiating countries in its early days, it is now therefore financed by all member states through the AU's scale of assessment. This is a sea-change from NEPAD's earlier challenges, as previously identified in 2017. As foreseen by the Kagame Report for the AU as a whole, greater member

state participation may stimulate greater interest and ownership of the AUDA-NEPAD agenda. Combined with specific champions, for example through the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative, together these reforms may help overcome some of the 'political, governance and technical challenges' faced in the past.

While keeping member states in the driving seat through their role in the budget, AUDA-NEPAD is also preparing to receive more funds from other partners and new sources. After a decade of only a handful but strong partnerships, AUDA-NEPAD plans to introduce the AU Development Fund (AUDF) in recognition that the "annual assessment of the member states will not be adequate to meet the funding requirements of the AUDA-NEPAD". A planned AU Infrastructure Fund is to mobilise resources from sovereign wealth funds and pension funds in Africa, in the spirit of AUDA-NEPAD's 5 Percent Agenda seeking greater contributions from African institutional investors.

Infrastructure: the key to AUDA-NEPAD jumpstarting the AfCFTA

While this seems to bode well, and AUDA-NEPAD's regional conceptual Integrated Corridor Approach offers a useful framework to provide added regional value, the reality is that the buck still stops with individual member states. A look at the Maputo Development Corridor shows that while regional and continental frameworks can help, and the new implementation-focused AUDA-NEPAD can support, ultimate success depends on quite specific combinations of timing, people and interests – it responds to a political need or 'problem'.

While PIDA provides a useful framework for building regional value chains with frictionless trade, fast customs procedures and cost-efficient multi-modal transit corridors to make trade through the AfCFTA a reality, AUDA-NEPAD can help, but ultimately success will come down to the key actors and interests around these at the country level.

Ueli Staeger is a PhD candidate in International Relations/ Political Science at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. He currently researches how international organisations shape the provision of security, with a focus on the African Union, and the resource mobilisation relationships of international organisations with member states and external partners. In his doctoral dissertation, different case studies explore the African Union's resource mobilisation in its programme budget, peace and security and infrastructure development.

Source: [Ueli Staeger and Bruce Byiers, ECDPM commentary](#)

Empowerment of Women with AUDA-NEPAD

Interview with Ms Fati N’zi-Hassane, Head of Human Capital & Institutions Development

Please enlighten us as to why, on a personal level, you are passionate about women’s empowerment on the continent?

Ever since I became an adult, I have always been very interested about promoting mechanisms that can help societies reach more equality. Inequalities come in many forms: social inequalities, inequalities based on disabilities, on racial or ethnic background, even on political opinions and sexual orientation. However, gender inequality is what I consider being the mother of inequalities. It is one we get exposed to everywhere, starting with our own family environments and we are socialised to accept it as a fact. I believe it is because as a society we tolerate gender inequality, that we are more prone to accept all other inequalities.

I am from the diaspora and was raised outside the continent until I reached adolescence. When we came back to Niger, my sisters and I were struck by the status of women and how society was depriving them of opportunities to reach their potential. At the same time, society was consequently depriving itself of women’s contribution, which I found to be counterproductive!

We spent a number of years in Niamey before we went abroad for our studies. As we were living there, our parents would (almost always) support us in challenging some of the

social norms and help us create space for us to breathe as young girls and women.

As Head of Human Capital and Institutions Development, what are the priorities in your division for women’s empowerment?

As much as some specific actions are needed, women’s empowerment is a matter that should run across all our activities. Women represent roughly half of the population, so they form half of the African citizens the Human Capital and Institutions Development Division is supposed to serve. Moreover, our impact on the ground should not accentuate harmful gender dynamics but rather contribute to reverse them, and this in every area: Economic Integration, Industrialisation and Economic Sustainability.

Our priority is to secure resources and develop a straightforward programme document, a compact portfolio of initiatives, projects and tools to advance gender equality internally, to support all programmatic divisions in promoting gender equality through their own delivery, and also, to develop more in-house projects targeting harmful gender dynamics.

In doing so, we are obviously guided by the African Union’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) strategy. We will align with African Union institutions and Member States to advance the priorities of this strategic framework.



“ Instead of trying to secure a comfortable position in the system, we should all question the system and be part of the change for a better and more inclusive society. ”



Are there any specific initiatives that AUDA-NEPAD is undertaking to support women that have been affected by COVID-19?

Under Health, Nutrition, and Skills and Employment, the activities that were pre-existing prior to COVID-19 are implemented with an intention to reach some gender representation targets. We have also redesigned some of our activities under Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) for Women Project to mitigate the effect of COVID-19 on the women in agricultural value chains in the six countries where the project is being currently implemented.

Kindly highlight some of the key results that AUDA-NEPAD has achieved in the past year towards the advancement of women in Africa.

Through the ATVET for Women project, we have developed gender-sensitive curricula for farmers in strategic agricultural value chains in six countries.

We also partnered with the International Food Policy Research Institute to conduct an in-depth evaluation on the impact of ATVET Women in Malawi and Benin. The results of the study were published at the end of 2020 and have allowed us and our partners to better understand how this project not only strengthens women economic empowerment but more importantly, contributes to developing women’s agency.

What is your key message, as an African woman, to other women on the rest of the continent?

I lean on the African Union GEWE strategy I was referring to earlier. The strategy recognises that “patriarchal systems are at the heart of gender inequality”. The reason I am mentioning this is that we, as privileged women (and being able to read this is already a form of privilege), tend to entertain some blind spots when it comes to gender inequality. Because we were able to get an education, secure a job and protect ourselves from violent

situations and environments, we tend to minimise the challenges of living as a woman in a patriarchal society. We even sometimes take all the credit to say “women can do everything if they put their head to it” - implying “just like I did”- ignoring the fact that not all women have the same material, financial, social and emotional resources that allowed us to get ahead.

My message would be that instead of trying to secure a comfortable position in the system, we should all question the system and be part of the change for a better and more inclusive society.

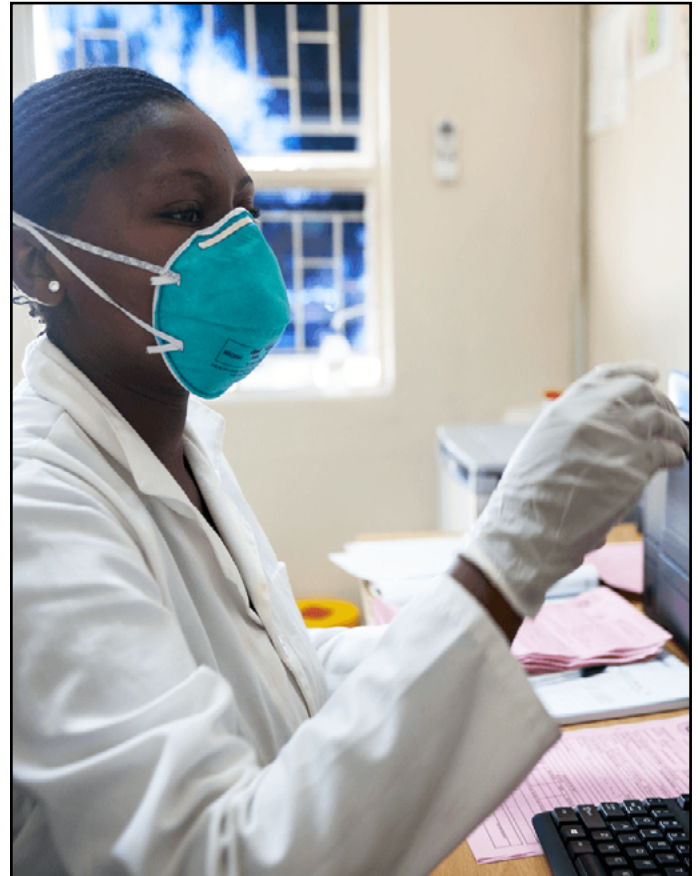
To quote the American poet Maya Angelou: “The truth is, no one of us can be free until everybody is free.”

The world is running out of time to act on the commitments to end TB

World Tuberculosis Day is commemorated annually on the 24th of March, to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of tuberculosis, and to step up efforts to end the global tuberculosis epidemic. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes tuberculosis, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease.

“Tuberculosis (TB) is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality globally and remains one of the world’s deadliest infectious killers,” said Chimwemwe Chamdimba, Principal Programme Officer for the Southern Africa TB and Health Systems Support System at the African Union Development Agency - NEPAD. “Each day, nearly 4000 lose their lives to TB and close to 28,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease, global efforts to combat TB have saved an estimated 63 million lives since the year 2000,” She stated.

The theme of World TB Day 2021 - ‘The Clock is Ticking’ – conveys the sense that the world is running out of time to act on the commitments to end TB made by global leaders. This is especially critical in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that has put End TB progress at risk, and to ensure equitable access to prevention and care in line with WHO’s drive towards achieving Universal Health Coverage. “This theme calls for everyone to sound the alarm that while we focus on COVID-19, every single day 4000 people die and 27,000 people get sick with TB. Around the world, 3 people lose their lives to TB every minute,” said Ms Chamdimba. The COVID-19 pandemic is in its second year and is unfortunately taking increasing medical resources and attention away from providing necessary life-saving diagnosis, medicine and care to people suffering from tuberculosis (TB). Alarming, in low and lower-middle-income countries, TB remains the biggest infectious disease killer. Countries have now less than two years left to fulfill promises and take action on the commitments made at the United Nations High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on TB in 2018. Nevertheless, with timely action and efforts, we can put an end to this preventable and curable disease. World TB Day is a day to educate the public about the impact of TB around the world.



The WHO has published the End TB Strategy in recognition of the need to control and eliminate TB. Health systems, health care staff and public health professionals in high TB burden settings face particular challenges in tackling this complex disease that is driven by societal, social, economic and medical factors. In low burden settings, TB has become relatively uncommon with the disease concentrated in marginalized and vulnerable groups with the associated challenges of early diagnosis, curtailing transmission and supporting complex patients to complete the long course of treatment. Antimicrobial resistance, in the form of multidrug-resistant TB, poses a particular challenge to disease control and has recently been declared a crisis by the WHO. The emergence of drug-resistant TB and COVID-19 pandemic pose a major health threat that could put at risk the gains made to end the global TB epidemic. “World TB Day is an opportunity to focus on the people affected by this disease and to call for accelerated action to end TB suffering and deaths,” concluded Ms Chamdimba.

AUDA-NEPAD, UNDP Partnership on 100,000 micro, small and medium scale enterprises initiative to review strategy

The African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Development ([AUDA-NEPAD](#)) and the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) its strategic partner on the development of the [MSME Academy](#) of the 100,000 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Initiative for all Africans are set to meet in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from the 26th – 28th March 2021 to review its strategies, share experiences, successes, lessons learnt and it gains in Q4 2020 and Q1 2021 and to further scale up on its partnership all in a bid to position the continent to recover and rebuild from the economic shock caused by COVID-19.

The initiative is as a result of the negative economic indices the continent has sprung up over the past decades amidst great human and mineral resources, currently with Africa's labour force expected to reach 450 million people by 2035, governments, regional institutions and their partners will need to develop innovative and relevant job creation policies to benefit from this 'demographic dividend' says the (World Bank).

In response, AUDA-NEPAD launched the 100,000 MSMEs Programme to accelerate African economic transformation, provide skills development programming and build resilience against the economic shock triggered by the global pandemic. The '100k MSMEs' initiative seeks to build the capacity of 100,000 enterprises in Africa through training on entrepreneurial and business skills to improve access to finance and new

markets, while establishing networks for support and incubation to bolster their success.

The MSMEs Programme is comprised of three pillars underpinned by a digital platform: MSME Academy, MSME Finance, and MSME Marketplace. UNDP will support the capacity building goals of the MSME Academy, including reaching and connecting MSMEs with vital capacities and resources to optimize productivity and sustainable economic benefits.

The initiative is aligned to Aspiration 1 of the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims at building a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. It is also linked to UN Sustainable Development Goal 8, which promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Objectives of the 100,000 MSME Academy

- Expand the reach of the 100k MSMEs initiative to youth across the continent and enable linkages into the wider entrepreneurship ecosystem that benefit the youth after training;
- Generate a database to enhance evidence-based policy recommendations to AU decision bodies as well as facilitate engagement with ecosystem partners such as financiers and links to trade and markets; and,
- Enable bottom-up engagement with youth and women entrepreneurs to ensure that

youth and gender development policies benefit from their voice and participation as citizens of the continent.

Between August 2020 and February 2021, the MSME Academy launched in thirteen countries and recorded the following results: registration by 25,000 MSMEs, 14,000 MSMEs attended online events, and more than 3 million participants tuned into webinars held on radio and online platforms. The next step is to launch the academy in ten additional countries per quarter, starting Q2 2021, with training modules delivered in at least five languages accessible across all 55 African countries.

The outcome of this high level meeting between the AUDA-NEPAD and UNDP meeting would not only attest to the satisfaction of the work done but continue to give hope to thousands of would be MSME's whom are relying on the MSME Academy to give them a platform to approach the future well prepared.

The AUDA-NEPAD's Pandemic Resilience Accelerator announces its first cohort

The Pandemic Resilience Accelerator for African Health-Related Businesses was founded by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), a pan-African institution at the forefront of policy harmonization, in partnership with JICA, the official development assistance agency of the Government of Japan, and with support from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a global management consulting firm.

The initiative aims to accelerate African home-grown solutions that are improving pandemic resilience. It provides hands-on, tailored acceleration support to growth and mature stage African health-related businesses that are improving healthcare capacity or reducing reliance on external medical supply chains.

The accelerator is launching as a pilot in the East African Community, following a call for applications in December 2020. Five companies have been selected from a highly competitive applicant pool and after a rigorous assessment process.



Access Afya Inc.: Provider of low cost, primary health care to people living in informal settlements & remote areas of Kenya.

<https://www.accessafya.com>



Africa Healthcare Network: Provider of affordable high-quality renal care services to typically underserved areas / secondary cities of Tanzania, Kenya & Rwanda.

<http://www.africahealthcarenetwork.com>



Damu Sasa Systems Limited: Cloud-based end-to-end blood services information management system to increase and manage blood supply in Kenya.

<https://damu-sasa.co.ke>



Mobile Scan Solutions Uganda: Developer of low-cost hand-held ultrasound units to diagnose pregnancy complications in low resource settings in Uganda.

<https://www.mscanug.com>



Revital Healthcare (EPZ) Limited: Manufacturer of over 40 types of medical devices in Kenya which are distributed to Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi & 12 other countries.

<https://www.revitalhcare.com>

These five home-grown companies contribute meaningfully to pandemic resilience, both in the immediate COVID-19 crisis and in their longer term strengthening of healthcare capacity and local supply chains. They constitute the inaugural cohort for this accelerator and will receive support over the six-month pilot programme.

Based on the outcomes of the pilot programme in the East African Community, the accelerator aims to expand to other parts of Africa later this year, with the ultimate goal of improving our continent's ability to respond to future outbreaks through home-grown solutions.

Organizations interested in joining the accelerator network as well as engaging with these exemplary companies by serving as advisors or providing direct support, or qualifying African home-grown solutions, can contact us by reaching out to George Murumba, the accelerator project lead via GeorgeM@nepad.org and pandemicresilience.africa@gmail.com.

Blue Economy: Africa's Untapped Potential for Economic Growth

By Seleman Yusuph Kitenge

Africa is one of the most blessed continents in the world in terms of its potential marine and terrestrial natural resources. However, most of these riches, particularly the marine resources which contribute to the Blue Economy, are yet to be responsibly utilised to foster the economic transformation of a rich yet poor continent in the world.

In most African countries, terrestrial resources seem to receive closer attention by governments and other stakeholders to the extent that certain conflicts and political instability in some parts of the continent result from such resources.

On the other hand, the marine resources which include freshwater bodies and oceans can offer significant economic opportunities such as fisheries, seabed mining, oil drilling, aquaculture, trade, and tourism which can drastically transform Africa's future. However, despite many of the marine resources being utilised, some of the resources (such as marine fisheries) are over-utilised or improperly used through destructive fishing methods etc. Moreover, the issue of planning and management (governance) of the aquatic ecosystems, goods and services is poor which is resulting in degradation of ecosystems, loss and waste of valuable resources and conflicts between users (i.e. between fishers and mining concerns etc.).

Notably, thirty-eight of Africa's 54 states are coastal, and maritime zones under Africa's jurisdiction. Furthermore, Africa's lake zones are estimated to cover approximately 240,000 sq km while its transboundary river basins cover 64% of the continent's land area. The African Union highlights that over 90% of Africa's imports and exports were transported by sea, making the continent a strategic gateway for both regional and international trade.

Subsequently, with the vast ocean and lake resources at its front door, African countries have a huge opportunity to diversify their economies and address the risks of relying on specific economic sectors which limit their chances to promote socio-economic development. Such economic diversification, if planned and managed in an equitable and sustainable way to grow the Blue Economy, will help





to mitigate the risk posed by the increased vulnerability of external shocks from the global economic system that can inhibit longer-term economic prosperity in the continent.

In addition, with the majority of African youth being unemployed, the Blue Economy proffers an enormous opportunity for youth to create employment for themselves through small-scale fisheries and even ocean entrepreneurship. However, such youth needs to receive proper practical and technical training that will enable them to engage in legal marine practices which will not pose a threat to the environment and even lead to the disappearance of endangered marine species.

In line with the African Union's 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy, AU Africa Blue Economy Strategy (2019), and other related continental and regional frameworks, policymakers and decision-makers at the continental and national level are recognising the opportunities to accommodate the Blue Economy as part of a bigger economic picture they are striving to paint. With the Blue Economy in the picture, governments will have a huge opportunity to create new sources of revenue that may contribute to the implementation of development plans and reduce donor dependency on national budgets.

Most importantly, both policymakers and decision-makers have to play a critical role to ensure they formulate policies and regulations which promote the sustainable use of lakes, oceans, and sea resources by addressing challenges that threaten such sustainability like illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, marine pollution (plastic, litter and micro-plastics), biodiversity degradation and loss and climate change, which has become a global phenomenon. This will ensure that all economic activities that emanate from Africa's oceans, seas/sea beds, lakes, rivers as stipulated in Aspiration 1 of the Agenda 2063 are sustainable and continue to benefit the Africans.

Therefore, as Africa is striving to be prosperous based on inclusive growth and sustainable development, proper governance and exploitation of the untapped potential of the Blue Economy will significantly accelerate economic growth and potentially reduce poverty across the continent. In anticipation of the support needed by member states and RECs to implement the continental Blue Economy Strategy the AUDA-NEPAD developed a Sustainable Blue Economy Programme in 2019 to facilitate the implementation of its priorities in alignment with Agenda 2063. Implementation of this Programme will significantly help to realise the Africa we want which is inclusive and prosperous.

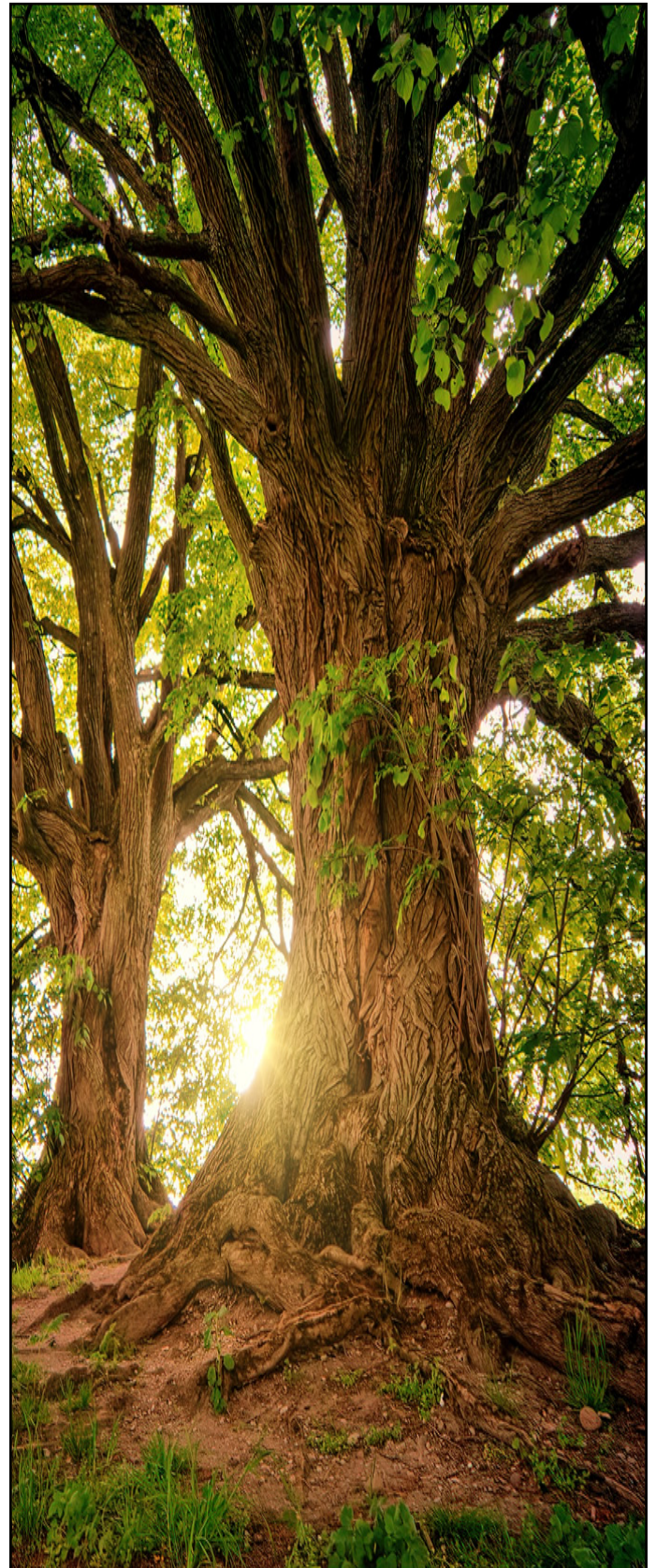
Life in Africa hinges on the restoration of its forests

When we drink a glass of water, take medicine for fever, write in a notebook or build a house, we do not always make the connection with forests. And yet, these and many other aspects of our lives are linked to forests in one way or another. According to an assessment released by the UN last year, around 4.06 billion hectares of forests remain in the world today.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 21 March as the International Day of Forests in 2012. The Day celebrates and raises awareness of the importance of all types of forests. The 2021 theme of the International Day of Forests is “Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being.” On each International Day of Forests, countries are encouraged to undertake local, national, and international efforts to organize activities involving forests and trees, such as tree-planting campaigns.

Forest sustainable management and their use of resources are key to combating climate change, and to contributing to the prosperity and well-being of current and future generations.

For the International Day of Forests 2021, the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD through the AFR100 initiative has partnered with Global Landscape Forum and will host the first-ever digital conference (on 2-3 June 2021) focused entirely on Africa’s drylands and how integrative restoration practices can see them flourish once again. In support of AFR100’s goals to restore 100 million hectares of land, the organization partnered with World Resource Institute and Fledge and launched the Land Accelerator, the world’s first training and mentorship program targeted specifically toward businesses that restore degraded forests, farmland, and pasture. Land Accelerator provides land-restoring entrepreneurs across Africa with mentorship and networking opportunities, technical training, and workshops to build up their storytelling and pitching skills. Despite all of the priceless ecological, economic, social, and health benefits, global deforestation continues at an alarming rate. However, this situation can be reversed by reducing the levels of deforestation and investing the money needed to restore the forests to health. Such actions could contribute to economic recovery in the post-COVID-19 stage and help nations mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.



Improving the Soy Value Chain in Mozambique

Southern Africa has a growing demand for soybean. Soy production and utilization in Mozambique is increasing rapidly due to demand from poultry millers and soybean-based products such as soymilk, soy flour and soy protein, however, farmers often lack access to the necessary inputs and knowledge on production practices, necessary to improve productivity. In an attempt to meet the expected domestic demand for soy in a sustainable manner, Grow Africa, IDH and Solidaridad set up a programme across Angonia and Gurue in Mozambique, aiming at increasing the soy volumes produced by small holder farmers by promoting the soy and soy seed production, strengthening the local supply chain through engagement with smallholder farmers for improved social and economic development.

The programme consisted of trainings linked to finance literacy, business skills, seed multiplication, sustainable soy production, sustainable use of pesticides aiming at providing farmers with the necessary skills to sustainably continue to produce with high returns per money invested across impacted communities in the identified the districts.

The project employs the concept of lead farmers in all trainings. The lead farmers were selected by the community and participated in specific trainings and later engaged in knowledge transfer to other farmers and group members. Each lead farmer had a demonstration plot and mentors an average of 40 other farmers. Lead farmers received inputs and additional support for land preparation/weeding control, as part



of their compensation. Each one of the lead farmers was equipped with a bicycle and an android cellular phone to enable them to keep records of their farming activities. The lead farmers are also responsible for the demo plots that are used to teach, experiment, and share ideas about agricultural practices. All the outputs of the demo plot are used by the lead farmer. To date, a total of 679 lead farmers have been cumulatively trained.

Due to this programme, farmers such as Nolia Waisson from the Angonia district can now employ the knowledge from the trainings coupled with existing experience and background.

“As a seasoned farmer that has benefited from the training, I can’t emphasize enough the importance of this programme for individuals looking for an agricultural education. The experience gained through this programme has taught me to keep

records of all agricultural operations, production costs and production sales revenues. This is important as it allows me to accurately calculate my gains.” Said Nolia.

“The training also provided me with the opportunity to create a second income stream selling fertilizers and insecticides in a neighbouring village;” she added.

Farmers such as Joaquina Potoro are now able to drive tractors and personally manage all the issues to do with the maintenance required to ensure the suitable performance of tractors. Thus, there is no need to hire the services of a tractor driver or mechanic.

Promotion of soy production by Grow Africa, IDH and Solidaridad in Mozambique has provided vital support to make current soya business models socially inclusive and economically viable.

AUDA-NEPAD in Pictures



On 13th March, Rwandan President, H.E Paul Kagame received the AUDA-NEPAD CEO, Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, in Kigali during his working visit. President Kagame is the Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee.

During his working visit, Dr Mayaki was welcomed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Biruta. He also had engagements with Africa Director General Ms Umutohi and Ms Gitera from the Rwandan Presidency, who also serves as Chair of the -NEPAD Steering Committee

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Businesses innovating for landscape restoration

Are you an #entrepreneur in Africa? Does your business focus on planting trees, improving the soil, or other ways to restore land? If the answers are YES, join the #LandAccelerator for amazing mentorship and investment opportunities! Apply now by April 11 at www.thelandaccelerator.com

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Did you know?

The Sahara Desert is the world's largest hot desert in the world. Located in North Africa, it is slightly larger than the continent of North America.



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