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August 2022 Newsletter



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Enabling Digital and Data Services for Expanded Economic Growth and Development in Africa

AUDA-NEPAD-VODACOM White Paper Launch

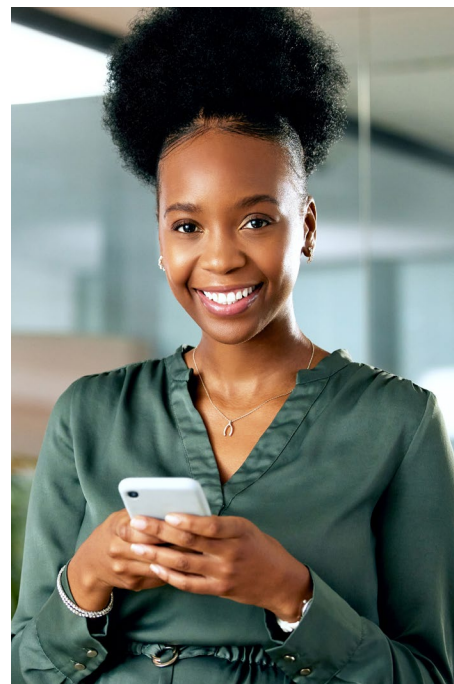
The AUDA-NEPAD in partnership with the Vodacom Group, on August 2 2022, launched a policy paper on “Enabling Policy Frameworks for Digital Services for Expanded Economic Growth and Development - A Focus on the SADC Region”. The white paper is part of the broader collaboration between AUDA-NEPAD and the Vodacom Group on strengthening the digital capabilities of AU Member States for enhanced public service delivery. The paper has come at an opportune time when the continent, recovering from the effects of COVID-19 and other global shocks, is putting in increased efforts to accelerate the implementation of digitalization strategies and policies. The paper provides in-depth analysis of the importance of appropriate free data flows within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and beneficiation from digital economies. More importantly, the paper draws on lessons from other jurisdictions to provide elaborate policy recommendations and guidelines on how SADC Member States and other AU Member States can leverage on the principles of Africa’s regional economic integration frameworks to reduce regulatory barriers in order to create regional digital markets for the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Opening the launch, the Chief External Affairs Officer of the Vodacom Group, Mr. Stephen Chege, stressed the need for appropriate free flow of data across borders to ensure use of digital technologies to drive business and economic growth. Cognisant of the concerns around cross border data flows, enacting appropriate regulatory frameworks will bring more national businesses and consumers into the digital fold. He indicated the importance of the partnership with AUDA-NEPAD in facilitating good practises for thriving digital economies. In his opening remarks, Mr. Martin Bwalya, Acting Director of KMPE, AUDA-NEPAD alluded to the importance of private engagements as key element in AUDA-NEPAD delivery model. Agenda 2063 is clear and resolute on the principle that sustainable economic growth and

inclusive development can only be realized through mutual public-private collaboration and shared responsibilities. It is perfectly possible to pursue business interests and development at the same time; in fact, the two reinforce each other. Mr. Bwalya pointed the added value of the white paper in providing of practical areas of considerations for AU Member States to ensure enabling regulatory environment for digital and data services to facilitate appropriate free flow of data between jurisdictions for viable regional digital economies. There is a need for political support on accelerating the implementation of SADC Model Law on Data Protection, the AU Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) and Data Policy Framework (DPF) for viable and thriving digital economies.

During roundtable panel session, Ms Abigail Yeboah, Head of Administration, Ghana Data Protection Commission, Dr. Gideon Nimako, Senior Programme Officer, AUDA-NEPAD, Mr. Clive Charlto, Head of Solution Architecture - Middle East & Africa, AWS and Mr. Matthew Alison, Senior Public Policy Manager, Vodafone Group discussed the paper and its implication for policy design and implementation as well as for business productivity. Dr. Nimako stressed the importance of appropriate adequate infrastructure and sound regulatory frameworks for flow of digital services across jurisdictions to exploit the trade opportunities being offered by the AfCFTA. He indicated the need to close the knowledge gap between policymakers and telecommunication companies to allow efficient dialogue on how digital technologies can enable social and economic growth through business productivity. The practical recommendations provided for by the paper are key for harnessing innovations that leverages on emerging data, digital and 4IR technologies to demonstrate clear and tangible value both on the business side as well as on the socio-development side.

Data is transforming the world economy and its analysis represents the next frontier



in economic value generation. The recent global shocks triggered by public health crises and conflicts has accelerated digital transformation of national economies. These have brought to bear, the need for countries to collaborate on data sharing and transfer, a crucial asset for policy and decision-making processes. One aspect in the world-wide experiences with COVID-19 is the spotlight the pandemic has put on the imperative and urgency to ensure wide and inclusive data flows and access. Data flows will only continue to rise as more countries and sectors embrace digital transformation. However harnessing social and economic benefits from the digital transformation will require deliberate and concerted efforts from the both public sector to create the enabling policy frameworks and the private sector to innovate for positive business growth and job creation. As such AUDA-NEPAD partnerships with the private sector will strengthened the digital capabilities of AU Member States for enhanced public service delivery and to stimulate growth in the private business enterprises.

[DOWNLOAD THE WHITE PAPER HERE>](#)

Call to Action for the AU Year of Nutrition and Food Security by African Youth and Media

It is time we moved the needle on nutrition. We must ensure awareness of the importance of nutrition at community level, was the preamble to the call to action developed by the African Youth and Media in Accra, Ghana.

The call to action was made during an awareness and orientation session on the African Union Year of Nutrition for youth and the Agenda 2063 Media Network. The session was convened by the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, in collaboration with the Youth Consortium and the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF) and the University of Health and Allied Sciences in Ghana.

“We have to think smart and act smart. Nutrition must be on the agenda for development, also as pinnacle to youth development,” said Boitshepo Giyose, Senior Nutrition Advisor to the AUDA-NEPAD Chief Executive Officer.

“This comes in against the recognition that Africa’s share in the world’s undernourished population decreased from 35.5 percent in 1990 to 22 percent

in 2019. However, this alarming rate still calls for stronger efforts to improve food security and nutrition in the continent,” Ms Giyose said.

Youths and media developed a call to action, aimed at strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security in Africa. The call is being made on Governments, Regional Economic Communities, youth, civil society, media, financial Institutions, traditional and religious institutions, academia, private sector, sports personalities, and individuals to effectively participate and contribute to the improvement of nutrition and food security in the continent.

Speaking on behalf of SAYoF, Misheck Gondo said the call to action is important since “Food security and nutrition are important elements of individual resilience, but they can also enhance the resilience of whole economies by improving the health and productivity of individuals.”

Kefilwe Roba Moalosi, AUDA-NEPAD’s Senior Nutritionist acknowledged the

importance of the role played by media and youth in advocacy and reminded participants of the need to strengthen local indigenous food systems as a driver for human capital development.

During the awareness and orientation session, an advocacy campaign was also launched, #Youth4Nutrition, which is aimed at rallying more youths and media to champion nutrition and food security in all regions of the continent.

The awareness and orientation session was held to primarily raise awareness and orient media and youth on the AU Year of Nutrition, while expounding on AUDA-NEPAD’s role in nutrition and food security. The session brought together youths and media from all the regions of the continent for engagement towards collaborative and sustainable action on nutrition towards the realisation of Agenda 2063.



Nigeria adopts national guidelines on genetically modified plants with stacked genes



Nigeria's biotechnology and biosafety stakeholders validated and adopted national guidelines on the regulation of genetically modified plants with stacked genes, on 25 July 2022 in Abuja. The objective of these guidelines is to provide guidance and information on the risk assessment and risk management requirements and procedures for plants with Genetically Modified (GM) stacked events through traditional breeding or molecular techniques. Gene Stacking refers to the combination of two or more genes of interest in the genome of a single plant.

The guidelines were adopted during a deliberation meeting that brought together officials of the National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA), Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), National Agricultural Seed Council (NASC), Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS), National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA), Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB), African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS), University of Abuja, Federal Competition, Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) amongst others.

According to the Director General-CEO of the National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA), Dr. Rufus Ebegba, the newly adopted document will guide the NBMA in the evaluation of biosafety applications for genetically modified crops with multiple genes, to ensure that the products from this technology are safe for human consumption and the environment. He stated that the guidelines are to ensure that the genes that are inserted into these GM products confer the expected benefits with no increase in risk compared to their conventional counterparts.

Speaking on behalf of the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), a partner of the NBMA in building functional biosafety regulatory tools, Mr. Samuel Timpo, Principal Programme Officer of AUDA-NEPAD, commended Nigeria and the NBMA for the continually developing regulatory tools that align with international standards and best practices. He further commended the NBMA for an inclusive, participatory and consultative process that led to a fit-for-purpose outcome. He also reiterated AUDA-NEPAD's commitment to continued fruitful cooperation with the NBMA, government institutions, and other stakeholders.

Leveraging Smart Technologies to Tackle Gender-Based Violence in Africa

Blog published by the Secretariat on behalf of the AU High-Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) and the Calestous Juma Executive Dialogues (CJED)



Gender-based violence (GBV) is defined as harmful acts committed against a person based on their gender. This could result in physical, sexual, and psychological harm. Whether occurring in public or private life, threats, coercion, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty constitute gender-based violence. Notably, both men and women are experiencing and being affected by gender-based violence. However, the majority of victims of gender-based violence have been women and girls. In Africa, gender-based violence is one of the numerous obstacles preventing women from exercising their fundamental rights to life, human dignity, peace, justice, socioeconomic development, and political advancement.

Frameworks such as the African Union's Agenda 2063, the African Union's Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) ensure Africa's commitment to gender equality. This is accomplished through the

resolution and abolition of violence against women and girls, as well as increased access to resources such as finance, land, education, health, information services, science and technology, and decision-making in socio-political governance and commercial ventures[6]. The framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment also envisions equal participation in African country advancement and the development of people-driven economies.

Nevertheless, despite the adoption of these progressive policies and legal frameworks to eradicate gender-based violence, this phenomenon remains the most pervasive violation of human rights in Africa. Notably, approximately 736 million women aged 15 or older around the world have experienced some form of gender-based violence at least once in their lives, and one-third (30%) have experienced it more than once. As a result, gender-based discrimination poses health risks, particularly for women and girls in Africa, and significantly contributes to the morbidity and mortality of women in Africa.

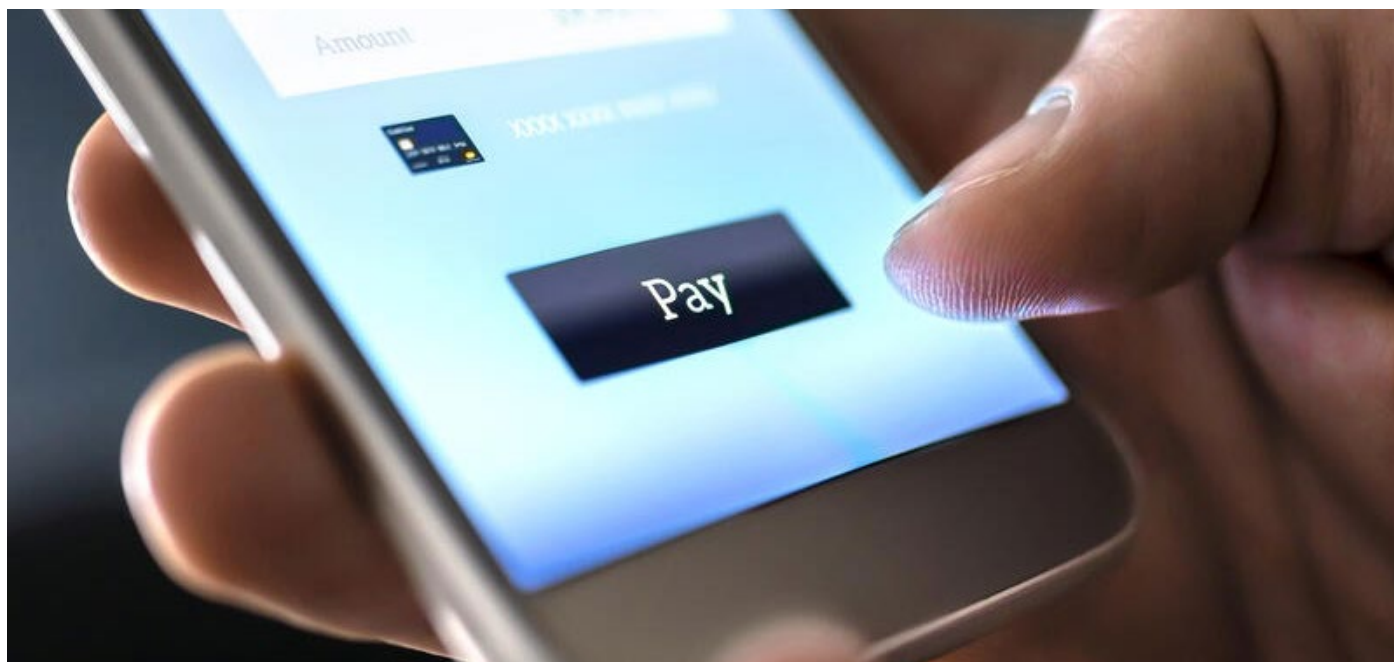
Africa remains one of the regions with the highest prevalence of gender-based violence, with approximately 36% of women having experienced it[1]. In some instances, these women are subjected to pervasive and enduring gender-based violations, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation[11]. Notably, at least one-third of women between the ages of 20 and 24 were forced into marriage before the age of 18 in 19 African nations. Additionally, at least one-third of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have undergone female genital mutilation. Notably, the prevalence of GBV in Africa can be attributed to fostered patriarchy, cultural gender norms, low literacy levels, poverty, wars, regional and tribal conflicts, and limited levels of information.

The high prevalence of gender-based violence in Africa has resulted in widespread public support for the abolition of gender-based violence. African governments have initiated and implemented some efforts to end gender-based violence. However, these efforts have been hampered by ineffective and incompetent coordination, as well as limited budgetary provisions for prevention and services. In South Africa, for example, political changes and limited funding mechanisms[14] have made it difficult for the National Council on Gender-Based Violence (NCGBV) council to draft, cost, and implement the national strategic plan to prevent gender-based violence. As a result, improved mechanisms for facilitating and coordinating preventive measures against gender-based violence should be developed and implemented.

To that end, the African Union High-Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) advises African countries to consider adopting smart technologies to eliminate gender-based violence in Africa. [READ MORE>](#)

Boosting the Safety and Security of Mobile Money Transfer Transactions in Africa

Blog published by the Secretariat on behalf of the AU High-Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) and the Calestous Juma Executive Dialogues (CJED)



Africa has a wealth of economic potential in nearly every socioeconomic development sector. As a result, Africa's young population presents enormous opportunities for harnessing digital technologies and underscores the necessity for Africa to prioritize digital technologies. This is due to the fact that digital transformation is a driving force behind inclusive, innovative, and long-term socioeconomic growth. By making goods and services easier to obtain and more widely available, technological advancements and digitalization are helping Africa's economy create jobs and combat poverty while also reducing inequality. In essence, this is helping to achieve the Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Digital technologies can promote Africa's economic integration, generate inclusive economic growth, stimulate job creation, bridge the digital divide, and eradicate poverty. Furthermore, the African Union (AU) has labelled digital technologies as one of the enablers to leapfrog Africa into sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development and growth.

For example, the African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030) has characterised the utilisation of digital technologies and innovation as a prerequisite to transforming African societies.

Financial technologies (fintech) applications are one of the domains digital technologies have revolutionised across the African continent. Fintech is effectively augmenting, streamlining, and digitalising the conventional structure of financial services. These applications have established financial ecosystems that are providing solutions to address some of the gaps in the provision of financial services. Consequently, fintech is progressively growing and changing the financial services value chain and boosting financial inclusion to encourage socioeconomic development and growth. This also enables various financial operational mechanisms such as depositing payments, paying bills, and obtaining financial assistance. For example, these are executed through mobile money banking, mobile payment, crowdfunding platforms, insurance technology, blockchain, and cryptocurrency.

Fintech applications such as mobile money are potentially expanding access to financial services to approximately 300 million unbanked and underbanked Africans. The upsurge of fintech firms and substantial banking investments into digitalisation has further enhanced innovation, strengthened local economies, and catalysed equitable, inclusive economic development and growth across Africa.[8] There were about 548 million registered mobile money accounts by the end of 2020, with approximately 150 million active users every month.[9] However, safety and security challenges associated with these technologies should be addressed for better absorption and enhanced trust and confidence in their applications from African users.

Notably, mobile money transfers are transactions involving money transfers between individuals, such as remittances, social benefits, reimbursements and all sorts of transfers which can occur between two persons. There are also payments from individuals to companies and vice-versa, such as purchases, subscriptions, bills, insurance contributions, taxes, and payments to suppliers.

[READ THE FULL BLOG HERE>](#)

Southern African countries explore innovative ideas to tackle environmental challenges

A region covering a total land area of 10 million km² of which 84% is drylands, Southern Africa is acutely affected by land degradation driven by both natural and human-induced processes. These include soil erosion which accounts for 15% of degraded land, as well as unsustainable agricultural practices, tree harvesting for charcoal production, contamination, pollution and biodiversity loss. Multiplied by climate change and intensified periods of drought, these hazards negatively impact the health, prosperity and livelihoods of millions dependent on agriculture, as evident from the recently launched [Global Land Outlook Thematic Report on Southern Africa](#).

To address these challenges in line with the Regional Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030, all sixteen of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries have committed to accelerating land, water and energy transformation. Leveraging the land, water and energy nexus for economic and business development became the focus of the recent stakeholder engagement and capacity building workshop in Pretoria, South Africa. The workshop focused on key investment pillars for future land restoration efforts in the region: water security for all, access to renewable energy, productive and resilient ecosystems, climate-smart infrastructure, strengthened agricultural productivity and sustainable food systems.

The workshop, organized by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD in collaboration with the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), Commonwealth Secretariat, SADC secretariat and the African Union Commission, brought together representatives of the environment, land, climate change and finance sectors, as well as technical and development partners. It provided an opportunity to pinpoint key environmental, social and economic challenges that face each of the 16 SADC countries and identify the key areas of action, with the specific focus on launching technical and financial partnerships for implementation of the regional strategy for the Great Green Wall Initiative.

The workshop, which marked a significant milestone under the tripartite partnership between the UNCCD, Commonwealth Secretariat and AUDA-NEPAD, also allowed country representatives to explore innovative project ideas to match each country's challenges with the technical and financial support from key partners and institutions. Potential projects include floating solar photovoltaic farms, improvement of agricultural value chains to reduce post-harvest loss and increase job creation, as well as improvement of water harvesting technologies to enhance drought resilience.

As the next step, the SADC countries will take stock of current initiatives to ensure coordination, avoid duplication, identify gaps and build on and upscale best practices and successful investments. National action and investment plans outline the ambitions of the SADC countries at national, transboundary, multi-country and regional scales.

Source: [UNCCD](#)



Up-Close and Personal with Agenda 2063 Media Network Member



Full Name: **Ndamu Sandu**

Media House: **Business Times (Editor)**

Country: **Zimbabwe**

NB: As Editor of Business Times, Ndamu Sandu introduced a new section which profiles female executives during the Women's Month and thereafter ensuring that at least half of the executives profiled in the section are female

What are your hopes for Africa when it comes to the empowerment of Women?

I am hopeful that one day it will be normal and no longer newsworthy that there is a first female managing director or chief executive officer of company X or Y or one that has been elected President. The fact that a number of women are breaking the so called glass ceiling is testament that change is beckoning.

What role should the Women of this continent play in transforming the continent?

African women should play a more active role in their societies as this will help in the positive transformation of not only the girl child but the family unit as a whole. They become the role models and inspire others that they can still succeed if they put effort, determination and zeal. Due to patriarchal nature of societies on the continent, we have seen resilient women breaking through "siege mentality". The continent now has successful women bankers, politicians, farmers and scholars, among others. That demonstrates that it is possible for a girl child to aim higher.

South Africa recently commemorated Women's Day in honour of the women who marched against the Pass laws. What cause do you think women in the rest of the continent should rally behind to really empower themselves ?

Women's Day commemorations are a clear indication on the power of women both in politics and the country's development. When women marched to Pretoria in August 1956 against the proposed amendments to the Urban Areas Act which entailed them walking with passes, an estimated 20,000k women took part. Women in some parts of Africa were previously not proceed with their education beyond primary school, but this has now changed.

There is a famous proverb which states that "if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)".

This should be the rallying cry to give women the necessary foundation to be able to compete.

African Women remain the most marginalised of society by virtue of being born Black, Female and Poor (Triple Oppression System). Imagine For a moment that you are a Head of State in any African country, what would you do differently to change this status quo?

As President, I would put in place special grants to encourage more women to be enrolled at schools, while for those already working I would put more policies that encourage women to be promoted on merit and also appeal to them to aim for higher jobs. I will ensure that my country not only signs conventions against the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, but implements that. This means appointment to government ministries, Commissions and government departments should be open to all and not men only. I will also strive to ensure that there is 50-50 representation in Parliament.

Lastly, what do you think AUDA-NEPAD should do to further drive the agenda of the empowerment of Women?

AUDA-NEPAD should have capacity building programmes on women to mould them into future leaders. As an African Union development agency, it should also take the lead in ensuring that there are women in senior positions. The appointment of the female CEO sends an encouraging signal that the continent means business in removing the barriers that militates against the ascendancy of women in leadership positions.

Celebration of AUDA-NEPAD CEO, HE Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas, first 100 days in office

“I wish to warmly thank the wonderful AUDA-NEPAD staff who have welcomed me with open hearts and hands and surprised me with a most memorable celebration of my first 100 (plus) days in office. I celebrate them all!” Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas



Appointments at the AUDA-NEPAD

Mr. Binas Zeufalbo, a national of Chad has been appointed as Programme Officer Cross Border Referral System, with effect from 01 August 2022 Within the Programme Delivery and Coordination Directorate. Mr. Binas Zeufalbo holds a Diploma in Computer Science Engineer (Major : Software Engineering & Database) from the African Institute of Computer Science « Inter-State School », Libreville (Gabon), a Bachelor in Computer Science (2000), Diploma of General University Studies (DEUG) in Software Engineering (1999), University degree in scientific studies (DUES), Mathematics and Physics from the University of N'Djamena, Faculty of Applied Sciences.

Upcoming Events



AUDA-NEPAD
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



**AUDA-NEPAD CEO,
Mrs Nardos Bekele-Thomas'**
Introductory Meeting with
the African Diplomatic Corps
in Sweden and neighbouring
Nordic countries

Date | **29 August 2022** ~ Time | **11:00 - 12:30**
Stockholm, Sweden



AUDA-NEPAD @ 77th UNGA
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

19 September 2022

Launch of **ENERGIZE AFRICA**
Harnessing the Potential of Africa's Youth to Transform the Continent



20 September 2022

**Climate Finance to
Address Global Challenges**

Climate Change, Desertification and Loss of Biodiversity

22 September 2022

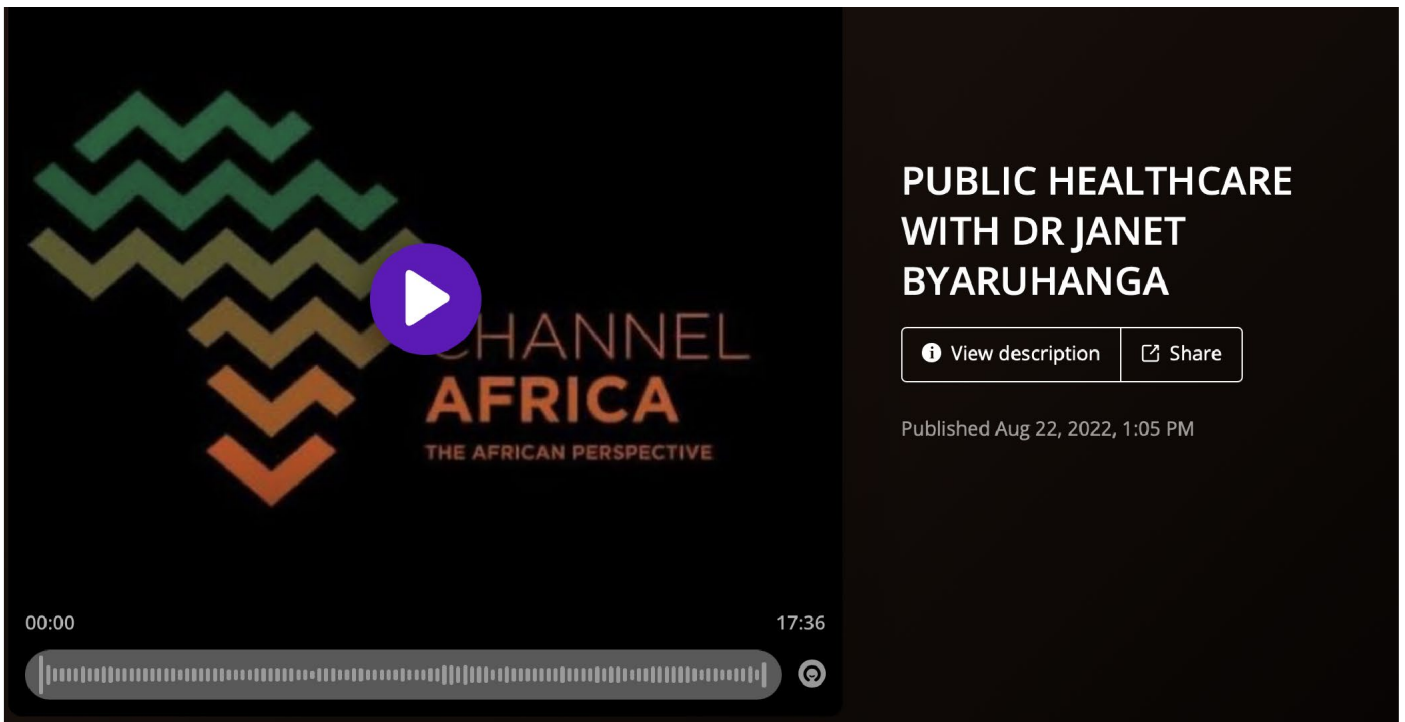
**Rethinking Development
Cooperation and International
Partnerships**

Linkages to business involvement in development "The Nexus"



19-22 September 2022, NY, USA

for more information, email: EnergizeAfrica@nepad.org



Listen to Channel Africa discuss the state of public healthcare in Africa with Senior Programme Officer and Head of Health at the African Union Development Agency, Dr Janet Byaruhanga [HERE>](#)

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