



HABARI

April 2024 Newsletter



@NEPAD_Agency



AUDA-NEPAD



/NEPAD.Page

Conversation with Felix Moukoko, AUDA-NEPAD Young Volunteer



Could you briefly outline your scope of work at AUDA-NEPAD?

The duties as a research assistant involved supporting the integrated vector management (IVM) Africa secretariat in fulfilling its mandate, strategic aims, and objectives. Before this role, responsibilities included assisting the supervisor of the AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund (AUDF). The AU Youth Volunteer (AUYV) work at AUDA-NEPAD encompassed preparing reports, organising meetings and missions, liaising with stakeholders, drafting concept notes and invitation letters, conducting research and idea brainstorming, as well as offering recommendations and suggestions for problem-solving. The work was assigned by the Africa IVM secretariat and the AUDF department.

What does being a youth volunteer within the organization entail?

Engaging as a youth volunteer involves dedicating your expertise, time, and energy to serve both the organisation and the continent. It entails committing a portion of your life to leveraging your skills and vitality for the betterment of the continent. During my time at AUDA-NEPAD, I was afforded the opportunity to contribute to the continent's

development through my involvement in the IVM program and the AUDF. Despite the wealth of experience held by experts around me, I consistently found myself encouraged to voice my opinions and express myself. My input was valued and considered, even as a volunteer. I never felt marginalised or sidelined due to my volunteer status; respect and responsibilities were clearly defined, and the team and organisation embraced creativity. This experience provided me with a steep learning curve.

How long was your tenure, and how was the experience, considering the diversity of the staff members?

During my tenure, which spanned two and a half years, I gained invaluable experience. The diversity among team members, encompassing variations in nationality, gender, religion, expertise, age, and culture, significantly enhanced my professional growth. As a global citizen and young African, I believe that the ability to collaborate effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds is essential for success. This reality was vividly evident during my time at AUDA-NEPAD. Engaging with such diversity not only broadened my perspective but also fostered cultural awareness and strengthened team dynamics within the organisation's programs. I consider this diversity to be a significant asset that enriches the organisational culture at AUDA-NEPAD. In summary, my experience was profoundly enriching.

Can you provide a brief overview of the mandate of the Programme you were supporting?

The African Union Development Fund was tasked with creating a fund to pioneer innovative financing mechanisms aimed at mobilising sufficient resources for the effective and coordinated implementation of impactful national, regional, and continental development projects.

The mandate of the IVM Programme is to establish and operationalise a continental platform facilitating robust collaboration between the health sector and other relevant sectors. This collaboration aimed to enhance vector control efforts effectively. A primary focus of this program was to strengthen regulatory capacity across Africa. The objectives of these programs are closely aligned with those of AUDA-NEPAD.

In your opinion, how has your work contributed to the attainment of the overall vision of Agenda 2063?

Malaria and other vector-borne diseases pose significant obstacles to sustainable development and economic progress. By addressing these challenges and supporting member states and regional economic communities (RECs) in combating malaria while bolstering regulatory capacity in innovative biocontrol technologies, we take crucial steps towards realising the vision of Agenda 2063. This effort aligns with the goal of fostering a prosperous continent and facilitating rapid transformation across Africa. As a volunteer with the IVM programme, I've had the privilege of contributing to this dynamic initiative, which resonates deeply with the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Moreover, the innovative financing mechanisms implemented by the AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund (AUDF) also play a pivotal role in advancing a prosperous Africa that is self-sufficient and sustainably financed. This, in turn, directly contributes to the overarching vision outlined in Agenda 2063.

As a young person, what are your thoughts on AUDA-NEPAD's initiative Energise Africa?

Malaria and other vector-borne diseases pose significant obstacles to sustainable development and economic progress. By addressing



Felix Moukoko attending the IVM Programme's side event on the sidelines of the PAMCA annual conference

these challenges and supporting member states and regional economic communities (RECs) in combating malaria while bolstering regulatory capacity in innovative biocontrol technologies, we take crucial steps towards realising the vision of Agenda 2063. This effort aligns with the goal of fostering a prosperous continent and facilitating rapid transformation across Africa. As a volunteer with the IVM programme, I've had the privilege of contributing to this dynamic initiative, which resonates deeply with the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Moreover, the innovative financing mechanisms implemented by the AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund (AUDF) also play a pivotal role in advancing a prosperous Africa that is self-sufficient and sustainably financed. This, in turn, directly contributes to the overarching vision outlined in Agenda 2063.

Share with us one memorable moment within AUDA-NEPAD that you will always treasure because of the impact it had on you.

One unforgettable moment during my time at AUDA-NEPAD was the Office of Science and Technology (OSTI) retreat, which left a lasting impact on me. This retreat served as a pivotal event, setting the tone and direction for the year ahead. It provided me with invaluable insights into the various programs within the directorate, the organisational processes of AUDA-NEPAD, and most importantly, introduced me to the diverse individuals who make up the organisation.

Coming from the regional office, the retreat offered me a rare opportunity to connect with colleagues from headquarters and gain a deeper understanding of the strategic vision and objectives of the office. Additionally, it fostered discussions around identified challenges and recommended solutions, setting a

proactive tone for our collective efforts moving forward.

What made this experience truly memorable was its timing, just a month before I embarked on my work with the IVM programme in Dakar. This allowed me to approach my new role with clarity and confidence, armed with a broader perspective on the expectations of the department and the steps to take throughout the year.

Moreover, beyond its informative aspects, the retreat served as a platform for relationship-building. It was my first encounter with many members of the team and organisation, and I believe it laid the foundation for strong team spirit. Overall, the OSTI retreat was not only a moment of learning and preparation but also one of bonding and unity, contributing significantly to the impact I was able to make during my time with AUDA-NEPAD.

Bridging Continents: The Trilateral Cooperation Workshop in Brazil



In late April 2024, Brazil played host to a pivotal workshop under the Trilateral Cooperation Brazil-UK-Africa initiative. Held from the 22nd to the 26th, this event was coordinated by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the Ministry of Management and Innovation in the Public Service (MGI), with significant support from the National School of Public Administration (ENAP).

The workshop's primary objective was to forge stronger alignment among African, Brazilian, and UK partners as they designed the new phase of their trilateral program. With the pilot project nearing its conclusion, the participants sought to build a balanced and ambitious proposal focusing on several key areas:

- 1. Strengthening National Statistical Capacities:** Enhancing the ability of national statistical agencies and institutes to manage electronic data collection and demographic information.
- 2. Advancing Digital Government:** Promoting the exchange and collaboration on digital government agendas to improve public service delivery.

- 3. Boosting Science, Technology, and Innovation:** Sharing experiences to strengthen innovation ecosystems and increase public and private investments in the public sector across Africa.

- 4. Improving Technical and Vocational Training:** Engaging with industry to enhance management practices and investments in national technical and vocational education networks.

In essence, the overarching aim of the workshop was to discuss ways in which to enhance public service delivery through innovative approaches.

The workshop brought together key representatives coordinated through the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD)'s partnership with AU Member States, so representatives were brought in from Cape Verde, Mozambique, Senegal, the Kingdom of Eswatini, Seychelles, and South Africa.

Representatives from Lund University were also invited to this crucial workshop as AUDA-NEPAD's collaboration with Lund University is a collaboration which is about making

a real difference in Africa through innovation. By teaming up with Lund University and aligning with the AU-EU Innovation Agenda, AUDA-NEPAD is helping to drive positive change across the continent. Together, they are working towards sustainable growth, empowering communities, and creating impactful solutions

Comprehensive agenda spans several days:

On April 22-23 in Brasilia: The event kicked off with a planning workshop at ENAP's headquarters, involving ABC, MGI, and notable contributions from the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MCTI) and the National Industrial Learning Service (SENAI).

The team also visited the Swedish Ambassador to Brazil, H.E. Karin Wallensteen, who praised Brazil's remarkable strides in digitalization and innovation, recognizing their pivotal role in shaping the future. She also applauded AUDA-NEPAD for its programmes focused on regional integration in Africa, emphasizing its significance in unlocking the continent's growth potential.

On April 24, the team travelled to Rio de Janeiro and held a significant working meeting on the 25th April,



at the headquarters of the Financing Agency for Studies and Projects (FINEP). Amine Idriss Adoum, AUDA-NEPAD's Director of Infrastructure, Industrialization, Trade, and Regional Integration, highlighted the necessity for independent financing institutions to support targeted investments in research and innovation.

On the last day of the mission, the delegation toured Porto Maravally, Brazil's first innovation hub which unites the city, the government, startups, investors, entrepreneurs and the company. Speaking of the hub, at its' launch a few weeks earlier, the Municipal Secretary of Urban and Economic Development, Chicão Bulhões, said the following, "There is

no project in Brazil that is like this, with this type of junction, with the highest quality education and the best in the city coming to settle here with large companies. We want to have this hub here, doing projects together with the students to transform this knowledge and technology into real development for Rio de Janeiro. This is the heart of what we want to see spread throughout the city, the great connection point with great projects that we have for the city and that were in need of a house".

The mission concluded with an assessment meeting to formalize the new phase of the trilateral cooperation project, ensuring that the foundations laid during the workshop would lead to tangible improvements in public

service delivery and innovation across participating nations.

The Trilateral Cooperation Brazil-UK-Africa workshop exemplifies how international collaboration can harness innovation to tackle global challenges. By aligning efforts and sharing expertise, the participants are poised to drive significant advancements in public service delivery, data management, and digital governance, ultimately fostering sustainable development and growth across continents.

[Watch Amine Idriss Adoum in a conversation with CEO of Porto Maravalle, David Barros](#)



Accelerating Africa's Journey Towards a Prosperous Future

By Nardos Bekele-Thomas

As Africa celebrated the golden jubilee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)/African Union (AU) in May 2013, it wasn't just a moment of reflection but a rekindling of a promise—a promise to ourselves and future generations. This promise, encapsulated in Agenda 2063, envisioned an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa.

This continent thrives on its terms and stands as a dynamic force in the global arena. Reflecting on the journey through the First Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, I've been inspired by our first steps towards realising this vision and motivated to address our challenges.

The recent evaluation of this first decade has been a mix of pride and a call to action. We've witnessed remarkable progress, such as significant strategic investments in transport, energy, water, and ICT, knitting our countries closer. Nearly 30 million more people now have access to electricity, with Africa's overall electricity access rate reaching approximately 44%. Intra-African exports have seen a slight increase to 16% of trade, thanks to road and rail infrastructure improvements, and over 160,000 jobs have been created through PIDA projects. Yet, the shadow of enduring challenges, such as the stark reality of energy access for over 600 million Africans, looms large, reminding us of persisting disparities.

Over the previous decade, Africa made considerable gains in maintaining and preserving peace. This has been evidenced through the marked reduction in armed conflicts and conflict-related deaths and strengthened capacities of Member States to resolve intra and inter-regional conflicts. For instance, the number of armed conflicts declined from 34 in 2013 to 9 by 2023, representing a performance of 72.6%.

However, the lingering presence of violent conflicts underscores the



fragility of our achievements and the imperative to forge lasting peace and stability across the continent.

Economically, while positive, our GDP per capita growth is not keeping pace with the needs of our rapidly growing population. The momentum of Africa's economic recovery has slowed, with average real GDP growth declining to an estimated 3.2 per cent in 2023 from 4.1 per cent in 2022. This decline results from multiple shocks and elevated inflationary pressures, particularly affecting Africa's leading economies.

These are not just numbers; they represent dreams deferred, potential unfulfilled.

Given this context, the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 is more than a policy document—it's a blueprint for the future we deserve. It's a roadmap for action. It targets key areas: economic transformation, connectivity, governance, peace, cultural identity, citizen empowerment, and global representation. These are ambitious goals, but they are within our reach if we commit to them fully.

The recent Thirty-Seventh Ordinary Summit of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union marked a significant milestone in this journey. His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and AU Champion of Agenda 2063, presented a comprehensive evaluation of the first decade's achievements and challenges, setting the stage for the implementation of the Second Decade's plan. President Ouattara's emphasis on the plan as a "beacon of hope" reminded us of the power of collective action in the face of global and continental uncertainties. His call to arms, emphasising peace, security, and prosperity, is a reminder that the time for action is now.

This phase calls for an enhanced focus on peace and security, poverty alleviation, and the creation of

Agenda 2063 Moonshots



Every AU MS to attain at least middle-income status



African values to be explicit and promoted



Africa to be more integrated and connected



Africa citizens to be more empowered and more productive



Public institutions to be more responsive



Africa to be a strong and an influential global player



Africa resolves conflicts amicably



For more information on Agenda 2063 implementation, scan the QR code to access the **Agenda 2063 progress dashboard**.

opportunities for the youth through quality education and advances in digital technology. The implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is particularly pivotal, offering unprecedented potential for integration and growth. This is a call to action for all African nations and their global partners to mobilise domestic and external resources to support the ambitious yet achievable targets set by Agenda 2063.

Achieving the ambitious goals of Agenda 2063 requires strategic, targeted actions across a spectrum of developmental areas. Each Moonshot, representing a bold, transformative goal, necessitates a unique approach tailored to address specific challenges and leverage opportunities inherent within the African context.

Elevating to Middle-Income Status through industrial advancement, agricultural revolution, and comprehensive social protection. Fostering Integration and Connectivity with sustainable infrastructure, trade facilitation, and enhanced connectivity.

Cultivating Responsive Public Institutions by promoting the rule of law, encouraging public participation, and ensuring inclusive policies. Championing Peaceful Conflict Resolution through early warning systems, mediation, and dialogue. Promoting African Values by integrating them into education, supporting cultural industries, and fostering pan-African identity.

Empowering Citizens by reforming education and health systems and focusing on youth empowerment. Becoming a Global Powerhouse by strengthening data systems and presenting a unified stance on global matters.

Implementing these strategies requires a concerted effort from AU Member States, regional bodies, the private sector, civil society, and international partners. This journey towards a prosperous future is not the government's agenda; it's our agenda. It's a canvas upon which we, the young and old of Africa, must paint our future—a future where no child goes to

bed hungry, where every young person has the opportunity to realise their potential, and where Africa stands tall among the nations of the world as a beacon of prosperity and peace.

This means holding our leaders accountable and stepping up as agents of change ourselves. Whether through entrepreneurship, activism, or community engagement, we all have a role to play in building the Africa we want.

The road ahead is challenging, but the spirit of Africa is indomitable. With continued collaboration, innovation, and a relentless pursuit of our collective goals, we will achieve the aspirations of Agenda 2063. This decade is our moment to shine and show Africa's true strength and beauty. Let's seize it with both hands and build "The Africa We Want."

Advancing the Fight: 2024 AU-NEPAD IVM Webinar Series on Cutting-Edge Strategies for Vector Control

The African Union Development Agency's Integrated Vector Management (IVM) Programme recently hosted the first session of its 2024 webinar series, focusing on malaria and other vector-borne diseases. This inaugural session, held on the AUDA-NEPAD policy platform known as the Calestous Juma Executive Dialogues (CJED), aimed to bring together researchers, regulators, entomologists, and various stakeholders to discuss innovative strategies and share knowledge on managing vector-borne diseases, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The session coincided with World Malaria Day on April 25, 2024, serving as a poignant reminder of the urgent need to combat malaria, which continues to claim many lives annually, particularly among the most vulnerable populations in Africa.

Moderated by Dr. Jeremy Ouedraogo, the webinar provided an insightful overview of global and African-specific challenges in vector-borne disease control, with a particular focus on malaria, its prevalence, the limitations of current control strategies, and the need for innovative solutions. His opening remarks highlighted the substantial burden of malaria, emphasising that it predominantly affects African children and expectant mothers, with annual mortality rates alarmingly high.

The presentations were delivered by a panel of experts who shared their experiences and research findings. Dr. Basiliana Emidi, a Medical Entomologist from the National Institute for Medical Research in Dodoma, Tanzania, opened the discussions by providing an insightful overview of community engagement in malaria vector control. Her talk emphasised the importance of addressing health equity, gender, and human rights in vector control programs. Following Dr. Emidi, Dr. Christian Kompaore, Permanent Secretary of the National Council for Malaria Elimination in Burkina Faso, offered an in-depth look at vector-borne diseases globally, discussing the pressing need for innovative

approaches to combat these diseases. He also gave an overview of vector control in Burkina Faso and current technologies, including drones, used in vector control.

Dr. Adama Gansane from the National IVM Platform, Burkina Faso, shared insights on the malaria burden in the region, focusing on the tools available for malaria elimination and the limits of current strategies. His presentation highlighted the critical need for ongoing adaptation and enhancement of tools to effectively manage malaria. Lastly, Dr. Moussa Savadogo, a consultant for the IVM Programme, discussed the role of genetically modified mosquitoes (GMMs) as a complementary tool in the fight against malaria in light of current limitations. Dr. Savadogo highlighted that for over two decades, scientists have been developing GMMs to serve as public health tools aimed at preventing the transmission of mosquito-borne diseases.

The regulatory framework for GMMs is underpinned by various international treaties, regional regulations, and national laws, ensuring that any deployment of GMMs is safe for humans, animals, and the environment. The session also addressed the necessity for strong community engagement throughout all stages of Genetically-Based Vector Control (GBVC) development. These engagements are crucial to maintain transparency and public trust, especially in areas affected by vector-borne diseases. The session further introduced the audience to the comprehensive guidelines developed under the AUDA-NEPAD West Africa Integrated Vector Management platform. These guidelines cover a wide range of topics crucial for the safe and ethical use of genetically modified mosquitoes. They include Ethics Guidelines for the use of Genetically Modified Mosquitoes, Guidelines for Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs), and Guidelines for Risk Analysis for the Testing and Deployment of these mosquitoes. Additionally, standards for

Importation, Exportation, Handling, Labelling, and Storage, as well as protocols for Containment Facilities and Compliance Monitoring of activities involving genetically modified mosquitoes, were elaborated. These guidelines are designed to ensure that all phases of genetic mosquito management are conducted within a framework that prioritises safety, regulatory compliance, and ethical considerations.

In conclusion, the webinar achieved its aim of setting a strong foundation for the upcoming sessions scheduled throughout the year. These sessions will continue to explore themes around malaria and vector-borne diseases with the aim of enhancing regulatory capacity, increasing awareness of ongoing efforts, and identifying concrete actions needed to accelerate progress in malaria elimination. On June 26th, the second webinar will discuss the regulation of gene drive technology for malaria control in Africa. The third session, tentatively scheduled for September 25th, will aim to strengthen African Union regulatory systems for Integrated Vector Management, emphasising collaboration across various sectors. The final webinar planned for mid-November will enhance negotiation skills for African negotiators involved in international biodiversity and health decisions related to gene drive technologies, aiming to improve strategic negotiation outcomes.

Promoting Regulatory Excellence in Africa: Review of the AU Model Law



The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the urgent need for robust regulatory systems in Africa to manage the demand for vaccines and essential medical supplies, and [the deficiencies in regulatory systems and supply chain were alarmingly apparent](#).

Recognising this critical need for effective regulatory oversight to be strengthened, key stakeholders convened in Nairobi, Kenya on the 9th of April 2024, to review and provide inputs on the draft revised African Union Model Law on Medical Products Regulation ([AU Model Law](#)).

The African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation (AMRH) initiative, which is spearheaded by African Union Development Agency -NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) are leading efforts to strengthen regulatory frameworks and promote regulatory harmonisation across the African continent. The adoption of the AU Model Law on Medical Products Regulation in 2016 marked a key milestone towards these efforts. However, emerging issues and challenges have highlighted the need for amendments to the Model Law, to address the associated regulatory complexities comprehensively. The AMRH Medicines Policy and Regulatory Reforms Technical Committee responded by undertaking a thorough review of the law, resulting in the first revised version, which was subsequently presented to stakeholders for their valuable input.

Key Areas for Amendment:

Several areas were identified during the review process, to ensure alignment with international standards, respond

effectively to emerging challenges, and strengthen regulatory mechanisms:

- 1. Substandard and Falsified Medical Products (SF):** [The prevalence of SF](#) medical products remains a significant challenge in Africa, creating the need for strengthened provisions within the Model Law to address detection, prevention, and penalties for such products.
- 2. Regulation of Medical Devices:** Comprehensive provisions are needed to regulate medical devices effectively, covering market authorisation, quality standards, and post-market surveillance.
- 3. Emergency Use Authorisation:** The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the urgent need for flexible regulatory mechanisms, prompting the inclusion of provisions for emergency use authorisation to expedite access to life-saving products during public health emergencies.
- 4. Scope Expansion:** The Model Law may need to expand its scope to include emerging categories of medical products, such as advanced therapy medical products and digital health technologies, ensuring adaptability to evolving health innovation.

The implementation of the Model Law requires concerted efforts from AU member states, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and other stakeholders. The AUDA-NEPAD supports member states with preliminary needs assessments of existing regulatory frameworks and systems, which will help to inform

the development of roadmaps and action plans to address identified gaps systematically. [A Guidance Document](#) on implementing the AU Model Law is also offered to support member states with the process. [Countries that have aligned their regulatory frameworks](#) to the Model Law also offer valuable lessons for other African nations embarking on similar regulatory reforms.

Implementing the Revised AU Model Law offers numerous benefits at both the national and regional levels:

- **Meeting International Standards:** Aligned, comprehensive national laws enable governments to ensure healthy populations through access to high-quality, safe, and efficacious medical products that meet internal standards of quality.
- **Supporting Universal Health Care:** Availability of needed medical products enhances universal access to health services, contributing to improved health outcomes.
- **Effective Market Control:** Clear and coherent regulations support effective control of medical products circulating in the country, safeguarding public health.
- **Regional and Continental Harmonisation:** Harmonised legal provisions foster collaboration within RECs and strengthen the continent's collective regulatory framework in the lead up to operationalisation of the [African Medicines Agency](#) (AMA).

The review of the AU Model Law represents a significant step towards promoting and achieving regulatory excellence in Africa. The revised Model Law addresses new challenges and contemporary issues to fit the ever-changing healthcare landscape. This will ensure public health is protected, with enhanced local production capabilities, paving the way for a resilient, economically vibrant Africa. With collaboration and dedication, Africa is well on its way towards a healthier and more prosperous future.

Home Grown Solutions Accelerator - Alumni support brainstorm discussion with AUDA-NEPAD and other stakeholders

The Home Grown Solutions (HGS) Accelerator for Pandemic Resilience is an initiative that aims to accelerate the growth of African healthcare companies to strengthen the continent's pandemic resilience, in line with the African Union's Energize Africa Initiative and Agenda 2063 aspirations. This is achieved through offering hands-on and tailored support to early-, growth- and mature stage healthcare businesses. The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) founded the Accelerator initiative, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the official development assistance agency of the Government of Japan.

Following the pilot in 2021 supporting 5 East African HGS, the initiative was successfully expanded across Africa in 2022, where it assisted its second cohort of 14 HGS, followed by the 3rd round in 2023 supporting 9 HGS. Across the years, these consisted of DrugStoc, Mdaas Global, Revital, Rology, Sinapi and Zuri Health, among others, assisted by a supporting network that includes the likes of World Food Programme, Africa CDC, GIZ, Rwandan Development Board, CSIR, AAIC, Ecobank Foundation, Aga Khan Foundation, World Health Organization, UNIDO, Afreximbank and others.

The initiative has received further support from the African Development Bank (AfDB) through its Fund for African Private Sector Assistance (FAPA). The objective is to enable AUDA-NEPAD to sustain, scale and execute the HGS Accelerator in healthcare whilst simultaneously facilitating increased manufacturing capacity and regional integration.

As part of this support, the initiative aims to provide additional assistance to selected HGS alumni to address their key challenges around access to affordable capital; tailored advice; connecting to appropriate partners through operationalizing of HGSA by a combination of in-house (AUDA-



NEPAD) and external technical assistance capacity.

To identify areas of alumni support, some of the HGS alumni and other stakeholders from AUDA-NEPAD, JICA, Villgro Africa and BCG came together in Nairobi on the 22nd of April 2022, brainstorming 8 elements of alumni support. These include providing context-specific support beyond the standard assistance given during the accelerator program; having a mentorship marketplace to enable HGS to contact experienced mentors; expanding the training curriculum beyond the existing offering; investor engagement including demo events and a digital platform for engagements that centralizes communication, resource sharing, and progress tracking.

In addition, providing additional specific technical support for scaling ventures, and small, milestone-based financial support alongside

continued introductions to partners such as government regulatory bodies, universities for research collaboration, or industry-specific advisors would enable HGS to expand their support ecosystem. These partnerships can provide alumni with critical insights, facilitate market entries, enhance product development through academic collaboration, and ensure compliance with industry regulations.

Overall, this demonstrates the growth of the HGS accelerator and its potential as we aim to strengthen healthcare systems across the continent.

OPED | Unleashing Africa's Potential: A Path to Sustainable Development

By Angel Navuri, A member of the Agenda 2063 Media Network



Africa, often referred to as the "cradle of civilization," possesses a rich tapestry of cultures, resources, and resilience. Yet, it is a continent that has long grappled with challenges ranging from poverty and conflict to underdevelopment and inadequate infrastructure. However, amidst these challenges lies immense potential and opportunity for transformative growth and development. In this opinion piece, we delve into Africa's development trajectory, backed by compelling statistics, to advocate for a renewed commitment to unlocking its full potential.

Economic Growth and Investment

Africa's economic landscape has been steadily evolving, with several countries experiencing robust growth rates in recent years. According to the African Development Bank, the continent's GDP growth averaged 3.4% in 2019, and despite the COVID-19 pandemic's impact, it is projected to rebound to 3.4% in 2021. This resilience underscores Africa's potential as an attractive destination for investment and economic diversification.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Africa have also been on the rise, reflecting growing investor confidence in the continent's prospects. In 2020, FDI flows to Africa increased by 11%



to \$40 billion, driven by investments in renewable energy, digital infrastructure, and the agribusiness sector. These investments not only spur economic growth but also create job opportunities, foster innovation, and contribute to sustainable development.

Human Capital Development

Investing in human capital is paramount for Africa's long-term development and prosperity. Education and healthcare are fundamental pillars of human capital development, yet many African countries continue to grapple with challenges such as inadequate access to quality education and healthcare services.

According to UNESCO, sub-Saharan Africa has made significant strides in improving access to education, with primary school enrollment reaching 79% in 2018. However, challenges persist in terms of quality and retention rates, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to enhance educational outcomes.

Similarly, healthcare systems across the continent face numerous challenges, including limited infrastructure, healthcare workforce shortages, and inadequate funding. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed these vulnerabilities, underscoring the urgency of strengthening healthcare systems and investing in healthcare infrastructure, research, and capacity building.

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure is the backbone of economic development, facilitating trade, connectivity, and access to essential services. Africa's infrastructure deficit remains a significant barrier to growth, with inadequate road networks, unreliable power supply, and limited access to clean water and sanitation hindering socio-economic development.

The African Union's Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) aims to address these challenges by promoting regional infrastructure projects in sectors



such as transportation, energy, and water resources. However, funding constraints and bureaucratic hurdles continue to impede progress, highlighting the need for innovative financing mechanisms and enhanced public-private partnerships to accelerate infrastructure development.

Harnessing Digital Innovation

Digital innovation holds immense promise for Africa's development, offering opportunities to leapfrog traditional barriers and drive inclusive growth. The continent has witnessed a digital revolution in recent years, with mobile technology and internet penetration rates soaring across many countries.

Mobile money platforms have revolutionized financial inclusion, providing millions of Africans with access to banking services, savings, and credit. In Kenya, for example, the adoption of mobile money has transformed the country's economy, driving financial inclusion and empowering small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Moreover, the rise of fintech startups, e-commerce platforms, and tech hubs across Africa is fueling innovation and entrepreneurship, creating new avenues for job creation and economic empowerment. Governments and policymakers must prioritize digital infrastructure development, digital

literacy, and regulatory frameworks to harness the full potential of digital technology for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Africa stands at a critical juncture in its development journey, with unprecedented opportunities and challenges shaping its future. By leveraging its vast resources, harnessing digital innovation, and investing in human capital and infrastructure, the continent can unlock its full potential and embark on a path to sustainable development.

However, realizing this vision requires a concerted effort from governments, the private sector, civil society, and international partners. It demands bold leadership, innovative solutions, and a commitment to inclusive and equitable development that leaves no one behind.

As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, let us seize this moment to reimagine Africa's future and build a continent that is prosperous, resilient, and sustainable for generations to come.

AUDA-NEPAD encourages freedom of speech and the expression of diverse views. The views of columnists/guest bloggers published on Habari are therefore their own and do not necessarily represent the views of AUDA-NEPAD.

African Medicine Regulatory Group Presents New Phase in Fight Against Counterfeit Medicine



The African Union Development Agency-NEPAD's African Medicines Regulatory Harmonization (AMRH) Programme proudly announces the launch of the First Continental Heads of Medicines Registration and Marketing Authorization Forum and the selection of its leadership team. This new Forum aims to facilitate the adoption of scientific recommendations made by the Evaluation of Medicinal Products Technical Committee (EMP-TC) for human medicinal products listed at the continental level.

The leadership of the Forum was elected during the inaugural Continental Forum for Heads of Registration and Marketing Authorization gathering, held on April 11, 2024, in Nairobi, Kenya. The elected leaders are:

Chairperson: Kariuki Gachoki from Kenya

Vice Chairperson: Dr. Chantal Noufionso from Benin

Rapporteurs: Mbagnick Diouf from Senegal, Nazalia Macuvele from Mozambique, and Bathusi Kgosietsile from Botswana

A representative from Northern Africa is yet to be elected and will be announced in the coming weeks.

"We are excited to introduce this dynamic leadership team for the Continental Forum for Heads of Registration & Marketing Authorisation," said the head of AMRH, Ms. Chimwemwe Chamdimba. *"Their expertise and dedication are instrumental in advancing Africa's medicine regulatory systems, ensuring the accessibility and safety of medicinal products for all Africans,"* she said.

Mr. Gachoki, the newly appointed Chairperson, expressed his gratitude, stating, *"It's a great honor to chair this prestigious forum. I assure you that our recommendations will prioritize the well-being of African citizens. Furthermore, as leaders, we humbly acknowledge that we do not possess all knowledge. We are fully committed to listening to the invaluable contributions of forum members, ensuring that we serve Africa to the best of our abilities."*

The leadership team will play a crucial role in facilitating the adoption and translation of continental scientific recommendations on medicinal products evaluated and listed by the EMP-TC into national registration and marketing authorization. The Forum will also foster collaboration among National Regulatory Authorities, facilitate information exchange, and advocate for continental recommendations to enhance the efficiency of Africa's regulatory framework. By streamlining medicinal product approval processes, the Forum aims to contribute significantly to the efficiency and functioning of the African regulatory system.

The conclusion of the election process saw critical discussions on implementing the continental pilot procedures for Registration & Marketing Authorization for medicinal products in Africa and establishing a harmonized mechanism for adopting continental scientific outputs guided by recommendations from the EMP-TC.

This initiative marks a significant step towards a more unified and effective regulatory environment for medicinal products across Africa, ultimately aiming to ensure the safety and accessibility of medicines for all Africans.



A small house will hold a
hundred friends.- Kenyan proverb

This Kenyan proverb relates to the communal lifestyle of the Duruma people. It is used to remind the community that there is always a place for one more person. It encourages bonding and learning to share things with each other. In their ordinary way of life, the family members appreciate hosting each other.

HABARI