6TH EU-AFRICA BUSINESS FORUM

Highlights
27 NOV. 2017,
Palais de la Culture,
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

More information about the EU-Africa Business Forum can be found on
www.euafrica-businessforum.com

and on the Africa-EU Partnership website
www.africa-eu-partnership.org
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TWEETS FROM THE EU AND THE AU</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6TH EU-AFRICA BUSINESS FORUM PROGRAMME</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OFFICIAL WELCOME AND OPENING CEREMONY</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITATING INVESTMENTS IN AFRICA</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the External Investment Plan</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Benefit from the External Investment Plan</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INVESTMENT PITCHES</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating Investments within the Framework of the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Development Bank and European Investment Bank</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards Boosting Youth Employment: Investing in Sustainable Cocoa Value Chain in West Africa</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlocking Investment for Regional Infrastructure to Accelerate Job Creation (PIDA)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INVESTING IN JOB CREATION FOR YOUTH</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-level Panel: Investing in Job Creation for Youth</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth and Women: A Driving Force to Deliver Inclusive Growth</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) and Skills for African Youth</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution Masterclass: Matching Skills Demand and Skills Development for Employment in Africa</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution Masterclass: Big Companies Helping Small Companies</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIGITAL ECONOMY</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Level Roundtable on the Digital Economy</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Economy: Investing in Digital Start-ups</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Finance and Scale your Digital Start-up</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing Business in the 21st Century: eGovernment Solutions as Prerequisite for Economic Competitiveness</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Start-up Fair</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Start-up Investment Pitches</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUSTAINABLE ENERGY</strong></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling and Leveraging Investments in Sustainable Energy in Africa</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebration: 10th Anniversary of Africa-EU Energy Partnership</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGRICULTURE AND AGribUSINESS</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Cooperation for Agricultural Investments in Africa</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Promote African Quality Products</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging Digitisation for Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITATING COLLABORATION</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Set up and Scale up EU Chambers of Commerce and Industry in African Countries</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Export to the EU Market?</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Comply with EU and African Quality Standards</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOOKING TO THE FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Closing Ceremony</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Joint Business Declaration</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIST OF ACRONYMS</strong></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TWEETS FROM THE EU AND THE AU

Too many people overlook Africa’s incredible energy and desire for change. Not the EU. @FedericaMog #AUEU

We need a ‘New Deal’ between #Africa and #Europe, a deal of equal partners where we set our priorities together, we identify the problems together and we all take responsibility for reaching our common goals. @FedericaMog #AUEU

Good to be back to #Abidjan. Let’s make the most of this #AUEUSummit to drive investments in Africa’s infrastructure @_AfricanUnion #EABF2017 #AUEU

#Akwaba! The #EABF2017 starts today. Join me as we address #Africa’s infrastructure #AUEU #AUEUSummit #Abidjan @_AfricanUnion @EuropeanCommiss @info_eabf @au_ied
This Business Forum is a chance to find best ways to work together, to build our economies and create more jobs for our youth - on both continents. My speech: http://bit.ly/VP_AA_Abidjan #EABF2017 #Digital4Development

We are investing in opportunities at the EU-Africa business forum as business leaders, investors and entrepreneurs from both continents come together. http://www.euafrica-businessforum.com #EABF2017

Cooperation between EU and Africa is key to improving the investment climate in Africa. #EABF2017 #AUEU
The 6th EU-Africa Business Forum (EABF), which took place on 27 November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, provided an opportunity for business leaders from Africa and Europe to make their collective voice heard. In a joint declaration to political leaders at the 5th AU-EU Summit, which took place a few days later, numerous recommendations were made to ensure the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) become a reality. The business forum convened more than a thousand public and private sector leaders to explore ways of working together to advance this goal. These included how to: stimulate more investment for job creation; work together to improve the business and investment climate and; catalyse collaboration in the digital economy, sustainable energy and agribusiness. In addition, details of the European External Investment Plan (EIP) and Sustainable Business For Africa (SB4A) initiatives were revealed as a way to deliver tangible investment opportunities for a rising continent.

The 6th EABF marked the culmination of a wider effort to mobilise the public and private sectors of Europe and Africa, by building on a series of earlier business-related events and joint EU-Africa partnership initiatives. Mirroring the sector priorities of the EIP, the EABF focused on the digital economy, sustainable energy and agribusiness, which are central to sustainable and inclusive development. The challenges and opportunities in each of these sectors were addressed in a mix of high-level panels and interactive solution sessions throughout the day. In addition, participants had the opportunity to explore investment opportunities in partnership with the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and some of the EU Military Staff’s (EUMS) development finance institutions. For the first time, the business forum included a digital start-up fair, giving over 100 young entrepreneurs and fledgling companies from Africa and Europe the opportunity to showcase their innovations and seek partnerships to scale and develop.

Under the overall theme of Investing in Job Creation for Youth, the EABF focused on how collaboration can address the pressing developmental issue of youth unemployment in Europe and Africa. Key to this challenge is developing a business-enabling policy environment that encourages innovative approaches to entrepreneurship, skills development and the creation of meaningful jobs that drive economic growth, particularly for young people and women.

The untapped potential of women as entrepreneurs and agents of sustainable development was highlighted, and private sector representatives stressed that they are ready to work with public authorities on focused training and empowerment programmes. The need for better integration of education systems with the business world was another focus, and success stories were discussed. In addition, a call was issued for public authorities and private enterprises to work together to promote entrepreneurship, and develop efficient strategies that allow an easy transition from school to work.

Private sector participants called for stronger business organisations in Africa and for the creation of a more permanent and structured forum for dialogue between private and public actors. The SB4A platform, launched in Abidjan, creates such a space. SB4A allows for closer interaction between government and the private sector and creates an institutional mechanism to provide continuity to the EU-Africa strategic partnership. In turn, policymakers stressed the importance of aligning business objectives with the public policy objectives of Investing in Job Creation for Youth. The forum noted the key role that young entrepreneurs will play in the future of both Europe and Africa and stressed their empowerment as an urgent priority.
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
Africa needs universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and secure energy in order to develop and grow. Doing ‘business as usual’ will not bridge the financial gap between existing investments and what is required to meet the SDGs. There is also a need to enhance multilateral dialogue between business, the authorities and research institutions to make it possible to benefit from research synergies and speed up commercialisation of cutting-edge technologies. Innovative finance instruments should be used to reduce risks, create more decentralised energy production, and support the development of a stable business climate conducive to investments in large-scale and capital-intensive energy infrastructure projects.

DIGITAL ECONOMY
The EABF highlighted that internet connectivity in Africa remains a developmental challenge, and there is an urgent need to accelerate digitalisation and create better digital infrastructure. Enhanced collaboration is needed between government and business to address technological disruption and harness the huge development opportunity that digital technology and services offer. As such, cooperation in digital infrastructure should become one of the flagship activities of EU-Africa business cooperation.

AGRICULTURE AND AGribUSINESS
In agriculture and agribusiness, too, there is an urgent need for public policies to attract investments and to implement climate smart policies. Innovative financial instruments such as the EIP and its specific investment window on agriculture were discussed, in particular with a view to support decent job creation for the youth notably in the cocoa sector. A dedicated structured dialogue platform between the public and private sectors, named FoodDrinkAfrica, was launched. Furthermore, innovative technology and data can help farming communities to thrive through better market access and by enabling products to be sold at higher post-harvest prices. This, in turn, will help generate greater interest from young people in the opportunities offered by the agricultural sector. Cooperation between Africa and the EU is essential to transform African agriculture and feed the growing population.

FINANCE
Access to finance was highlighted at many sessions as a factor hampering development. Participants stressed the need for public and private sector organisations to work together to identify new and innovative ways for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to access finance, and to help grow domestic businesses. Business leaders also called for a larger and more flexible supply of microcredit to satisfy the need for investment capital, particularly for MSMEs. This will be crucial to support the large number of women entrepreneurs in many African countries, since access to capital is a major barrier.

The forum outlined how the private sector is responding to needs on the ground and is mainstreaming development, environmental and social dimensions into business models. It also stressed that the business sector is ready to accelerate efforts to facilitate investment in critical areas, support productivity and competitiveness, and create prosperity, providing there is a sound policy environment and business climate. What is needed are measures to control risks, remove barriers, improve labour mobility, share knowledge, ensure legal certainty and administrative transparency, and promote the digital economy to better integrate economies and societies in Africa. European governments can support these efforts by encouraging their companies to engage in business activities in Africa through practical measures, such as political dialogue and guarantee instruments for trade and investment. An overarching message of the forum was that the EU’s External Investment Plan will play a central role in in realising the EU-Africa partnership’s vision for a sustainable and prosperous Africa.
## 6th EU-Africa Business Forum Programme

### Investing in Job Creation for Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07.00 - 08.30</td>
<td>Participant Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08.30 - 09.30</td>
<td>Opening Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.30 - 10.50</td>
<td>High Level Panel has a Panel on Investing in Job Creation for Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 - 11.45</td>
<td>Facilitating Investments in Africa: Introducing the External Investment Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.45 - 12.45</td>
<td>Facilitating Investments within the Framework of the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45 - 14.00</td>
<td>Networking Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.00 - 15.30</td>
<td>Youth and Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.30 - 16.00</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00 - 18.00</td>
<td>Matching Skills and Skills Development for Employment in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.10 - 18.10</td>
<td>Big Companies Helping Small Companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.50 - 20.00</td>
<td>Award Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.30 - 21.00</td>
<td>Closing Ceremony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B2B Hub**
- Network Space
- Exhibition Stands Available to Businesses and Countries

**Digital Start-Up Fair**
- Africa-EU Youth Lab

**Skills and TVET for African Youth**
(by invitation)

**High Level Round Table on the Digital Economy**
(by invitation)
The Government of Côte d’Ivoire, the European Union and the African Union officially opened the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum and welcomed all assembled participants from the public and private sectors from both continents to Abidjan.

Chief co-moderators Tania Habimana and Ibrahima Cheikh Diong welcomed the assembled guests and dignitaries and invited speakers to take to the floor. Every participant’s contribution was recognised: convened was a group of people with the capacity to make a real difference to the lives of young people and to address joint priorities under the forum’s main theme: Investing in Job Creation for Youth.

Setting the tone for the forum, representatives from the African Union and the European Commission, Business Africa and Côte d’Ivoire outlined their ambitions for the day. They focused specifically on the challenges and opportunities in enhancing job-creating sustainable investment in Africa in the strategic sectors of renewable energy, agriculture and the digital economy. The addresses emphasised links with the EU’s External Investment Plan and its investment windows, which aim to enhance sustainable investment flows in Africa and optimise inclusive job creation. Africa’s young people were hailed as one of its greatest assets and speakers urged the continent to invest, in order to reap this demographic dividend.

In the first address, Albert Yuma, President, Business Africa, expressed his gratitude to the Government of Côte d’Ivoire, and President Alassane Ouattara in particular, for hosting the forum. Citing migration as one of the most pressing issues facing both Africa and Europe, the Business Africa president said his organisation was ready to mobilise its companies

“Africa is ready to do business and the African Union is putting job creation for youth and women at the centre of its strategy.”

Victor Harrison
Commissioner for Economic Affairs,
African Union Commission
This business forum will look at how to create the best conditions for long-term private investment in Africa, how to support jobs for young people, and especially women, by connecting and developing business partnerships, locally, regionally and beyond.

H.E. Andrus Ansip
Vice President, European Commission, Digital Single Market

to improve employment opportunities for young people in Africa, thereby addressing one of the root causes of migration. For the private sector to be able to do this, the necessary conditions would have to be put in place to enable companies to grow. Yuma called for an action plan to develop key sectors of the economy, with a particular focus on agriculture, to encourage young people to remain working on the land. In industry, he stressed the need for capacity building and a qualified workforce, and argued that an African structured growth programme be adapted to global competition. In addition, improved levels of governance were crucial. Yuma believed that a productive partnership, jointly created by Africa and Europe, would enable both continents to face the challenges ahead.

Next to speak was H.E. Andrus Ansip, Vice President, Digital Single Market, European Commission, who highlighted the role of the private sector in job creation; the goal was not only to create enough jobs, but also to ensure that they are both decent and sustainable. Referring to the main topics of the forum, Ansip noted that digitalisation is reshaping Africa, with mobile payments creating greater financial inclusion. He added that Africa has enormous sustainable energy potential, which the private sector is well equipped to tap. Ansip highlighted, too, the need to invest in training and capacity building, to prepare young people for the labour market and integration into economic life. He called on forum participants to investigate the best ways to work together to create jobs for the youth on both continents.

In his address, Victor Harisson, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission, highlighted challenges including a low level of economic diversity, climate change and rapid population growth. However, the business environment and investment climate in Africa are improving and there is a need to create an educational system that feeds the African industrial revolution. “Africa is ready to do business,” he said, adding that the “African Union is putting job creation for youth and women at the centre of its strategy”.

H.E. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Vice President, Côte d’Ivoire, said that as part of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), the forum aims to showcase the position of business in relation to the challenges ahead, and that the EU-Africa partnership is being enhanced by inclusion of the private sector. He noted that Africa has a marginal share of global trade and there are many challenges on the road to development, particularly in the
area of training and education. Moreover, the processing of African products should be promoted and African industry must have access to European markets if it is to flourish. The vice president noted that rural communities are in particular need of support, and that tourism would be a valuable tool for the economic inclusion of vulnerable communities. There is a need to improve the “climate of confidence” between the public and the private sectors. A new Africa is emerging, with huge economic potential, he said, adding that the EU-Africa partnership would support this dynamism.

**Keynote Speakers**

H.E. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Vice President, Côte d’Ivoire; H.E. Andrus Ansip, Vice President, Digital Single Market, European Commission; Victor Harisson, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission; Albert Yuma, President, Business Africa

“The development of African economies is a great opportunity to strengthen ties with European investors in a new framework which aligns all actors for truly shared wealth creation.”
FACILITATING INVESTMENTS IN AFRICA

Introducing the External Investment Plan

ABOUT

In 2015, the international community put the role of business firmly on the sustainable development agenda. In response, the European Commission launched its External Investment Plan (EIP), a proposal to encourage greater investment and strengthen private sector partnerships in Africa. An innovative plan, the EIP aims to mobilise private sector resources and develop new financing models to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The EIP expects to leverage up to €44 billion of investments by 2020. During this session, participants discussed priorities within the EIP investment windows; the European Fund for Sustainable Development’s (EFSD) role in supporting investments by the public and private sectors; technical assistance; how the EIP can support regulatory, policy, and governance reforms; and the role of the private sector, the informal private sector, educational entities, youth and women associations, and local authorities in achieving the set goals.

SUMMARY

This session opened with a presentation about the External Investment Plan. The plan is an ambitious new strategy adopted by the European Commission on 28 September 2017 to support investment in partner countries in Africa and the European Neighbourhood. It aims to contribute to achieving the SDGs by promoting job creation and enabling young jobseekers to make a living in their country of origin, thereby alleviating some of the root causes of migration. The EIP is based on three pillars that work hand in hand: the new European Fund for Sustainable Development; increased technical assistance; and support for an improved investment climate and business environment.

In his presentation, Stefano Manservisi, Director General, DG International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, underlined the opportunities for public and private stakeholders and investors offered by the EIP, the EFSD, and the new EFSD guarantee. For the first time, he said, the EIP provides a specific, coherent framework to promote investment, technical assistance, and an enabling investment climate. It aims to leverage up to €44 billion of financing from financing institutions and the private sector.
Manservisi highlighted the EIP’s objective of mobilising private investments to help partner countries achieve the SDGs. “The EU and its network of delegations will provide support to African countries to identify, implement, as well as incentivise the priority reforms needed to improve the investment climate and business environment,” he said. This would enable more productive investments, in particular with the EFSD guarantee, allowing trusted financial institutions to de-risk investments.

The technical assistance provided under the EIP will maximise the quality and impact of investments, while also enhancing structured dialogue with the private sector to better support key investment climate reforms at the country level. Manservisi said that technical assistance could take many different forms, from studies to capacity building and facilitating dialogue between national authorities and businesses. The overarching aim is to unleash partner countries’ commercial potential in order to create businesses, jobs and improve economic and social development.

Under its third pillar, the EIP would promote a positive investment and business climate by reinforcing policy and political dialogue. Structured dialogue with the private sector would help to identify opportunities and constraints to investment. Also covered by this pillar are country-level sector and value chain diagnostics, allowing for a better understanding of market dynamics; these actions will be backed up by financing programmes to support legal, policy and institutional reforms.

Manservisi also gave an overview of the Sustainable Business for Africa (SB4A) platform, which he called an essential building block of pillar 3 of the EIP. The SB4A was created to enable and enhance structured dialogue with the private sector and will operate at country, sector and strategic levels to pull in the African and EU private sector’s perspective and ownership of the EIP.

Manservisi informed the session that a dedicated web portal would be operational shortly, serving as a one-stop-shop for those interested in the EIP. The web portal will be the first point of entry for requests to access the EFSD and technical assistance and it will also provide information on ongoing actions under the EFSD in Africa and the European Neighbourhood.

Calling the EIP ‘Europe’s voice in Africa,’ Jérémie Pellet, deputy chief executive officer of the French Development Agency said that the plan is important for Africa in that its three pillars would help facilitate investment and create jobs, in particular for young people and women. Meanwhile, Phoenix Capital Africa President Michel Abrogoua said that in Africa access to finance is one of the main obstacles facing young entrepreneurs, and this is where the EIP’s first pillar could play a central role, he said.

The EU’s External Investment Plan will unleash our partner countries’ business potential. It will create jobs and promote inclusive economic and social development.

Stefano Manservisi
Director General,
DG International Cooperation
and Development,
European Commission
Roberto Ridolfi, Director, Directorate General for Sustainable Growth and Development, European Commission, explained that the EIP does what many banks or investment institutions are unable to do because of its appetite for risk. Banks fear losing money when they invest in countries where the conditions are unstable. The EIP, on the other hand, can absorb these risks and is able to provide guarantees and risk-sharing for various types of investment.

Participants in the discussion emphasised the importance of supporting and enabling investment opportunities in African countries for jobs and growth, in particular for youth and women. To ensure optimal outcomes, participants stressed that public and private sector organisations should work together to identify new and innovative ways for MSMEs in Africa to access finance and support.

Business representatives said African governments should continue their efforts to provide legal certainty and stability, smooth and transparent administrative procedures with good governance, and to uphold social and environmental standards in public calls for tenders. Improvements in critical infrastructure could unleash productivity potential, with a view to creating jobs and growth.

It was underlined that with the right policy environment, the business sector is ready to scale up and facilitate investment in critical areas, to join a structured dialogue on the investment climate via the SB4A, and to support productivity and competitiveness to create prosperity in Africa.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Create platforms** to facilitate exchanges between business partners.
2. **Prioritise the provision of legal certainty and stability**, smooth and transparent administrative procedures with good governance, and social and environmental standards in public calls for tenders.
3. **Create a policy environment** that is conducive to investment.
4. **Public and private sector organisations should work together** to identify new and innovative ways for MSMEs in Africa to access finance.
5. **Reinforce policy and political dialogue** to capitalise on the key role played by actors on the ground.
6. **Conduct structured dialogue with the private sector** to identify key opportunities and constraints to investment, allowing for evidence-based policy making.
7. **Encourage digitalisation, a key** to economic growth; there should be a budget dedicated to digitalisation of agriculture, energy, health, education and other sectors.
8. **Create infrastructure to support new entrepreneurs** in the management of their businesses at the early stages so as to ensure the sustainability of their enterprises.
9. **Harness venture capital** to facilitate business development and job creation in Africa.
How to Benefit from the External Investment Plan

ABOUT
This practical, interactive session highlighted the operating principles of the European External Investment Plan (EIP) and encouraged participants to take advantage of its opportunities. It also presented a key element of the EIP - the innovative European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD) Guarantee. This new EU risk mitigation mechanism aims to stimulate investments in Africa, particularly from private investors. The discussion touched on how entrepreneurs in Africa and the EU can get involved in the EIP; the main business benefits of the plan; and potential guarantee products under the EFSD.

Moderator
Roberto Ridolfi, Director, Planet and Prosperity, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission

Speakers
Kay Parplies, Head of Unit, Investment and Innovative Finance, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Antti Pekka Karhunen, Private Sector and Trade, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Georges Beukering, Head, Investor Relations and Operations, Climate Investor One; Tim Turner, Chief Risk Officer, African Development Bank; Philip Moss, Head of Sustainable Development Investment Partnership (SDIP) and Blended Finance, World Economic Forum; Maria Shaw Barragan, Director, Global Partner Countries, European Investment Bank; Cathy Oxby, Chief Commercial Officer, African GreenCo; Camilla Otto, Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

SUMMARY
The session opened with a presentation by the European Commission on the main features of the EIP, in particular the operating principles of the new innovative EFSD guarantee. The EFSD will be composed of two regional investment platforms (Africa and the European Neighbourhood) and will combine blending activities with a new guarantee, to unblock bottlenecks to private investment by reducing the risks.

The new guarantee will have a number of investment windows under which partial guarantees will be provided to a portfolio of investments being made by public finance institutions and the private sector. With EU funds of €4.1 billion until 2020, the EFSD guarantee, along with regional investment platforms, is expected to mobilise up to €44 billion in additional investment by 2020.

The EFSD guarantee is the first of the EIP’s three pillars which offer an integrated approach: mobilising investments through blending and the guarantee as part of pillar 1; technical assistance to help partner countries attract investments by developing a higher number of bankable projects in pillar 2; and improving the investment climate and business environment in partner countries in pillar 3.
The panel discussion gave concrete examples of how to make use of the EFSD guarantee, in particular highlighting the financial innovations it can provide that enable private sector investments that would otherwise not be possible. Examples were presented on risk sharing, first loss or pari-passu guarantees, and also de-risking for reinsurance firms.

Outlining the current state of development and climate finance, Georges Beukering, Head of Investor Relations and Operations at Climate Investor One (CIO), said that there is too little institutional capital flowing into developing countries. In fact, too many investors are locked out because of perceived risk, and too few projects reach the operational stage due to their complexity and insufficient early stage funding.

CIO’s response is to combine blended finance with an innovative whole-of-life financing concept. In addition, climate fund management expertise is used to build better financing methods with catalytic environmental and social impact. CIO supports efforts in developing countries to create regulatory frameworks that support private investment, with a focus on renewable energy projects.

The organisation also facilitates early-stage development, construction financing, and refinancing to fast track renewable energy projects in developing countries. The European Commission contributes to the CIO development fund, tier 1 of the construction equity fund and provides guarantees for tier 2 capital, thereby helping to enable the implementation of fully financed and well-structured renewable energy projects.

Cathy Oxby, Chief Commercial Officer, African GreenCo, said that the SDG target of universal access to electricity by 2030 cannot be achieved without mobilising private sector capital through blended finance. “The efficient deployment of risk-tolerant donor capital can leverage significant private sector capital and achieve transformative change,” she said.

Oxby added that the current bilateral model of financing is insufficient, as it relies solely on the credit strength of a single off taker and because requiring governments to underwrite utilities’ obligations puts significant strain on sovereign balance sheets. Sector development should be done in partnership with utilities and governments, combining financial support with technical assistance and structured political dialogue to achieve sustainable market development. This is where the EIP has an important role to play.

Oxby outlined the key principles of a development finance institution (DFI) or multilateral development bank (MDB) working group on blended finance. These include additionality, to prevent concessions from undermining the market, and crowding-in, to contribute to catalysing market development and mobilising private resources. Other principles are the commercial sustainability of projects and that they should reinforce the market.
In the question and answer session that followed the presentations, businesses expressed interest in gaining access to the EIP. The European Commission highlighted that business would be able to engage with the EIP through eligible (pillar assessed) intermediaries, and access the new guarantee and investment support through regional investment platforms. A dedicated EIP web portal will be operational shortly, serving as a one-stop-shop for those interested. This portal will be the first point of entry for requests to access the EFSD and technical assistance, and it will also provide information on ongoing actions in Africa and the Neighbourhood.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Use donor funds** to access locked-out private capital.
2. **Establish structured private/public dialogue** to identify and remove key constraints to investment; SB4A will support this.
3. **Avoid reinventing the wheel** and back existing initiatives.
4. **Ensure the commercial sustainability of projects**, to avoid permanent dependency on long-term support.
5. **Ensure the market-compatibility** of incentives of project participants.
6. **Create practical solutions** to mitigate market risk and shift the onus away from host government support.
INVESTMENT PITCHES
Facilitating Investments within the Framework of the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative

ABOUT
The African investment landscape is changing rapidly and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with its bilateral partners – Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Tunisia – are shifting into top gear. Their moves are taking place within the framework of the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative, an initiative of the German G20-presidency 2017 that aims to promote private investment in Africa. BMZ has initiated reform partnerships in line with the Marshall Plan with Africa; the three countries which have expressed outstanding political will to reform are being funded to the tune of €100 million each. Pitching for investment in this session, these African countries discussed investment opportunities with international organisations, business and BMZ, along with current reform efforts and the need for targeted assistance. Reflecting on how these changes impact various sectors, the pitch outlined the new dynamics of investing in Africa, as well as tangible opportunities at the project level.

Moderator
Adwoa Banful, Strategic Partnership Manager, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), Ghana

Speakers
Günter Nooke, Commissioner for Africa, BMZ; Adama Coulibaly, Director of Cabinet, Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs, Côte d’Ivoire; Mohamed Hédi Oueslati, Head of Division for Investment, Ministry of Development, Investment and International Cooperation, Tunisia; Charles Adu Boahen, Deputy Minister of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Ghana, Pierre Frank Laporte, Country Director for Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, The World Bank Group

SUMMARY
The session opened with Günter Nooke, BMZ Commissioner for Africa, outlining joint efforts, both in the G20 Compact with Africa Initiative and the Marshall Plan with Africa, to increase the involvement of the private sector in Africa’s development. He also highlighted the improving investment climate in the three countries pitching for investment – Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Tunisia.

Nooke stressed the obligations of leading politicians to engage effectively with their youth populations, as well as with entrepreneurs and local and foreign investors. In particular, he highlighted the critical importance of providing youth with a 21st century education. The need for economic, legal and regulatory environments that are sufficiently conducive to doing business in a stable and prosperous fashion was emphasised too.
Outlining the ambitious goals of the Compact with Africa Initiative, Nooke said a central aim was to provide young people with up-to-date training and to establish a thriving business environment in the target countries. “Africa, including the three countries we are targeting, may have the biggest concentration of young people in the world, but without proper training this will be meaningless,” he said.

“By 2035, Africa will have the largest potential workforce in the world. With decent jobs and economic development, these workers will turn into the customers of the future. However, in the end, it is not governments that will create economic growth and jobs. It is the private sector,” Nooke stated.

Following the German representative’s address, participants from the three countries pitched investment opportunities to the participants.

Côte d’Ivoire
Stepping up to outline the opportunity for Côte d’Ivoire, Adama Coulibaly, the country’s director of cabinet in the economic and financial affairs’ ministry, said transport and energy were the two main sectors identified for investment. The country’s major ports - Abidjan and San Pedro - are already being extended and are due for completion by 2019. On the issue of energy policy, Côte d’Ivoire currently has a capacity of 2,200MW, but wishes to achieve over 4,000MW in order to supply countries like Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Mali with electricity. According to Coulibaly, a major advantage is that all its main projects have been developed within the framework of its National Plan for Development (PND) 2016-2020. The PND is an economic development document that is prepared in broad consultation with various stakeholders and development partners.

Ghana
Ghana is pursuing four broad reform areas to promote investment, namely structural, legislative & policy, economic and alignment. According to Charles Adu Boahen, Ghana’s deputy finance minister, the country’s goal is to develop world-class, business-friendly policies and legislation. Another priority is a focus on logistics at its main ports and to make loading and unloading processes as speedy as possible. In addition, Ghana has prioritised the cocoa industry for development. After Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana is the world’s second biggest exporter of cocoa beans, and the aim, according to Adu Boahen, is to process the cocoa within the country.
Tunisia
Mohamed Hédi Oueslati, from Tunisia’s Ministry of Development, Investment and International Cooperation, stressed the importance of peace and socio-economic stability, and the country’s efforts to ensure stable investments in the economy and infrastructure. Significantly, Tunisia is the only country in Africa so far to have harnessed the power of the wind.

Having listened to pitches from all three countries, Nooke stressed that reform partnerships are an important first step towards more private investments and improved framework conditions. The countries are not only demonstrating great political will to improve their business environments, but have already launched concrete reforms and improvements. He added that Germany was committed “to fitting target countries with updated and reliable training facilities and tuition”.

Meanwhile, African representatives confirmed their willingness to make the project successful by promising to harmonise and promote flexible business policies, fostering economic cooperation within and between countries, and to connect transport infrastructure in the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Ensure socio-economic stability.** A stable and secure business and investment climate is essential for the Compact with Africa Initiative to be viable and effective.

2. **Deliver training, particularly for the youth.** While Africa may have the largest population of young people in the world, without training this demographic dividend cannot be realised.

3. **Understand that entrepreneurs and investors need a legal and economic environment** that is conducive to stability and prosperity. The target countries – Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Tunisia – were chosen based on their efforts and political will to create a stable socio-political environment.

4. **Governments are not the main actors creating jobs,** so it is essential that policies support the private sector in delivering employment.

5. **Create African solutions for African challenges.** African ownership and self-responsibility for reforms are crucial. With its Agenda 2063, the African Union has already set the target for development in the coming years. The Compact with Africa Initiative and the Marshall Plan with Africa aim at supporting these goals.

6. **Invest in transport and energy infrastructure** in target countries. Connecting neighbouring countries like Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana is already a priority and should be accelerated.

7. **Harmonise judicial systems,** which would enable Europe and Africa to cooperate across a much wider economic area.
ABOUT

At this session, participants discovered priority programmes and initiatives to be implemented by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) to foster private sector development in Africa. Focusing on how the AfDB and the EIB plan to work with the European Union to implement the External Investment Plan (EIP) in Africa, the session highlighted a longstanding and increasing focus on private sector operations. It also showcased success stories of programmes implemented by both banks with support from the EU, and presented existing and new initiatives that are structured to leverage and complement the EIP.

Moderator
Shirin Wheeler, Senior Media Officer, European Investment Bank

Speakers
Pierre Guislain, Vice-President, Private Sector, Infrastructure & Industry, African Development Bank; Heike Ruettgers, Head of Division, Mandate Management Development & Impact Finance, European Investment Bank; Luca Lazzaroli, Director General, Deputy Head of Operations, European Investment Bank

SUMMARY

Pierre Guislain, Vice President, Private Sector, Infrastructure and Industrialisation, African Development Bank, noted that there is a strong complementarity between the activities of the AfDB and the EIB. With respect to carrying out the investment required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, he noted that purely public sector investment is easy and historically proven. Likewise, private investment alone is also straightforward. Where things become complicated, is when the public and private sectors come together, he said, adding that it is in the public-private space where de-risking instruments, like the EIP, had a crucial role to play.

One of the main challenges that entrepreneurs and businesses in Africa face is access to local currency but development banks, by and large, provide only forex lending. This needs to change as small, local businesses are often not equipped to deal with currency risk.

Highlighting the key issues of de-risking and blending finance, the moderator asked the EIB to clarify how it is addressing this issue, and what experience it can bring to the table to make the EIP a success. She also asked about the extent to which the European Commission’s Investment Plan for Europe (EC IPE) could provide a model for Africa.

In response, Heike Ruettgers, Head of Division, Mandate Management Development & Impact Finance, European Investment Bank, said the bank had been working in the area of de-risking in Europe for some time. Furthermore, since the EU introduced blending a number of years ago, the EIB has been working to make projects bankable. Until now, this was very much focused on public sector infrastructure projects, but the EIP has a much wider remit, from micro-enterprises to larger projects. “This is the ambition of the EIP and it is very much welcomed by institutions like the AfDB and the EIB, allowing us to enter into segments where we haven’t been able to operate before,” she said.
Enabling a much larger scope in terms of the type of investments is the ambition of the EIP and it is very much welcomed by institutions like the AfDB and the EIB, allowing us to enter into segments where we haven’t been able to operate before.

Heike Ruettgers
Head of Division, Mandate Management Development & Impact Finance, European Investment Bank

Ruettgers continued that with the investment facility it manages on behalf of its member states, it is already able to take on local currency risk and can provide micro-finance and financing to SMEs in local currency. Since 2014, the EIB has gone even further under the investment facility, whereby member states have endowed the bank with an impact financing envelope of around €500 million. This has made it possible to take on a higher level of risk for stronger development impact, and do more in the areas of agriculture and women’s economic empowerment, in particular with Boost Africa, a joint initiative of the EIB and AfDB. Boost Africa aims to harness the continent’s potential and create opportunities, through enabling and enhancing entrepreneurship and innovation, creating new and quality jobs for youth, and contributing to the development of an efficient entrepreneurial ecosystem. The initiative is also working to address the financing gap at the earliest and riskiest stages of enterprise creation, and develop and strengthen the skills and expertise of young entrepreneurs.

Guislain said the EIP is an opportunity to address critical niches that cannot be reached on the purely private side, or the purely public side. The AFDB does not have its own in-house blending instrument, so the bank can use the EIP strategically to enter into structured dialogue with the European Commission, and other partners, about how best to use resources to achieve the greatest development impact, he said.

Meanwhile, Luca Lazzaroli, Director General, Deputy Head of Operations, European Investment Bank, agreed that the EIP addresses a current gap. One of its strengths, he said, is that it is not one product, one sector, one counterpart – it is a platform that can be modified. It draws inspiration from the EC IPE and is about taking money that would otherwise be used for grants. However, it is not simply being used for grants, but also for other financial products that are construed around the notion of guarantees and diversified risk. “It is up to all of us to make the best of the EIP,” he said, because it paves the way towards much greater risk absorption.

On creating economic opportunities for young people, Guislain noted that technical assistance is very important. He said that there is concern that the introduction of concessional elements in the commercial space could be undermining, so the challenge is to design products that avoid this. “Blending requires the identification of market failures and steps to address these,” he said.

The aim is to deal with the overlapping space between public and private financing and to expand the market without distorting it, Guislain said. Ruettgers concurred, stressing that the aim of EIB is not to give risky projects an easy ride – it is still necessary to look at the impact that projects will have in real terms. However, there is a clear desire to place capital where it can have the greatest impact, and where this can be measured, added Guislain, who stressed that “projects must be bankable”.

Investment Pitch: African Development Bank and European Investment Bank
In response to a question from the floor, Lazzaroli explained that the EIP is structured to work through institutions like the AfDB and the EIB which, in turn, use it to work with client institutions in client countries on a portfolio of projects. Ruettgers added that an advantage of the portfolio approach is that it is scalable. “The aim is to come up with scalable proposals for the EIP operational board, so we can accelerate our actions in a programme-based approach, because time is lost by working from project to project,” she said. On this score, it is important to be close to the market and to know who the final beneficiaries are, so that these can be grouped as efficiently as possible.

Asked about the value of the EIB-AfDB partnership with regard to the implementation of the EIP, Lazzaroli noted that the two institutions have a strong and developing partnership to address complex issues. “The combination is very good, and brings know-how to the African market,” he said. Guislain agreed, but stressed that as the EIP is new, there is a need to think about how to use the instrument to strengthen the partnership and support venture capital and start-ups on the African market. “The EIP creates an opportunity to accomplish things that would otherwise be impossible, due to their complexity”, he said.

“The EIP creates an opportunity to accomplish things that would otherwise be impossible, due to their complexity.”

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **De-risking instruments** are needed in the public-private investment space.
2. **Place capital** where it can have a clear and measurable impact.
3. **Use the EIP** to address critical areas that cannot be reached with traditional instruments.
4. **Use the EIP** to strengthen the EU-Africa partnership and support venture capital and start-ups in Africa.
5. **Strengthen the EIB-AfDB partnership** to ensure that both institutions have the greatest possible impact.
Towards Boosting Youth Employment: Investing in Sustainable Cocoa Value Chain in West Africa

ABOUT

Cocoa, or ‘black gold’ as it is known, is one of the most important agricultural products and sources of foreign currency in West and Central Africa. Indeed, the region accounts for more than 70% of global cocoa production. The European Commission stands with Germany and other EU and AU Member States to develop partnerships and investment models that benefit the entire cocoa value chain in West Africa. Working with private and public sector finance institutions to develop and grow the market for equitable and ethical cocoa production, the most important goal is to halt deforestation, provide farmers (especially smallholders) with a decent income, and create job opportunities throughout the value chain. This session examined: the role that African and EU governments and the private sector can play in educating consumers and giving incentives to companies to create fairer and more sustainable cocoa value chains; specific interventions required to protect natural resources; how to make trading conditions fairer; and current and future investment opportunities.

Moderator
Jean Marc Anga, Executive Director, International Cocoa Organisation

Speakers
Roberto Ridolfi, Director Directorate General for Sustainable Growth and Development, European Commission; Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Côte d'Ivoire; William Agyapong Quaitoo, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ghana; Reinhard Junker, Deputy Head, Policy Issues of Development Cooperation with Africa, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development Germany; Yao N’Goran Pompidou née Brou Oussou, President, National Federation of Women Cocoa Producers; Andrew Brooks, Head of Cocoa Sustainability, Olam Africa; Nicolas Dutois, Corporate Partnerships Manager, Max Havelaar; Patrick Poirrier, President, CEMOI Group

SUMMARY

Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Côte d’Ivoire, opened the session by highlighting the correlation between high levels of unemployment in the region and the current, highly publicised migration of young people looking for opportunities elsewhere. “Cocoa has been produced the same way for 50 years but things must and will change with the support of public-private partnership,” he said. He also underlined the need for modernisation of the whole agricultural sector in relation to climate change.

William Agyapong Quaitoo, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ghana, emphasised the severity of youth unemployment. “Most of our youth today – whether they have graduated from higher education or not – do not have jobs. Cocoa production is an opportunity for them.” He recommended Ghana as an excellent place to invest due
to its political stability, qualified manpower and the large-scale opportunities in cocoa production - Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana produce 60% of cocoa globally.

Roberto Ridolfi, a director in the European Commission’s DG for Sustainable Growth and Development, acknowledged that Europeans are the main importers and consumers of cocoa. As such, the EU is determined to strengthen partnerships with Africa, and to improve the investment climate in relation to agriculture. A contribution of €4.1 billion from the European Commission’s External Investment Plan is earmarked for this. Despite the inherent high risks in agricultural production, in cooperation with national investment and foreign private sector banks, investment from the EU should help to ensure there are appropriate tools to assess smallholder creditworthiness.

Many cocoa producers lack the financial resources, technical knowledge and, in particular, entrepreneurial skills to use modern technologies and expanding agricultural markets to boost their income. Reinhard Juncker, deputy head of African policy issues at Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, outlined the G20 initiative Rural Youth Employment. The initiative focuses on Africa and has a specific target of creating five million training opportunities, and a million jobs for young people by 2022. “Germany is strongly committed to working with our African partners and within the European Union to make the youth dividend a reality. The cocoa value chain offers huge opportunities if it can be transformed towards more sustainable and fair production, processing and trade.”

GIZ supports 350,000 cocoa farmers in West and Central Africa with essential training on how to better plan their cocoa and food production. More than 60% have opened accounts with rural banks, and their savings will serve as collateral for new loans. Almost a third of these new banking customers have been granted loans for cocoa and food production. With this additional income, small businesses are better able to cope with fluctuations in cocoa prices and yields.

Patrick Poirrier, President, CÉMOI Group, highlighted the importance of consumer awareness and sharing wealth along the entire value chain: “We work closely with cocoa producers on the ground as well as their ultimate customers. It is essential to ensure that the value created in cocoa production is shared fairly at every stage. This will attract and encourage youth to work in the industry.” Consumer awareness regarding the situation of cocoa farmers in Africa must also be improved. “All consumers should feel responsible and be aware that behind every piece of chocolate, there is a producer,” he said.

The cocoa value chain offers huge opportunities if it can be transformed towards more sustainable and fair production, processing and trade.

Reinhard Juncker
Deputy Head, Policy Issues of Development Cooperation with Africa, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany
Nicolas Dutois, Corporate Partnerships Manager, Max Havelaar, revealed how his organisation provides bonuses to protect cocoa farmers from price fluctuations. Olam Africa is also playing its part. Andrew Brooks, Olam’s head of cocoa sustainability, said his firm has been supporting cocoa producers and cooperatives and restoring farms since 2009, with around 100,000 farmers taking part in the programme.

Yao N’Goran Pompidou née Brou Ouossou, President, National Federation of Women Cocoa Producers, explained that her organisation has 53 cooperatives and 10,080 members. “Like many cocoa producers in Côte d’Ivoire, I cannot read well, but I can earn my living working with cocoa producers.” In Côte d’Ivoire women have never had access to land, but thanks to the work of her organisation, this obstacle has been removed. “The future belongs to youth and I believe cocoa production will boost employment because land never betrays its users,” she said.

Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Côte d’Ivoire, said the €44 million that the EU has earmarked for agricultural assistance will help to support the value chain and ensure sustainable production. However, projects must be implemented through a joint committee of the World Bank, BMZ, the AfDB and local institutions.

The role of digitalisation and modernisation of agriculture also surfaced as a way to draw more youth to the sector, and to improve efficiencies. Sangafowa Coulibaly agreed that digitisation is very important, particularly to streamline payment transactions. It can also reduce the risk of violence against cocoa purchasers. “We cannot keep on producing cocoa as we did in the 1960’s,” he said.

Germain Kouassi, a participant in charge of quality at a cocoa factory, stressed the importance of infrastructure and transport in commercialising cocoa in West Africa. Poirrier agreed, raising the issue of poor road infrastructure as damaging to the cocoa value chain. However, William Agyapong Quaitoo from Ghana’s ministry of agriculture and livestock, said the cocoa board spends US$300 million in rehabilitating and improving roads in order to allow the easy transportation of products from farms to seaports.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Improve the living conditions and value chain of cocoa production to attract youth.
2. Introduce digitalisation to improve transactional efficiencies and safety in the sector.
3. Transform the cocoa sector towards more sustainable and fair production, processing and trade.
4. Address price fluctuations and work towards a minimum price to guarantee a decent income for cocoa farmers.
5. The agribusiness system must function with investment from both the public and private sector with a focus on partnerships.
6. Consider climate change as a reality. Invest in food security, health and education.
7. Hold agribusiness firms accountable for the living conditions of farmers.
8. Be aware of the working conditions of young girls that work in cocoa production.

“The future belongs to youth and I believe cocoa production will boost employment because land never betrays its users.”

Yao N’Goran  
President, National Federation of Women Cocoa Producers
Unlocking Investment for Regional Infrastructure to Accelerate Job Creation (PIDA)

ABOUT

The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is an important vehicle for expanding infrastructure investment. In outlining PIDA's achievements and insights gleaned to date, including its impact on job creation, this session aimed to build a strong economic case for accelerated investment in future projects. Discussions between various stakeholders centred on how to enable and leverage investment for selected PIDA projects that facilitate job creation. The discussion focused on: what PIDA means for the youth and job creation in Africa; proposed strategies to unlock private investments for infrastructure; determined concrete actions to increase the bankability of infrastructure projects; and sought to leverage investment for projects.

SUMMARY

This session began with a presentation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), its achievements and future challenges. Business and government representatives participating in the session presented PIDA as a catalyst for the role of regional infrastructure in political, economic and social development as well as a driver of job creation and Africa's socio-economic transformation. In his keynote address, Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, emphasised the importance of prioritising projects at the continental level, given the complexity of infrastructure development. As a continental framework for infrastructure development, PIDA has the ability to deliver.
It is fundamentally important to prioritise projects at the continental level, given the complexity of infrastructure development. As a continental framework for infrastructure development, PIDA is the answer to the prioritisation issue.

Ibrahim Assane Mayaki  
Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency

The NEPAD CEO also discussed PIDA progress to date and presented the different instruments developed by the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Agency to accelerate its implementation. In particular, he focused on the Service Delivery Mechanism, the Continental Business Network (CBN), and the 5% Agenda initiative. Mayaki mentioned the outcomes of NEPAD reports on de-risking infrastructure investment for Africa, which provide recommendations to both public and private stakeholders on strategies for low-risk investment and NEPAD is adopting a corridor approach to regional infrastructure projects, regional corridors would shape future industrial and social development and interaction across the continent.

Towela Nyirenda-Jere, a programme officer dealing with regional integration, infrastructure and trade at the NEPAD Agency, presented five PIDA projects: the Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme, the Ethiopia-Sudan Interconnector, the Kinshasa-Brazzaville Bridge, the Dar-Chalinze Toll Road, and the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya Power Interconnector.

At the subsequent panel discussion, Cheikh Bedda, Director for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission (AUC), said that the AUC, in collaboration with the African Development Bank, has established the Institutional Architecture for Infrastructure Development in Africa as a tool for planning, monitoring and evaluating PIDA implementation. Africa and Europe share common interests in infrastructure development, he said, and the EABF is an ideal platform to implement projects that improve the living conditions of Africans.

Roberto Ridolfi, from the European Commission’s DG for International Cooperation and Development, emphasised the EU’s commitment to supporting the AU member states through the implementation of PIDA. Based on the European experience, he highlighted that cross-border infrastructure, especially the PIDA transport corridors, would form the backbone of Africa’s successful integration. Ridolfi commended NEPAD for its work on the PIDA Job Creation Toolkit, which would help to create more jobs through infrastructure development.

Investment in infrastructure will help to create jobs for Africa’s rising youth population. On this note, Amadou Oumarou, Director for Infrastructure and Urban Development, AfDB, said the bank expects to create 25 million additional jobs within the next five years through its investments, most notably in infrastructure. Over the past few years, the bank has approved about US$40 billion worth of infrastructure projects and has collaborated with other stakeholders to de-risk and provide guarantees for projects across the continent.

In turn, Georg Schmidt, BMZ Commissioner for Africa, reiterated Germany’s commitment to cooperating with the African Union on PIDA implementation. In addition to technical cooperation, Germany has already contributed €777 million to finance regional infrastructure in Africa. Schmidt emphasised the importance of close cooperation between the different funding and technical partners, and cited the G20 Compact with
Africa as an initiative capable of mobilising private sector resources for infrastructure development. Schmidt concluded by highlighting the importance of political commitment from AU member states to incorporate all PIDA projects in national budgets, as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of cross-border infrastructure projects.

Fonsys Executive Director Mamadou Mbaye said that the main difficulty facing infrastructure project development in Africa was how to improve the economic landscape for investment by increasing country ratings. In this regard, the European Union could help by providing better ratings through guarantee schemes to the African project owners. Mbaye also suggested that local commercial banks have a significant role to play within the project cycle. The EU External Investment Plan could be a tool to assign good EU ratings to projects in Africa, he said.

The EU and AU will continue to promote intra-African trade and advance greater economic integration by jointly implementing PIDA as the strategic continental framework to develop cross-border infrastructure for energy, transport, ICT and transboundary water management. They will also jointly support preparation activities and mobilise African and European public and private investments for PIDA, other infrastructure projects, and AU Agenda 2063 flagship projects. Both parties acknowledge the potential of PIDA and infrastructure development in job creation and Africa’s development. Furthermore, the EU and AU will cooperate to form a new PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA-PAP 2020-2030), which will pave the way for sustainable and inclusive infrastructure development over the next decade.

The EC and AUC committed to strengthening cooperation, growing and replicating existing successful initiatives and launching concrete, new partnerships that will accelerate infrastructure development, with a special focus on PIDA projects.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Build on the achievements of the EU-Africa partnership** by having a common goal, putting more projects into action and increasing youth participation through job creation.
2. **Create more infrastructure** to support the economic transformation of African countries.
3. **Strengthen cooperation between the AU and EU**, scaling up and replicating existing successful initiatives like the PIDA Service Delivery Mechanism (SDM).
4. **Unlock institutional and financial constraints** in order to strengthen national and regional capacities for the implementation of PIDA.
5. **Increase the participation of national financial institutions** in infrastructure projects.
6. **Mobilise public and private investments** for African infrastructure and its sustainable structural transformation for the benefit of both continents.
7. **Deepen the partnership** between the European and African private and public sectors to boost investment for PIDA via the Continental Business Network (CBN).
8. **Harmonise policies and regulations** for infrastructure development, promoting the use of local content and industrial integration to create local jobs particularly for the youth.
INVESTING IN JOB CREATION FOR YOUTH
High-Level Panel: Investing in Job Creation for Youth

ABOUT

By 2050, Africa’s youth population is expected to double but for the estimated 10-12 million people entering the workforce each year, only three million formal jobs are created. Recognising this as a problem that isn’t going away, the high-level panel Investing in Job Creation for Youth set out to tackle two of the most pressing issues facing the African continent: migration and youth unemployment.

From the need for investment in vital infrastructure, like energy and transport, to focused education and training and access to finance, it quickly emerged that job creation needs to be viewed from a macroeconomic perspective. With this in mind, the high-level panel debated some of the key issues and business-enabling policies required to harness Africa’s demographic dividend to drive inclusive transformation and create sustainable jobs.

For Europe and Africa to benefit, the panel underlined the need for greater collaboration between large and small actors on both continents, as well as innovative approaches to entrepreneurship, skills development and matching techniques. It also explored possibilities for future partnerships that lead to inclusive and sustainable job creation, in particular for youth and women. Current constraints were explored such as whether existing policies were sufficient to harness Africa’s demographic dividend and whether business and public institutions were doing enough. Priority sectors for meaningful job-generating investments, such as agriculture, were identified too.

Moderator
Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Chief Co-Moderator, 6th EU-Africa Business Forum

Speakers
Akinwumi Adesina, President, African Development Bank; Albert Yuma, President, Business Africa; Stefano Manservisi, Director General, European Commission, Directorate for International Co-operation and Development; Luca Lazzaroli, Director General, Deputy Head of Operations, European Investment Bank; Issad Rebrab, President, Director General Cevital; Parvinda Vir, CEO, Tony Elumelu Foundation; Wadzanai Motsi-Khata, Zimbabwean Youth Lab Entrepreneur

SUMMARY

Akinwumi Adesina, President of African Development Bank (AfDB), opened the panel with an important point - that job creation in Africa needs to be viewed from a macroeconomic perspective. “Africa is growing, but the issue is how inclusive that growth process is,” he said.

In Africa, where youth unemployment levels are among the highest in the world, Adesina acknowledged that there is a “major jobs crisis”. However, he argued that “if the continent is able to fix this particular problem, it could boost GDP by US$500 billion a year”.
A strong believer in empowering the youth to create jobs for themselves, the AfDB is focused on driving entrepreneurship, developing skills, especially for SMEs, and enabling access to finance. Through its Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy, the bank is committed to creating 25 million jobs and reaching 50 million Africans over the next 10 years.

A challenge identified by Victor Harisson, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission, is public spending in schools. The average time an African youth spends in school is just five years, and only a few governments are able to finance professional training to a satisfactory level, he said. This has resulted in three out of five young people being unemployed in Africa.

Stefano Manservisi, Director General, Directorate for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, stressed the importance of jobs being sustainable and “more than decent”. Europe, he said, was striving to be the best partner for Africa and was looking to identify common solutions, involving all stakeholders, that would deliver benefits for both continents.

Echoing the points made by Manservisi, Luca Lazzaroli, Director General, Deputy Head of Operations, European Investment Bank (EIB), stressed the need for sustainable youth employment as an essential element in the fight against poverty. “At the EIB, when we say jobs, we don’t mean underemployment, we don’t mean underproductive employment we mean growth, that is environmentally sustainable and inclusive,” he said.

The EIB wants to fund more private sector projects and has identified a strong and growing need for private equity and venture capital investments. Lazzaroli said the EIB recognised the importance of microfinance and is currently working with over a hundred organisations to promote growth of very rural projects.

Another issue that all agreed on was the need for vital infrastructure and Lazzaroli stressed that the EIB is focused on improvements in energy, sewage, communications and more. One such initiative is the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific €800 million Migration Package, which recognises the effect of displacement, and has high-impact initiatives to address it. The EIB will also shortly be launching an infrastructure package.

Later in the session Issad Rebrab, President, Director General, Cevital, returned to what he saw as Africa’s most pressing issue – the need to accelerate investment in large-scale infrastructure. “The number one challenge is the electrification of Africa and the interconnection of its power grids. The second imperative is to interconnect all Africa’s
transport networks so that goods, especially fresh produce, can be more easily traded,” he said. That it takes a month and a half today to deliver a candle from Europe to central Africa was just one example of the current limitations. Rebrab also called for “massive” investment in education.

A civil society view came from Wadzanai Motsi-Khata, Zimbabwean Youth Lab Entrepreneur, who is working with others to develop a set of recommendations to bring extraordinary and inspired ideas to fruition. This is essential if Africa is to catch up and Europe is to continue to grow. Citing examples of people in Europe and Africa trying to connect, she argued that, “the current business and policy infrastructure are inadequate to inspire interconnected learning across the region.”

Parvinda Vir, Chief Executive Officer, Tony Elumelu Foundation, argued for greater investment in entrepreneurship, which she believes could be taught. But she warned that this should not be limited to the urban elite. On a continent where, in many countries, as many as 90% of people are self-employed, there is a need to democratise entrepreneurship, especially in post-conflict areas. Vir said there needs to be “less thinking and talking about how to empower Africa’s extraordinary talent and human capital, and more doing”. The Foundation has already invested US$100 million to support and empower 10,000 entrepreneurs.

As the panel drew to an end, moderator Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, turned the spotlight again to the AfDB’s Adesina. With 66 million young people in Africa today living on less than US$2 a day, he stressed that many youth are stuck in rural areas in zones of economic misery. Where the AfDB sees a huge opportunity is in agriculture. With the right investment and commitment, Adesina said Africa’s future billionaires would not come from the oil and gas sector but from agriculture. He had this very clear message for potential investors and the continent’s youth: “Agriculture is cool and it’s the fastest way to turn things around.”
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Investment in vital infrastructure** including electricity, transport, communication and sewage, the number one imperative. In Africa, 645 million people don’t have access to electricity, and as Adesina put it, “no economy can grow in the dark”. Although the AfDB has invested US$12 billion over the past five years in energy, more can and must be done.

2. **Strengthening transport links** between neighbouring countries and beyond would help to dramatically reduce delivery times for goods. This is particularly important for countries producing perishables like fruit and vegetables.

3. **Education and training is hugely important**. Governments must ensure that children spend more hours in school with a strong focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Youth literacy levels, the lowest in the world, also need focused attention. When it comes to training, there is consensus that with the shift to digitalisation, this should focus on “jobs for the future”.

4. **Agriculture is the single biggest opportunity for youth job creation in Africa**. To put this in perspective, the average age of farmers in Africa is 65, yet 70% of its population is under the age of 30, and each year there are 25 million jobseekers. What is more, Africa spends US$35 billion on food imports, which could be grown and processed on home turf. Sustained investment in agriculture, including tech-driven agro-processing solutions, would not only help to deliver food security and create jobs, it could deliver the highest returns.

5. **Entrepreneurship can and should be taught** but it requires the development of specific strategies. It should also not be limited to urban areas.

6. **Access to finance requires a shift in mindset**. Institutions like banks need to become more youth centric and stakeholders need to work together to de-risk financial markets so that young people can borrow money easily. There is also a growing need for micro-finance, especially in rural areas.

7. **Jobs need to more be more than decent**. They need to be inclusive, environmentally sustainable and with a special focus on youth and women.

8. **Predictable, stable and simple conditions for enabling business are a must-have**. Public and private sector actors need to work together to ensure, for example, good governance, transparency in taxation, security and application of the rule of law. One suggestion is to draw up a manifesto that is adopted and signed by all policymakers.
Youth and Women: A Driving Force to Deliver Inclusive Growth

ABOUT

With an estimated 30 million young people seeking employment every year in Africa, decent job creation for youth and women is a top priority. The African Union’s Agenda 2063, and its ten-year implementation plan, aims to reduce unemployment of youth and women by 2% a year; it also notes that young women are particularly vulnerable, with 35% not in employment, education or training versus 20% of men. Encouragingly, however, young people in Africa are establishing leading businesses with a strong social edge, and with the ability to create meaningful jobs. The discussion panel not only shone a light on some of the big picture issues, it highlighted some notable success stories.

Moderator
Tania Habimana, Chief Co-Moderator, 6th EU-Africa Business Forum

Speakers
Stefano Manservisi, Director General, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Ms. Parminder Vir, President, Tony Elumelu Foundation; John Wali, Chief Executive Officer, Junior Achievement Kenya; Thione Niang, Co-Founder, Solektra/Akon Lighting Africa; Vérone Mankou, Chief Executive Officer, VMK Congo

SUMMARY

This thought-provoking panel discussion focused on the relevance of education and training facilities currently available, the status of women in African society, the attitudes and views of the youth, and the role of the diaspora in developing the continent. The goal of the session was to agree recommendations on how to raise awareness among African youth, to kickstart Africa’s economic growth and to make it clear that no success can be achieved without being fully involved in the development of the continent.

“Anglophone and francophone countries should cooperate more to ensure that the African educational system is upgraded in a way that builds the whole continent.”

Vérone Mankou
Chief Executive Officer, VMK Congo
Vérone Mankou, Chief Executive Officer, VMK Congo, spoke about the different outlooks towards entrepreneurship that exist in anglophone and francophone Africa. This has led to different possibilities in relation to job opportunities and the provision of educational facilities. Since colonial times, he noted, people from English speaking countries have been trained “to get their hands dirty”. As a result, more people attend vocational training colleges than universities, leading them into work as electricians, plumbers, mechanics, qualified hairdressers, construction workers and so on. In francophone countries, on the other hand, young people become scholars and in many cases civil servants. For Mankou, a surprising result of the francophone approach is that young people are more risk averse and more reliant on government support. In conclusion, he argued that anglophone and francophone countries should cooperate more to ensure that the African educational system is upgraded in a way that builds the whole continent. Speaking frankly, he said: “The real issue that plagues education in Africa is inadequate content. In reality, it deals more with theories than practical skills. As a result when young people leave school they possess skills and knowledge that have nothing to do with the society they live in and the rest of the world.”

On the subject of women, Parminder Vir, President, Tony Elemelu Foundation, outlined the general perception of women in African societies. “Women are seen as daughters, sisters or mothers and the tasks they are entrusted with defines their status; they are just householders.” For this reason, most women do not attend school, and if they do “society has already designed for them the appropriate occupation - secretaries, teachers in nursery schools, nurses or midwives.” Nevertheless, Vir stressed that women play a huge role in the family and are “on the frontline when it comes to retail trade in Africa”.

One participant said the youth today hold political leaders highly accountable for the conditions and opportunities in Africa, which began in the 1990s with the arrival democracy and multiparty systems. “It became increasingly necessary for young Africans to belong to a political group and be active within the party.” When political clashes became armed conflicts, leaders relied heavily on getting youth onside. This caused social divisions and riots, which disrupted the education system and created a sense of entitlement that destroyed the ideal of the self-made man. The result, is that “young Africans mistrust the ruling class and are disappointed in them.”
Another participant said that many in the African diaspora no longer believed that governments in their home countries would enable them to establish a small or medium-sized company. “When they manage to make it abroad, only a few Africans are willing to return to their homeland and reinvest their earnings,” he said. The panellists agreed that no matter where young Africans find themselves in the world, they are acutely aware of their under-qualification. To ensure economic growth and prosperity, Africa needs to rethink its education policy and invest in training facilities. However, despite the challenges, Africa’s youth are strong believers in the assets, potential and opportunities on the continent.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

To meet the challenges ahead the panel agreed on a number of steps:

1. **Make school attendance compulsory** for all children.
2. **Improve the quality of education at all levels** to increase learning and skills.
3. **Raise awareness**, particularly in francophone Africa, so that meaningful and lucrative careers are possible through entrepreneurship, rather than a traditional civil service route.
4. **Improve the choice** of options available to students between vocational training and comprehensive academic education.
5. **Take into account women’s specific needs** while designing training schemes.
6. **Restore hope, trust and communication** between the government, political parties, youth and the diaspora.
7. **Provide young people** with adequate, updated and practical know-how.
8. **Ensure support** and scholarships are granted on merit.
9. **Improve collaboration** between governments and banks to make financing accessible to education projects.
10. **Provide expert assistance** and training to small entrepreneurs.
Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) and Skills for African Youth

About

Achieving the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for people-centred strategies that put education, skills development and economic empowerment at the forefront of development efforts. Hosted by the NEPAD Agency, which currently supports over 40 countries, with backing from the Spanish Agency for International Development and Cooperation, this session provided a platform to exchange insights and practical solutions for women and youth development and economic empowerment. Among these: strengthening of Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) systems; building skills to harness business opportunities along agribusiness value chains; and grassroots economic empowerment, especially for women.

Moderator
Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency

Speakers
Cristina Díaz Fernández-Gil, Director of Cooperation with Africa and Asia (AECID), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain; Georg Schmidt, Regional Director of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel, German Development Cooperation; Ndeye Rosalie Lo, Advisor for Gender, Civil Society & Parliamentary Affairs, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency; Sana Jatta, Director of the East and Southern Africa Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); Patrick Meinhardt, Head of Politics, Bundesverband mittelständische Wirtschaft e.V. (BVMW); Katherine Nyangui Ichoya, Chief Executive Officer, FEMCOM; Jussara Matos, Coordinator of Employment Management Unit, Instituto de Emprego e Formacao Profissional (IEFP), Cape Verde; Adolfo Brizzi, Director of Policy and Technical Advisory Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); Mahawa Kaba Wheeler, Director of Women & Gender Development, African Union Commission; Gabriel Cremades Ventura, Head, Department for Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain
In addition to looking at what works elsewhere, technology should also be home grown and adapted to our reality.

Katherine Nyangu Ichoya
Chief Executive Officer,
FEMCOM

MODERATOR

Moderator Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, an economic development programme of the African Union, began by outlining two key challenges to strengthening TVET systems to develop and empower youth and women. According to Mayaki, the huge numbers of people and the diversity of sectors involved have made it difficult to reach solutions, despite the mechanisms and strategies already in place. While acknowledging the importance of taking a high-level approach to TVET strategies, he said the issue also needed to be tackled at the grassroots. “Whatever happens, we need to ensure impact at the local level,” Mayaki said.

Following Mayaki’s introduction, Georg Schmidt, Regional Director of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel, German Development Cooperation, focused on the tangible impact that appropriate training for young people can have on sustainable development. He clarified that training must reflect the economic needs of each country, and go beyond university degrees to focus on skills and qualifications needed on the ground. Recognising the challenges that political instability brings to the business environment, he called for companies investing in Africa to do so with full understanding of local realities.

The empowerment of women was another central theme. While much has been achieved, there is still more to do in Africa to achieve gender equality, said Cristina Díaz Fernández-Gil, Director of Cooperation with Africa and Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain. In many countries, women are still confined to work in the informal sector and are prohibited from owning property. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, over 50% of women in sub-Saharan Africa are employed in agriculture, but just 5% are landowners. Women also work longer hours and earn less than male counterparts. However, women are more involved in entrepreneurial ventures than men. In fact, in sub-Saharan Africa rates of female entrepreneurship are among the highest in the world.

Recognising this, Spain is working with bodies like NEPAD to empower women and youth. In 2007, a €20 million fund was established and has financed 79 projects in 38 African countries, benefiting over a million women through income generating activities (IGAs). In addition, two business incubators have been adopted this year to support women’s entrepreneurship.

In outlining some of the details and challenges of these projects, Ndeye Rosalie Lo, Advisor for Gender, Civil Society & Parliamentary Affairs at NEPAD, said that innovation and transparency had been crucial. A monitoring and evaluation department had been established with a set of seven criteria for ensuring transparency, including a poverty and gender index. As a result, it had been possible to select countries impartially and objectively. Also from NEPAD, Senior Coordinator Fati Nzi-Hassane hoped that by ensuring the competitiveness of SMEs through inclusive partnerships, it would be possible to create more decent jobs.
Continuing on the issue of women’s empowerment, Katherine Nyangui Ichoya, Chief Executive Officer of FEMCOM, an association supporting women in eastern and southern Africa, said: “Everything starts with a mindset”. In particular, she wanted to see a stronger focus on technology training for women in the agriculture sector. “In addition to looking at what works elsewhere, technology should also be home grown and adapted to our reality,” she said.

Sana Jatta, Director, East and Southern Africa Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), agreed, arguing that south-south cooperation should be leveraged more. The focus should be on solutions for Africa, and wherever possible examples should come from the continent rather than from Europe.

Jatta pointed to the huge numbers of young Africans (some 10 to 12 million) entering the labour force each year. Although the agricultural sector provides some jobs for young people in rural areas, there is still migration to urban areas. SMEs could create jobs for young people but a major constraint is access to finance. Jatta called for more to be done to help finance young people, who are considered too risky an investment. In addition, he said investment has to go hand-in-hand with technical assistance. Business plans should be drawn up with the specific objective of investing in young people with achievable goals. Crucially, there must be good quality and relevant education, and any investment should be preceded and followed by training.

Facing questions from the audience on how IFAD can support young entrepreneurs and what instruments are available, Jatta said that for many years the fund had helped youth to produce and process commodities. He also highlighted a US$200 million fund established in Côte d’Ivoire that can be accessed for direct support or used as a guarantee.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Invest in quality, relevant education.** The focus should not just be on attaining a university degree but also on quality education, skills and training relevant to economic needs.
2. **Address TVET strategies** at a high level but also at the grassroots.
4. **Tailor financial instruments** to youth, and ensure that investment goes hand in hand with technical assistance. Crucially, there should always be pre- and post-investment training.
5. **Review existing legislation** to ensure more widespread participation, such as the ability for women to own property.
6. **Develop policy approaches** that are socially and culturally oriented.
7. **Encourage south–south cooperation** but ensure that solutions are developed in and adapted to the local context.
8. **Tackle gender inequality** and issues like domestic violence head on and at all levels.
9. **Establish bodies that coordinate and empower** youth and women at a regional level.
10. **Challenge perceptions about entrepreneurship**, which should be viewed as a viable and desirable pathway.
Solution Masterclass: Matching Skills Demand and Skills Development for Employment in Africa

ABOUT

By 2050, one third of the world’s youth population will live in Africa. Fast-growing economies require flexible skills with strong investments in human capital to educate, train and support people throughout their working lives. There are numerous challenges ahead. Among these: connecting the workforce to the needs of the economy; integrating youth in the labour market; promoting initiatives and enterprises; establishing agile systems that address industrialisation and technological advances; and creating opportunities for workers to be part of the transformation. Yet today Africa is still not making the most of its human capital and is underprepared for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. In a world driven by artificial intelligence and greater automation, there is clear demand for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects as well as information technology and communication (ICT) skills. Critical thinking, creativity and emotional intelligence will also be needed.

Moderator
Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Chief Co-Moderator, 6th EU-Africa Business Forum

Speakers
Patricia Gieska Keringa, Chief Executive Officer, The Job Factory, Congo; Amadou Daffe, Chief Executive Officer, Gebeya, Ethiopia; Gilles Roland, Chief Executive Officer Active Invest, France and Côte d’Ivoire

SUMMARY

Many countries in Africa suffer from a mismatch between the skills needed by the labour market and those offered by the workforce. The participants in this discussion identified ways to avoid potential gaps between skills demand and supply, so that businesses have the workforce they need to grow, enabling them to contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development on the continent.

One way of meeting this challenge is for companies to provide training programmes aimed at developing specific skills. Training should also be adapted to women’s needs and supported by management to increase their employability and career development.

The benefits of integrating entrepreneurship in curricula within higher education and vocational training programmes were also highlighted. The EU-funded programme, EduLink, is a case in point as it integrates entrepreneurship skills and education within the curriculum of existing university programmes with positive results in creating sustainable new companies.

Vocational training and experience of the dual model system developed in Europe, and other parts of the world, could be shared between Europe and Africa and this should be explored.
Another way of meeting the challenge would be to create additional exchange programmes between African schools, universities, enterprises and technical institutes with European counterparts. The speakers noted that mobility between African and European students and employees would contribute significantly to the standardisation of skills and should be encouraged.

A number of time-tested programmes were highlighted, including the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme. This cross-border exchange programme gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from established small businesses in participating countries. Also highlighted was ErasmusPro, part of the European Commission’s Youth Initiative. ErasmusPro is a new activity within the Erasmus+ programme dedicated to supporting extended apprentice placements abroad. Under this initiative, 50,000 apprenticeship placements, lasting six to 12 months, will become available.

Also mentioned as an example of an initiative that promotes skills development was the project ‘Mobilities for professionals and qualified employees of MSMEs’ (MobiliseSME). Funded by the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation – PROGRESS 2016-2017, this project analyses opportunities for cross-border mobility of employees of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the EU and the potential benefits. The aim of the project is to assess the potential for a European mobility scheme for MSME employees, like the Erasmus Programme does for university students. A similar approach could help to address the skills mismatch in Africa.

Many countries in Africa suffer from a mismatch between the skills needed by the labour market and those offered by the workforce.

Patricia Gieska Keringa
Chief Executive Officer,
The Job Factory
The participants called on public authorities in Europe and Africa to work with private bodies to promote entrepreneurship and to develop strategies that facilitate an easy transition from school to work. They also called on governments, the private sector and educational entities (formal and non-formal) to work together to support quality education and training for youth and women, in order to improve their employability. In particular, women need specific support to access training that develops and builds confidence to run a business.

Participants stressed the need to develop vocational training modules and informal education systems adapted to market needs. They also called for the better integration of education systems with business, through mechanisms that enhance work-based learning, such as apprenticeship schemes and TVET programmes. Such initiatives would help to reduce skills gaps and enhance employment opportunities for youth in rural and urban areas.

Best practices from European Dual System Professional Training programmes, combining education with apprenticeships, could be tested, adapted and transferred to Africa with the support of European enterprises, particularly SMEs. However, it was stressed that training should be flexible for students, who often need to work and have other responsibilities and obligations.

Educational curricula should tackle private sector needs, provide students with entrepreneurial skills and include company placements as part of the course. Mentorships that focus on skills development can also provide participants with the skill sets required to integrate into the labour market, and these should be promoted. The participants also noted that support is needed for joint skills development initiatives between the private sector and educational institutions, and should be pragmatic in meeting labour market demands.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Create exchange programmes** between African schools, universities, enterprises and technical institutes with European counterparts.
2. **Promote public-private sector cooperation** to develop efficient strategies that allow an easy transition from school to work.
3. **Support quality education and training** for youth and women.
4. **Integrate the education system** in Africa with the business world.
5. **Adapt vocational training** to suit the needs of the market.
6. **Ensure training schemes are flexible**, so that students can work around them.
7. **Incorporate the private sector perspective** in educational curricula.
Solution Masterclass:  
Big Companies Helping Small Companies

ABOUT

The role that big business can play in supporting or partnering with young entrepreneurs presents an exciting opportunity for both Europe and Africa. Areas where collaboration could go a long way to helping small companies include: accessing markets and contracts; creating the right commercial networks; building technical capacity and securing financial support. Typically, these resources are controlled by big business and there are insufficient opportunities for young entrepreneurs to broker the strategic partnerships required to advance and scale. The discussion touched on what an EU-Africa framework for a partnership between big business and youth business could look like. It also considered how to build on current best practices and how an online platform could enable and support the framework, while incentivising investment from established EU and African companies. The outcome of the session included the drafting of a Big Business-Youth Business framework.

Moderator
Uzoamaka Madu, Founder, What’s in it for Africa?

Speakers
Olawale Ominiyi, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Irofit; Zipporah Gatiti, Founder and CEO, Taste of Kenya; Sadamoudou Kaba, Head of Department, Orange, Côte d’Ivoire; Femi Olaloku, Senior Adviser Digital Banking, Ecobank Group; Michael Kottoh, Managing Partner, Konfidants

SUMMARY

According to a recent study by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, there are 364 million Africans aged between 15-35, and by 2045 the number of African youth is expected to double. Meanwhile, 10-12 million new young workers seek employment every year; 60% of Africa’s unemployed are young adults and this proportion is growing. Today’s Africa’s youth are better educated, but many still lack essential business skills.

This solution masterclass discussed the way forward for big companies to collaborate with early stage start-ups faced with the challenges of accessing markets and contracts, creating the right commercial networks, building technical capacity and securing financial support. Typically, these strategic resources are controlled by big business, and young entrepreneurs have too few opportunities to broker essential partnerships. The panel argued that young entrepreneurs in Africa rely on support from experienced big business, which has a responsibility and role to play in creating the right opportunities.

The panel discussed the benefits of various interventions and programmes provided by large companies to smaller businesses. Graduate programmes are one way to acquire business skills by offering graduates a fast track to relevant experience, skills and knowledge. Mentoring of entrepreneurs by executives from more financially established businesses is another valuable exercise. Zipporah Gatiti, Founder and CEO, Taste of Kenya, noted that she has been able to add value to the production chain by simply cutting out middlemen and linking small-scale coffee farmers directly to the roasters. As a result, this has led to a fairer price and faster payment for farmers, as well as traceability of origin for consumers.
Because of structural disconnect between big and small business ecosystems, there is an important role for ‘connectors’, and ‘collaboration engineers’ - players who specialise in bringing big corporates and small enterprises together. Unfortunately, existing collaboration models tend to thrive initially but fail over time. Consulting firms and start-up accelerators should think more creatively about how to drive collaboration in a more sustainable way.

Larger companies like Orange or Google can offer accelerator, training, matchmaking programmes and even co-working spaces, ensuring a faster take-up of skills transfer and knowledge. Key lessons that small businesses gain from these solutions include insight into successful business process management and experience to develop their own sustainable strategies. Indeed, access to innovative business solutions developed over years by big business can create quick and easy market entry points for young start-ups. What is crucial, however, when requesting financing and assistance, is the ability to present a concise and clear profile of achievement, relevant experience and business potential.

Femi Olaloku, Senior Digital Banking Advisor, Ecobank Group, pointed out that banks could certainly help small companies harness digital solutions in Africa. However, big business also has an opportunity to discover interesting and creative insights from young entrepreneurs or graduates, who often spot new trends or opportunities that a larger company might miss. Furthermore, their potential to access an untapped demographic may offer potential for new opportunities. Olawale Ominiyi, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Irofit, is one such innovator. Irofit provides a mobile point-of-sale that helps African SMEs process payments in real time and manages operations, even without an Internet connection.

Both big business and small business can benefit from knowledge exchange, that leads to mutually beneficial partnerships. This view was endorsed by an executive from Nestlé, who pointed to the importance of building partnerships based on shared values, which made the “development of a partnership longer-lasting and more meaningful for both sides”.

The panellists suggested an online platform to enable matchmaking and collaboration opportunities, thereby incentivising investment from big EU and African companies.

The session closed with the announcement that a Big Business-Youth Business framework would be drafted shortly.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Assistance is needed** to address the challenge of accessing markets and contracts.
2. **Technical capacity building** and funding are important requirements.
3. **Small companies need to show** their experience before asking for equity-free loans.
4. **Accelerator programmes** offer a potential solution.
5. **Banks must help small businesses** to take advantage of digital banking solutions.
DIGITAL ECONOMY
High-Level Roundtable on the Digital Economy

ABOUT

Investment in the digital economy that is mutually beneficial for both Europe and Africa is an investment in the future. It is therefore crucial that the two continents work together to build strong, cooperative partnerships that deliver digital businesses and jobs for young people. This high-level roundtable examined ways to build a digital bridge between Africa and Europe for cross-sector benefits that give rise to sustainable jobs for young people. It also considered how African companies can access the EU digital single market, and whether now is the time for something similar in Africa. The discussion covered barriers to affordable broadband connectivity, and how investment in digital infrastructure would be boosted through the External Investment Plan (EIP). Other points for discussion were: how businesses can boost digital skills on both continents; possibilities for digital entrepreneurship with a strong social impact; policies to help African and EU start-ups scale and become global leaders and; mainstreaming digitalisation across governance, agriculture, energy, health, education and financial services.

Moderator
Sasha Rubel, Regional Advisor for Communication and Information, UNESCO, Senegal

Speakers
Andrus Ansip, Vice President, European Commission; Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission; Steve Collar, Chief Executive Officer, SES Networks; Boutheina Guermazi, Practice Manager, ICT, World Bank Group; Pierre Guislain, Vice President, Private Sector, African Development Bank; Bruno Mettling, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Middle East and Africa, Orange Group; Daniel Jaeger, Nokia Market Unit Head, Central, East and West Africa; Cina Lawson, Ministry of Post and Digital Economy, Togo; H.E. Moustapha Mamy Diaby, Minister of Telecommunications and NTIC, Republic of Guinea; Hadja Ouattara-Sanon, Minister of Post and Digital Economy Development, Burkina Faso; Ruben Nieuwenhuis, Director, StartupAmsterdam; Gunter Nooke, Personal Representative of the German Chancellor for Africa and BMZ Commissioner for Africa; Mohamed Anouar Maarouf, Tunisian Minister of Communication Technologies and Digital Economy; Bruno Nabanagone Koné, Minister of Communication and Digital Economy, Cote d’Ivoire; Habib Bamba, Director, Deloitte Côte d’Ivoire; André Bouffioux, CEO, Siemens Belgium-Luxembourg; Moez Chakchouk, Chairman and CEO, Tunisian Post; Leonard Cox, CEO QWANT, Odunayo Eweniyi, Co-founder & COO Piggy Bank, Nigeria; Jérôme Gruber, Chief Digital Officer, French Development Agency; Eldrid Jordaan, CEO GovChat; Luca Lazzaroli, Director General, Deputy Head of Operations, European Investment Bank; Shiletsi Makhoefane, Head of Government & Industrial Relation for Africa, Ericsson; Mokgabudi Lucky Masilela, CEO, ZACR; Linda McAvan, Member of the European Parliament for Yorkshire and the Humber, European Parliament; Francis Meston, Executive Vice-President, Atos; Ursula Owusu-Ekuful, Minister Communications, Ghana; Michael Pittelkow, Executive Development Cooperation, SAP; Robert Nkuna, Director General, National Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, South Africa; Loszlo Toth, Head of Public Policy, GSMA Europe; Arouna Modibo Touré, Minister of Digital Economy & Communication of the Republic of Mali; Alexandre Zapolsky, Chief Executive Officer, Linagora; Amina Gelen, Member of the Make-IT Alliance.
This roundtable discussion focused on three topics: the role of the digital economy in African countries; investing in the digital economy; and the digitalisation of all sectors. Speakers highlighted the fact that the digital economy is a driver of innovation for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Various studies were cited showing that a 10% increase in Internet access would boost per capita GDP growth by 2.8%. Meanwhile, a 20% increase in ICT investment would generate a 1% increase in GDP.

In light of this, participants called for the digital economy to be made an integral part of EU-Africa cooperation at both business and government levels. In particular, Daniel Jaeger, Head of Market Unit, Nokia Central, East and West Africa, said: “A strong and effective partnership between the private and public sectors is needed to develop the digital economy in Africa.” Meanwhile, Shiletsi Makhofane, Head of Government & Industrial Relations Department for Africa, Ericsson, stressed that digitalisation must be pushed throughout Africa, because it provides added value to all sectors of economic activity.

Andrus Ansip, Vice President and Commissioner for Digital Single Market, European Commission, was fully aware of the important role that the digital economy will play in achieving sustainable development goals in Africa. As a result, the European Commission is supporting Africa’s digital development with €44 billion, in an effort to make digital technology cheaper and more accessible. Cina Lawson, Minister of Post and Digital Economy, Togo, noted that Africa is investing in digital infrastructure. “African countries have been investing in ICT, for example in the laying of fibre optic to boost digitalisation, and the continent is seeing some positive changes,” she said.

Bruno Nabagne Koné, Minister of Communication and Digital Economy, Côte d’Ivoire, highlighted the nationwide efforts of the Ivorian government and private companies to improve connectivity throughout the country. However, more needed to be done. “As the world is developing at a rapid pace, and digital is used in every sector, significant investment is needed,” he said.

There was broad consensus that the EU and Africa should reinforce their partnership in order to boost the digital economy and mainstream digital technologies and services in all fields of cooperation. Pierre Guislain, Vice President, Private Sector, Infrastructure & Industry, African Development Bank, said that all partners must join forces to develop digitalisation. “The digital economy is not a national issue but a global one,” he said. It was agreed that there are five priority areas: promoting affordable broadband connectivity; developing digital skills, with a particular focus on youth and women; supporting digital entrepreneurship; mainstreaming digitalisation in sectors such as governance, agriculture, health, energy, financial services, and education; and cooperating on cybersecurity, privacy, open data, big data, and data protection; promoting responsible business practices.

Speakers noted the important role that digitalisation plays in providing cost-effective solutions to ongoing development challenges. It promotes social inclusion by removing physical boundaries between people.
and enabling access to vital services that improve people’s livelihoods. African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy Amani Abou Zeid called digital “the driving force of economic and social progress”. She added that Africa needs real development of its digital infrastructure in order to facilitate the empowerment and inclusion of the broader population.

Stressing digitalisation’s potential to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, speakers called for an increase in the financial envelope for public funding of projects. Public policies and incentives should also be established to enable the development of start-up hubs, and ensure support for start-up ecosystem builders (such as incubators and accelerators). In particular, there should be improved access to capital, so that innovative ideas can be scaled across all sectors of the economy.

Participants argued for increased investment in e-Governance services by: creating enabling legal frameworks; interconnecting public registries; opening public data; and supporting digital entrepreneurship in developing e-Governance applications. Investment is also required in digital services infrastructure, particularly the capacity of governments to securely store data with the highest level of protection and privacy, as well as open data and big data. Related to this, some participants highlighted the need for cybersecurity measures to strengthen trust in digital services, including the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy. One possibility would be better coordination of cybersecurity agencies and stakeholders, in order to better protect both networks and online content.

Another focus of investment should be education and training. Linagora CEO Alexandre Zapolsky said that each year the continent needs more and more engineers to teach digital skills. Francis Meston, Executive Vice President, Atos, agreed: “People, not technology, create solutions so we must focus on training.” This will ensure that the digital and ICT sectors have the trained workforce needed to contribute to sustainable growth, boost youth employment, foster new African local actors, and support the aspirations of the African Union 2063 Agenda.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrate the digital economy into EU-Africa cooperation at both business and government level.
2. Reinforce the EU-Africa partnership in boosting the digital economy and mainstreaming digital technologies and services in all fields of its cooperation.
3. Develop and enforce enabling institutional, legal, and regulatory frameworks to boost investment, make broadband connectivity affordable for all, and create growth and jobs for young people in Africa.
4. Support private sector investment in backbone, last-mile connectivity with a focus on underserved, rural areas.
5. Mainstream digital skills into education and training curricula, including initiatives teaching coding skills to African youth, with a special focus on girls and women.
6. Establish an EU-Africa digital cooperation platform, involving all relevant private and public stakeholders.
7. Foster the development of local digital solutions in response to global challenges by harnessing the creativity of young people, thereby helping to create employment.
8. Create safe online and offline spaces for women in order to promote women’s participation and mentorship in the ICT sector.
9. Deploy digital technologies and services to better manage scarce resources such as energy and water and contribute to the fight against climate change.
10. Use digital technologies and services in order to support small farmers to increase their production and income by providing better market access and eliminating intermediaries;
11. Embrace the opportunities created by mobile payments and mobile loans across the African continent to increase financial inclusion of citizens.
12. Invest in e-Governance services by i) creating enabling legal frameworks; ii) interconnecting public registries; iii) opening public data, and; iv) supporting digital entrepreneurship in developing e-governance applications.
13. Promote harmonised e-Commerce rules based on recognised standards.
14. Deploy digital solutions in order to facilitate the use of remittances from the African diaspora to encourage sustainable investments in Africa.
15. Promote responsible business practices in all fields of the digital economy, including the prevention of corruption, fair labour standards, environmental protection, and respect for human rights.
16. Develop enabling public policies and create incentives for the development of start-up hubs and support start-up ecosystem builders such as incubators and accelerators;
17. Encourage the development of south-south and north-south exchanges to ensure young enterprises can develop sustainable business models and exchange best practices.
Digital Economy: Investing in Digital Start-ups

ABOUT

With its forward-thinking Digital for Development (D4D) approach, the European Commission has highlighted the role of digital technologies and services as a powerful tool for growth, jobs and sustainable development. A major challenge facing start-ups, however, is access to capital. In this session, involving two panel discussions, investors, entrepreneurs, public and private stakeholders identified challenges to investing in Africa and means of tackling these potential barriers. The debate focused on finding ways to boost venture and angel capital for African and European start-ups, while also encouraging international partnerships and expansion. The session examined existing policies in the EU and Africa, which could support companies in scaling up, and assessed existing gaps.

Moderators

Tomi Davies, President, African Business Angels Network; Ruben Nieuwenhuis, Chief Executive Officer, StartupAmsterdam

Speakers

Paolo Ciccarelli, Head of Unit, Cities, Local Authorities, Digitalisation, Infrastructures, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Grégoire de Padirac, Investment Manager, Orange Digital Venture Africa, Dakar; Issa Sidibe, Chief Executive Officer, Comoé Capital; Gianluca Dettori, Chairman, Primomiglio; Maria Del Amparo De San José Riestra, Director, Start-up Europe Latin America; Bruno Nabagne Koné, Minister of Communication and Digital Economy, Côte d’Ivoire; Cina Lawson, Minister of Post and Digital Economy, Togo; Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium and Minister of Development Cooperation, Digital Agenda, Telecom and Postal Services, Belgium; Katrin Bornemann, ICT Digital, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; Lars-Erik Forsberg, Deputy Head of Unit, International Relations, Directorate-General for Communication Networks, Content and Technology, European Commission; Cheikh Bedda, Director, Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission; Cedric Atangana, Founder, WeCashup; Luis Verdeja, Executive Director, Jobartis; Alexandre Zapolisky, Chief Executive Officer, Linagora; Anderson Assui Konan, Directeur de cabinet adjoint du Ministère de la Promotion de la Jeunesse, de l’Emploi Jeune et du Service Civique, Côte d’Ivoire

SUMMARY

This well-attended session focused first on the challenges of securing investment and then, in a second panel, on the strategies and policies needed to help start-ups in the EU and Africa to scale.

Panel 1: Boosting Capital and Partnerships for Start-ups

Moderated by Tom Davies, President, African Business Angels Network, this interactive discussion saw leading investors, European and African entrepreneurs and established public and private stakeholders identify the barriers to investing in Africa, and solutions to overcome them. Increasingly, the importance of venture and angel capital is viewed
Digital Economy: Investing in Digital Start-Ups

African entrepreneurial ecosystems struggle to access capital, especially at the seed and early stages. European counterparts, on the other hand, easily access capital for mature markets like the USA, but also struggle to get funding for Africa’s emerging markets.

as crucial to grassroots projects, especially in rural areas. The debate considered ways to boost this, for both African and European start-ups. Picking up on a dominant theme of the EU-Africa forum held in Brussels in June 2017, it was argued that start-ups from both continents could benefit from international partnerships and expansion. Panellists were quizzed on the role of government in funding the start-up ecosystem, which sectors should be prioritised for investment, and how the investment barriers varied in the EU and Africa. Although both African and European start-ups face investment constraints, they vary. For example, African start-up ecosystems struggle to access local capital, particularly in the early stages. On the other hand, European start-ups can access capital easily for mature markets like the US, but struggle to get funding in less established markets. In the early stages, when capital is scarce and credibility yet to be established, access to talent is a struggle for start-ups across the world. Participants also wanted to hear about how start-ups could be supported in fragmented markets with high broadband costs and poor infrastructure.

Panel 2: Creating Policies to Enable Scaling Up

This session focused on specific policies and strategies for start-ups and was moderated by Ruben Nieuwenhuis, Director, StartupAmsterdam. Participants considered the existing landscape and what more can be done to drive international growth. Panellists faced questions about the role of government in strengthening a tech-focused start-up ecosystem. For example, one idea is to design and implement an African digital single market, which is interoperable with that of Europe. Panellists agreed that it was also important for stakeholders to play an active role in understanding the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, robotics and blockchain. Blockchain, a distributed database technology that underpins cryptocurrencies like bitcoin, can help to make supply chains more efficient and remove powerful middlemen. This could prove transformational for new business models. Another priority, and focus of the panel, was the importance of helping women to become more financially autonomous, as this would give their entrepreneurial activity a boost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Increase the availability** of private and public funds to support the start-up ecosystem in Africa and Europe. A number of options are available such as the creation of joint Africa-EU funding schemes from government sources and/or private corporations.

2. **Foster the emergence and development** of digital crowdfunding platforms specific to high growth African start-ups looking to expand into Europe.
3. Improve the quality of research and encourage exchanges between European and African academics.

4. Design and implement a tax and regulatory environment that meets the needs of African start-ups. On a pragmatic level, create and support European-African task forces at government level to create a digital-friendly tax and regulatory environment, and highlight African success stories.

5. Develop an African digital single market that could become interoperable with the EU digital single market.

6. Facilitate access to talent, capital and contacts. Special focus needs to be given to funding women that are engaging in entrepreneurial activity. One possibility could be to extend the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme to start-ups from African countries.

7. Make education about entrepreneurship mandatory in schools and universities on both continents.

8. Develop cooperative schemes between African and European entities that would help African start-ups to draw talent back from the European diaspora.

9. Build and expand on existing digital content for teaching entrepreneurship. Massive open online courses (MOOCs), for example, sourced from European projects on the subject of entrepreneurship, could be made available openly to African universities.

10. Tailor training and education programmes for those interested in investing in African start-ups and markets.

11. Promote jobs in start-ups as a viable career pathway.
How to Finance and Scale your Digital Start-up

ABOUT

In this solution-oriented session, digital start-ups explored ways to kick-start their business with a number of experts. Participants were encouraged to seek advice on various important topics including access to markets and capital, taxation, talent and skills development, and more. Discussion in the groups covered: the public policies needed for start-ups to scale; how digital start-ups from Africa and the EU can cooperate; access to information about the various competitions, foundations, programmes and funds available for accessing finance; and specific requirements of digital start-ups in the African context.

Moderator
Antonio Grilo Co-Founder, Start-up Europe Africa Network

Speakers
Alain Kouadio, General Confederation of Enterprise, Côte d’Ivoire; Ben White, Co-Founder, VC4A; Tom Davies, President and Founder, ABAN/Lagos Business Angels Network; Audra Shallal, Managing Director, BOSS Consulting; Celestino Alves, Founder, iTBOON; Jan Schwaab, Head of GIZ Programme, Make IT in Africa

SUMMARY

Antonio Grilo, the co-founder of Start-up Europe Africa Network, opened the session and briefly outlined the role public and private sector organisations could play in financing start-ups. The outcome of the discussions will contribute further to the development of the African Start-up Manifesto initiated by the Start-up Europe Comes to Africa network.

Following Grilo’s introduction, the session was organised into a workshop with three solution-oriented discussions focusing on the most challenging issues in getting start-ups off the ground: securing finance; skills development; prohibitively high taxes; and access to markets. The groups reported their recommendations and conclusions back in a lively, interactive discussion.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Financiers are urged to provide sector-specific solutions.** The reality and requirements of every sector are quite different. Finance institutions should grant allowances and support to start-ups according to their line of business.

2. **Review taxation for start-ups.** Tax rates for start-ups are often prohibitive, and can be the difference between a company succeeding and failing. Governments should review the tax burden for start-ups at the local level.

3. **Improve access to technology infrastructure and digital opportunities.** Access to technology is not yet global. Access costs and performance levels vary widely. For example, in some places 2G is still the norm, whereas elsewhere 3G or even 4G networks are available.

4. **Reduce or remove red tape and step up administrative assistance.** Formalities and approvals are burdensome and often prevent start-ups from working efficiently. A lot of effort and time is required to receive the necessary approvals, something that could be easily resolved with more resources and efficiency.

5. **Shift mindsets.** Positive messaging and information about start-ups should be increased. People should know what a start-up is, how it works and how it can benefit society by, for example, creating jobs.

6. **Increase peer-learning between African and European start-ups.** Exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge could really benefit young companies. Stakeholders should strive to build connections between companies on both continents to share relevant experiences.

7. **Mentors are needed.** Business experts have a lot to offer, and should be more involved in sharing experience with the younger generation. Concrete case studies would help, as well as adequate and sustained guidance.

8. **Design a start-up structure that is built for scale.** As an overarching theme, participants agreed that well-structured and organised start-ups had a better chance of funding.

9. **Education about start-ups is essential.** Understanding what a start-up is and what it does should begin at primary school. It is important to make this a process, so that the notion of a start-up becomes embedded in the culture. Parents and society at large should be educated too about the value of launching a start-up. All this can be achieved through training, mentoring and internship programmes.

10. **Education must consider the reality on the ground.** The education system in Africa today is generally based on European models. But it is important to consider what works in Europe, and then analyse whether it really works for Africa.
Doing Business in the 21st Century: eGovernment Solutions as Prerequisite for Economic Competitiveness

ABOUT

Governance, and the role of eSolutions and eGovernment in improving the landscape for doing business and achieving economic growth, underpins the EU-Africa partnership under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. The overarching goal, which eGovernment and digital innovation can help to achieve, is a public service that is both accountable to its people, especially the vulnerable and youth, and focused on business. Against this backdrop, the session on Doing Business in the 21st Century drew on the experience of pioneering European and African countries that have been using digitalisation to deliver a more investor friendly environment. The discussion was positioned in the light of the implementation of the new EU Digital4Development approach, which also feeds into other instruments like the European External Investment Plan’s third pillar and the AU Agenda 2063’s flagship programme, the ‘Pan-African E-Network’.

Moderator
Daniel Schaer, Ambassador, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Speakers
Väino Reinart, Undersecretary of State for Economic and Development Affairs, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Stefano Manservisi, Director General, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Melanie S. Tijjenda, Deputy Director, Enterprise Software and Portal Development Office of the Prime Minister of Namibia; Priit Kongo, Chief Executive Officer, Estonian ICT cluster; Alec Fokapu, CEO, Fiftyfor

SUMMARY

This panel was a lively discussion about the extent of digitalisation today both in Europe and Africa, its relevance to economic growth and how it is currently being implemented. Given high mobile phone penetration (80.8%, according to 2016 data from the International Telecommunication Union), there was a particular focus on the relevance of digitalisation efforts to Africa’s youthful population.
Europe and Africa need to work together to establish reliable and sustainable databases to ensure that governments can provide efficient services for their populations.

A European lesson in digitalisation came from Estonia, the most northerly of the three Baltic states, which restored independence in 1991. One of the most economically successful of the EU’s newer eastern European members, Estonia is the only country in Europe, where digital legislation is only now coming into force, to be fully digitalised.

Väino Reinart, Undersecretary of State for Economic and Development Affairs, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attributed the country’s success to the size of its population – much smaller than, say, France or Germany. Outlining Estonia’s shift to digital, Reinart said: “The very first step of the whole process starts by giving all citizens a digital ID to record the status of individuals.” From there it is about building a digital picture of the person throughout their life, from the schools they attended to the organisation they worked for and the time they retired.

According to Reinart, digitalisation had brought the government closer to the people and helped to deliver greater administrative efficiency by reducing corruption, saving time and money.

An African perspective came from Melanie S. Tjijenda, Deputy Director of the Enterprise Software and Portal Development Office of the Prime Minister, Namibia. Like Estonia, Namibia has a relatively low population; it is also the most digitalised nation on the African continent, a process that it began in 1999. Today, Namibia is, for example, one of the few countries in Africa to have digitalised the national population register with birth, ID, marriage and death registers consolidated under one profile.

Elsewhere in Africa, Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire have also made headway. In Nigeria, with its 150-million strong population and thriving mobile phone market, digitalisation has helped to dramatically increase tax revenues. Speakers agreed that other nations could stand to benefit.

Meanwhile, among francophone members of the West African regional body ECOWAS, Côte d’Ivoire is the only country to have fully digitalised its education system. Viewed as a digital success story, today students are issued with a personal identification number and pay registration fees and receive examination results online.

In Namibia, Tjijenda argued that due to the lack of human contact implicit in doing business online, a major hurdle is trust. Schaer, the event’s moderator, acknowledged that this too had been a challenge for Estonia. He stressed: “Trust is gained by implementing a transparent and user friendly system. Each citizen owns their own information not the government!” As a matter of urgency Priit Kongo, CEO of Netgroup, said that, “Europe and Africa need to work together to establish reliable and sustainable databases to ensure that governments can provide efficient services to their citizens.”

The importance of government commitment to digitalisation and sharing of information between countries was underlined. Among the advantages are narrowing the gap between the ruling class and electorate, and ensuring stronger, fairer, more inclusive involvement for all citizens. Participants agreed that the youth, in particular, would benefit from serious, sustained digital investment, which could boost growth, and as a result jobs, while helping to save time and energy. As technology is already integral
Doing Business in the 21st Century: eGovernment Solutions as Prerequisite for Economic Competitiveness

To young people’s lives, participants argued it would be easier to excite them about ‘the [digitalisation] deal’.

In short, along with transport infrastructure, it was widely agreed that digitalisation could boost economic activity, drive growth and jobs and bring people closer together.

Greater cooperation and knowledge sharing between countries like Namibia, Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire in Africa and Estonia in Europe, as pioneers in digitalisation, could help to accelerate progress. Tjienda, for one, said that with Estonia as a partner, Namibia could be a “driving force in promoting widespread digitalisation on the continent”.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Begin with the basics.** A good starting point is to get the national population register in order, starting with the digital consolidation of births, deaths, marriages and the assignment of a digital identity to all citizens. Start moving services to the Internet.
2. **Make data easily accessible.** Data today is a commodity, so Africa and Europe should work together to create reliable, sustainable databases. A first step would be to update and digitalise public administration data sources including records on national census, civil status, immigration, security, and more.
3. **Build partnerships to raise awareness.** Countries that have already made progress with digitalisation should work together and share information with others.
4. **Lower taxes on IT devices.**
5. **Invest in infrastructure.** From transport to communication networks, many countries still cannot afford 3G, so significant investment is needed in infrastructure. One-stop service centres are a good way to efficiently provide services.
6. **Build digital skills.** As a matter of urgency, digital literacy must be prioritised in schools, and should be a requirement for many jobs.
About

The European Commission invited 50 EU and 50 African-based digital entrepreneurs to participate in a digital start-up fair, organised as part of the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum. Start-ups had the opportunity to showcase their services and technology to investors and decision-makers and attend a number of parallel events dedicated to entrepreneurship, digital economy, renewable energy and agriculture. Ten entrepreneurs of exceptional quality were selected to pitch their innovations to a jury of investors. These are described in more detail in the next section.
ABOUT

Through a competitive process, ten promising digital start-ups were selected and given just three minutes to pitch their ideas to a jury of investors. The session was designed as an opportunity for successful candidates to hone their skills and take their product or service to the next level - and potentially find new business partners from the audience. The ten start-ups were awarded a diploma during the Awards Ceremony at the close of the day.

Moderator
Gary Stewart, Director, Wayra

Jury
Issa Sidibé, General Director, Comoe Capital; Gregoire de Padirac, Investment Manager, Orange Digital Venture Africa; Amparo de San Jose, Director, Business Angels Network, IESE Business School; Audra Shallal, Managing Director, BOSS Consulting; Gianluca Dettori, Chairman, Dpixel; Ruben Nieuwenhuis, Director, StartupAmsterdam; Ben White, Co-Founder, VC4A

SUMMARY

The following innovative solutions were pitched to the jury and participants of the session.

Single Spark ‘Business in a box’ (The Netherlands): This revolutionary app, coined the FeedCalculator, generates affordable quality feed recipes from locally available ingredients. Livestock holders have 70% feed costs, and this FeedCalculator was specifically developed to address how to reduce expenditure. It empowers farmers to source quality feed from locally available ingredients for the lowest price. The app provides a three-step mixing recipe at the lowest local costs. Pilot projects have already shown savings of up to 30-40%. Innovatively, the application is able to function off-grid after it is downloaded.

Visio Green Agriculture (France): A multipurpose sensor that records physical data (air, soil etc) capture, through a management app, and represents an interesting data source for farmers. Initial investment outlay is €200-300 with consumable costs at €20-30 per year.

Opisms (Côte d’Ivoire): A management app for use in medical treatment and injection management. The target audience is mothers and their children, company health departments and travellers. So far, the app has 200,000 users who pay a 1,000 XOF subscription. The company asked for an investment of US$2 million.

M’Care Health (Nigeria): An app, which can be used in rural hospitals and healthcare management.
Matibabu (Uganda): An accelerated blood testing app to speed up the process of testing and results was the innovation of this start-up.

Medixus (UK/Nigeria): Nigeria has a ratio of one doctor per 100,000 patients. This app pools information from all general practitioners locally. The available data research has been self-funded, but this start-up requested €500,000 to continue their work.

Chalkboard Education (Côte d’Ivoire / Ghana): In Africa, universities lack the capacity to be able to accept 150 million students. This dedicated app provides adapted downloadable study material. Final development of the app requires an investment of €200,000.

Pay Genius (South Africa): This is a one-stop solution (toolbox) for customised payment solutions for SMEs. The operation has established an office in Paris to facilitate planned entry into the international market.

AIRINOV (France): This firm is a leader in transforming data and imagery from drones, into actionable advice for farmers (fertilisation advice, crop damage).

TESPACK (Finland): A company that specialises in mobile energy with a vision of making everyone energy independent; its aim is to help users ‘stay powered and connected anytime, anywhere!’

I.T. Grapes (Tunisia): An e-monitoring and smart automation system that helps farmers to better manage water resources used in agriculture.

DRONAMICS (Bulgaria): Lowering air cargo costs by 50% with drones that can carry 350 kilogrammes over 2,500 kilometres, cheaper than any aircraft ever!
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
Enabling and Leveraging Investments in Sustainable Energy in Africa

ABOUT
The pressing need for investment in sustainable energy in Africa was the focus of this high-level panel discussion, where participants deliberated on current trends and priorities for the sector. Attended by some 150 people, contributions to this debate were of a particularly high quality. The session showcased successful examples of private-public cooperation that can potentially be replicated and developed further. Among the topics discussed were: how to share knowledge on innovative business and financing models; ways to strengthen public-private cooperation to improve the business environment and de-risk private investments; and accessing support to leverage investments in sustainable energy.

Moderator
Felice Zaccheo, Head of Unit, Sustainable Energy and Climate Change, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission

Speakers
Stefano Manservisi, Director General, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner Infrastructures and Energy, African Union Commission; Ousmane Sylla, Ambassador of the Republic of Guinea to the EU and Focal Point for renewable energy; Luca Cosentino, Executive Vice President, Eni; Amadou Hott, Vice President Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth, AFDB; Andrew Alli, President, CEO AFC; Astria Fataki, Founder Energy Generation

SUMMARY
Home to some of the sunniest countries on the planet and an extensive, windswept coastline, the case for renewable energy in Africa, where today just 30% of people have access to electricity, can no longer be ignored.

“Although investing in renewables is already a reality, more can and must be done. It’s no longer an option,” said Felice Zaccheo, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, the moderator of this session. As Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission, put it in her opening address: “It is unacceptable that we are still at this point in Africa, when it comes to energy.”

Africa needs energy that is accessible and affordable for all, and Abou-Zeid called for a multi-sector approach. Africa is a competitive continent, she said, but fulfilling its potential in all areas is inextricably linked to meeting its energy requirements.
On a similar note, Stefano Manservisi, Director General, DG International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, called for investment that is “underpinned by strong partnerships, and that leads to concrete action and a positive impact for Africa and our planet,” Participants agreed that the right innovation and investment in sustainable energy would not only help to address youth unemployment, but also mitigate climate change by reducing dependency on fossil fuels.

While underlining the progress being made in tech-driven renewable energy solutions and the opportunity to go even further, Abou-Zeid called for clear thinking. “We need to check if our perceptions are true or not, if they are clear for the country and profitable for the continent,” she said. As a starting point, there needs to be greater public sector involvement in ensuring a more favourable business environment to attract investment. “From power point to power plant, there is a lot to do in terms of investment and infrastructure, and this requires the commitment of all,” she said. The participants were reminded that even where energy is created, 30% to 40% can still be lost because of undeveloped transport infrastructure.

Some African countries have implemented policies to drive deployment of renewable energy by creating, for example, investment vehicles for independent power producers but they should not be complacent.

In the later panel discussion, private sector commentators underlined some of the barriers to investment. While sufficient funds are certainly available, due to limited capacity, the investment climate and regulatory uncertainty, in some places there is a dearth of bankable projects. According to Luca Cosentino, Executive Vice President, Eni, there are challenges in getting the right guarantees in place to move projects forward. Currency risk is another barrier and private sector participants stressed that EU support, by financing projects in local currency for example, may boost investment and help to mitigate risk.

Nevertheless, Cosentino reiterated his company’s commitment to renewables, particularly in Africa. For example, Eni added a dedicated renewable energy business line two years ago, and has made Africa home to its largest renewable operation. He also highlighted that energy companies are well placed to launch renewable projects since they already have resources in terms of people, finance, experience and infrastructure.

Bridging the gap between investment and bankability is already underway, and participants were keen to hear how the EU External Investment Plan (EIP) could reduce perception of risk. An argument was made for standardising evaluation criteria, which would make sustainable energy projects more bankable to financiers.

Representatives from the private and public sector called for: enhanced regulatory frameworks; capacity building (notably for the youth); ownership, research and innovation; and regional integration. In addition, promoting off-grid solutions is crucial because exclusively relying on a grid-based model would likely fail due to high connection costs.

“Eni are pleased to share expertise and knowhow to make the EIP successful and are delighted to see the EU doing what is necessary to build a renewed partnership with Africa alongside with private sector.” — Luca Cosentino, Executive Vice President, Eni
Stakeholders acknowledged that it’s not just about securing investment but also ensuring, for example, that knowledge and skills transfer takes place, and that the right technical tools are available.

Discussions also focused on the role of consumers and communities, and how all levels of society should be encouraged to explore ways to meet their own energy needs. The importance of partnerships at the local level to facilitate direct and easier access would help.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Support project developers in making projects bankable** through instruments such as the EIP, the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP) and the EU Technical Assistance Facility (TAF), which are helping beneficiaries to develop financially attractive and mature projects.

2. **Enhance bilateral dialogue** between business, the authorities and research institutions. This will help to close the gap between research and commercialisation of cutting-edge technologies.

3. **Develop innovative finance instruments** to reduce risk. On the one hand, this could help to create more decentralised energy production, in agriculture, for example, and in cooperative schemes with small to medium enterprises. Large-scale investments could benefit too.

4. **Review regulations, standards and fees** to promote an enabling environment for investment in renewables.

5. **Take a holistic, multi-sector approach** to energy investment. Investment in sustainable energy needs to be viewed with a wide lens.

6. **Make education and training** a top priority. Training should be for the building and maintenance of energy infrastructure.

7. **Promote off-grid solutions** to avoid the high connection costs of relying exclusively on a grid-based model.

8. **Invest in infrastructure**. Energy networks, for example, need upgrading because 30% to 40% of energy is lost during transportation.

9. **Promote public sector involvement** in attracting investment. Lower taxes and other investor-friendly policies would go some way towards encouraging greater investment.

10. **Conduct comprehensive feasibility studies** and be clear about the risks and how these can be mitigated.

11. **Engage communities and consumers** and facilitate partnerships at the local level to ensure easier, more direct access.
Celebration: 10th Anniversary of Africa-EU Energy Partnership

African and European Heads of State and Government adopted the Joint Africa-Europe Strategy (JAES) at the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December 2007. At the same time, African and European leaders agreed to launch the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) as one of the eight strategic partnerships of the JAES. Under this partnership of equals, the two continents share knowhow and resources, align complementary interests and closely link policies to jointly meet the energy challenges facing both continents. This session showcased successes achieved within the AEEP to date; it included a presentation of the AEEP Mapping Phase II, an overview of both the African and European perspective, and a status update on the targets achieved.

This celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Africa EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) opened with a presentation of the achievements of the AEEP to date. Felice Zaccheo, Head of Unit, Sustainable Energy and Climate Change, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, praised the successes of the Africa-EU partnership since its launch in 2007. The panel agreed that the partnership had been fundamental in promoting increased investments in energy infrastructure in Africa. Yet there was a note of caution: given the evolving energy landscape, increasing energy demands, and the need for a substantial increase in private sector investment, the partnership’s evolution will need to reflect this new realities.

The AEEP has been critical in ensuring high-level political commitment and setting and monitoring tangible targets. Stefano Manservisi, Director General, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, emphasised that long-term cooperation between the two continents will bring “benefits for all”. A representative of the European entrepreneurs’ association CEA-PME (Confédération Européenne des Associations de Petites et Moyennes Entreprises), an organisation that
Targets sustainable and renewable energy in the context of SMEs, reiterated the importance of balancing the partnership between the two continents and helping Africa to concentrate on key areas for development.

Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission, argued that there is a need to work on the ground with energy producers and build capacity and infrastructure to support African countries in realising their sustainable energy potential.

Sindinso Ndema Ngweya from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), agreeing with Abou-Zeid, said that a funding programme is needed to encourage private sector investment and innovation for the development of the EU-Africa partnership. This would help address the challenges of poverty that Africa faces, and the dearth of existing energy institutions.

The importance of involving the growing number of youth entering the job market and encouraging them to join the sector should not be forgotten. Sergio Mercuri, Minister Plenipotentiary, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy, said: “There is a need to strengthen sustainability among partners and engage young people in the process of energy development. Both Africa and Europe must collaborate for a better future in the energy sector”.

Daniel Schroth, SE4ALL Africa Hub Coordinator, African Development Bank, suggested a coordinating platform between the EU and Africa that focused on electricity and the creation of projects for different African countries.

Collaboration and cooperation is key for developing the energy sector and improving the economic conditions and future prosperity of the continent. Abel Tella, Director General, Association of Power Utilities Africa, agreed that better coordination between Africa and Europe would help to bring about a more prosperous future. “All African populations must have access to energy, including young people, to ensure a better future for all,” he said. Khilna Dodhia, Chief Executive Officer, Founder, Kenergy Renewables, underlined the fundamental role that access to electricity, clean fuel, and finance has for economic development in Africa and Europe.

Meanwhile Felice Zaccheo from the European Commission's DG International Cooperation and Development noted the necessity of supporting regional societies, creating an international debate and engaging the private sector. On behalf of the panel, he said the AEEP has contributed, and will continue to contribute, to a larger strategy of pursuing peace and security in Africa.
“Europe and Africa must act in concordance so that all African populations have access to energy, including young people, to ensure a better future for all.”

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Policy support** is needed for the development of the sustainable energy sector.
2. **Financial support** in this area is required.
3. **Africa and Europe need common and clear goals and targets.**
4. A **programme is needed to encourage private sector investment** and innovation for the development of the EU-Africa Partnership to meet the challenges of poverty, and the lack of energy institutions.
5. **Europe and Africa must coordinate efforts** so that all African populations have access to energy, including young people, to ensure a better future for all.
6. **There is a need to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship,** along with capacity building for entrepreneurs.
7. **Engage young people in the energy development process** to strengthen sustainability among the partners.
AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS
Greater Cooperation for Agricultural Investments in Africa

ABOUT

Food security is a top priority for Africa which, according to a recent analysis, has around 600 million hectares of uncultivated arable land, roughly 60% of the world’s total. But to realise the growing potential of this land, focused and collaborative action is needed. The first panel examined first how the European External Investment Plan (EIP), along with other financial instruments, can support African agribusinesses, with a specific focus on creating decent jobs for youth. The second panel went on to explore how to scale up AU-EU business cooperation in agriculture, while ensuring that business remains grounded in local realities. This panel also discussed the establishment of an agribusiness platform, within the framework of the EIP-funded Sustainable Business for Africa (SB4A).

Moderator
Emmanuel Essis, Director-General, Investment Promotion Agency, Côte d’Ivoire (CEPICI)

Speakers
Roberto Ridolfi, Director, Planet and Prosperity, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission; Josefa Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission; Ishmael Sunga, Chief Executive Officer, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU); Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency; Fadel Ndiame, West Africa Regional Head, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA); Jennifer Blanke, Vice-President, Agriculture, Human and Social Development, African Development Bank; John Clarke, Director, International Affairs, Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission; Mella Frewen, Director General FoodDrinkEurope; Daniel Gad, Owner, Omega Farms

SUMMARY

The European Commission’s director of planet and prosperity, Roberto Ridolfi, introduced this session by commenting on the high risks of investing in African agriculture. Among the challenges are: access to energy, and water, as well as finance and technology; global climate change; and a mismatch in the skills needed and those available. However, given the huge opportunities offered by African agriculture more has to be done to make the sector an attractive business proposition for youth.

He called for responsible investment along the entire agricultural value chain as well as for vocational training, where the EU is already providing significant investment.
The private sector is interested in investing in Africa but national governments must play their role in improving the business climate and investment conditions. Food companies have an important role to play; whatever their size they must ensure that their investments have a real, positive impact locally, creating jobs, improving livelihoods and driving local socio-economic development.

Josefa Sacko, from the African Union Commission, highlighted the difference between the actual and perceived potential of African agriculture. She believes that if there is real commitment to invest in the sector, the risks can be mitigated and potential for success will outstrip any expectations. She also called for an agricultural model to end hunger, and attract more young people to a sector where farmers are ageing. To solve this problem, the AUC has submitted a business plan to the EU, to help rejuvenate the whole sector.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) supports this shift in mindset. Jennifer Blanke, Vice President, Agriculture, Human and Social Development, AfDB, said the bank would invest €24 billion in agriculture over the coming decade to grow the next generation of ‘agripreneurs’. The bank is fully committed to working with PYAG to scale up and expedite results that deliver decent and sustainable jobs for Africa’s youth. Both formal employment and youth entrepreneurship programmes should be explored to allow African youth to become drivers of their own economic prosperity, social stability and environmental sustainability. Grow Africa, too, has launched a programme with AfDB and the African Union.

Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, added that “for 25 years people have been talking without taking any concrete actions. If actions have to be taken, the first to benefit from these actions should be small-scale farmers and small agricultural enterprises.”

Fadel Ndiame, West Africa Regional Head, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), asserted that there is a real value in agribusiness and it is the responsibility of governments to establish and develop its potential. In particular, it is important to encourage farmers to be more commercially aware, and to promote their products. For example, he suggested farmers organise themselves into groups when approaching financiers and banks to increase their bargaining power and improve their ‘bankability’. However, the lack of land ownership should not discourage small farmers or hinder their
success. Daniel Gad, Owner, Omega Farms, highlighted that Africa is currently using only 10% of its arable land, and investment in agro-industrial parks for processing of raw materials in rural Africa, could be a real opportunity.

For John Clarke, Director, International Affairs, Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission, there needs to be responsible investments in agribusiness that also addresses the root causes of migration. Government intervention to create a business-friendly environment with enforceable contracts and light-touch regulation, would generate sustainable growth, and ensure farming becomes more attractive to young people. Like Gad, Clarke argued for more much greater value to be added to raw materials on the African continent. In outlining the challenges ahead, there is a strong sense that the EU-AU partnership and political engagement will deepen, by better mobilising and focusing efforts and resources, and the EIP will reinforce this solid economic partnership.

In line with European Commission, Mella Frewen, Director General, FoodDrinkEurope, said governments must play a role across the value chain, and address local realities to support job creation in the agri-food sector. Therefore, following outcomes of the AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Conference on 2 July 2017 in Rome, she announced a proposal to build a platform for EU and African agri-businesses to share priorities.

A vibrant discussion then took place between participants and panellists on the topics of access to land by youth and women. They concluded that a bankable proposal, to create jobs and businesses in rural farming communities, would make people more willing to work in agriculture.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The panellists agreed that a revolution is required to overcome the actual and perceived risks of investing in African agriculture. To achieve this, the following recommendations were made.

1. **Ensure that government plays a more active role** in facilitating a business friendly environment; this will help to attract responsible and sustainable investments along the agricultural value chain.
2. **Create sustainable growth and decent jobs for young people** through comprehensive participation from all key players in the private sector.
3. **Align government and businesses** on the right priorities to boost investments in African agriculture.
4. **Foster the participation** of farmers throughout the agriculture value chain.
5. **Enhance vocational training and encourage entrepreneurialism** in agriculture and agrifood industries.
6. **Scale-up digitisation** to make agriculture more attractive to young people and boost productivity and income.
7. **Ensure continued application of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.**
How to Promote African Quality Products

ABOUT

The growing importance of Geographical Indications (GIs) was the focus of the session on how to promote quality African goods. Given that many GI goods originate in rural, agricultural and handicraft sectors, Africa, a continent of 55 countries with rich natural and cultural diversity, has much to gain. As the panel noted, there is a growing recognition of the unique market value attached to products like South Africa’s Rooibos tea, Morocco’s Argane oil and Attiéké, a cassava based staple from Côte d’Ivoire.

The panel outlined some of the recent positive developments in building a continent-wide strategy for GIs, not least that promoting high quality, differentiated African agricultural products could raise income levels and generate employment. It also considered some of the challenges, such as the practice of dubious middlemen, and illegitimate producers, and the requirement for collective action.

Moderator

Monique Bagal, GI Consultant, European Union Joint Rural Development Programme, (EU-JRDP, Egypt)

Speakers

Diana Akullo, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission;
John Clarke, Director, International Affairs, European Commission DG Agriculture;
Alexandra Grazioli, Head of the International Registry of Geographical Indications and Appellations of Origin, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO);
Ndiaye Badjo, President, Grand Lahou Cooperative, Côte d’Ivoire;
Celine Meyer, African Representative, Organisation for an International Network of Geographical Indications

SUMMARY

The idea that ‘scarcity creates value’ was a theme explored by this panel, which considered the important role that Geographical Indications (GIs) could play in creating more value for Africa’s farmers.

GIs, like other food certifications including Appellations of Origin (AO), Fair Trade and Organic, have become increasingly important as consumers in parts of the world have attached growing importance to what are perceived as ‘quality’ foodstuffs. According to the World Intellectual Property Organisation, 43% of European consumers are willing to pay as much as 10% more for GI products.

Since the adoption of TRIPS, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement, in 1994, there has been growing interest in GIs. GIs are said to be good for consumers, who are able to identify quality products more easily, and good for businesses, which can market more effectively and command a higher price.

As the name implies, a GI on a product indicates a specific geographical origin, and that it possesses certain desirable, attributable qualities as a result of where it comes from. An AO is effectively a special kind of GI, and implies an even stronger link with the place of origin – that the raw materials are sourced in the geographical region, and processing also takes place there. Champagne and Scotch whisky are two notable examples of AO.
If not adequately protected, geographical indications can be subject to abuse by dishonest commercial operators and, as a result, both consumers and bona fide businesses may suffer.

In Africa, there are a growing number of products that potentially benefit from GIs. From north to south, west to east, unique value has been attached to products like Rooibos tea from South Africa, Argane oil from Morocco, Penja Pepper from Cameroon and Attiéké, a cassava based staple from Côte d’Ivoire. An important question raised was whether African products can attain the global recognition of products like Champagne, Darjeeling tea and Café de Colombia, and the role of public and private institutions in supporting this process.

Acknowledging the importance of empowering local actors who have, over generations, worked to maintain the unique qualities of African products, Diana Akullo, Policy Officer, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission, said that thanks to a continent-wide strategy for GIs, questions were being answered. The strategy is closely linked to the AU Agenda 2063 implementing sustainable goals. “The African Union (AU) is seeking to go beyond creating awareness and is looking for concrete results,” said Akullo. Since over 60% of Africa’s population is employed in agriculture, and most GIs apply to agricultural and cultural products, finding innovative solutions for the sector are a top priority for the AU.

Clarity was also sought on how the EU enforces GIs, and how the European Commission intends to support a strategy for Africa. The European Commission’s John Clarke reiterated strong support for the AU-EU summit deliverable of an African GI strategy. In fact, the document A continental strategy for Geographical Indications in Africa had been endorsed by the AU member states just a few days before the EABF and to include all four regions of the continent – east, west, north and southern Africa. Clarke explained that there were a number of prerequisites to enforce a GI. Among these are the link between the quality of the product and its origin, and collective organisation by all stakeholders. It is, however, also crucial that African countries recognise importance to the necessary legal, economic and cultural implications of geographical labelling.
Alexandra Grazioli from WIPO pointed to evidence of products that had achieved international protection under the multilateral Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin. In 2015, the so-called Geneva Act was said to modernise and update the previous Lisbon System by allowing for the international registration of GIs as well as AOs. The success stories of Cameroon’s Penja Pepper and Guinea’s Mount Ziama Macenta coffee were notable examples. “The adherence of Cameroon and Guinea to the new and most protective Geneva Act would result in those names being efficiently protected,” she said. Noting the value of GIs, Grazioli added they could help to fight rural depopulation, reinforce social cohesion, increase prices and combat abuse at the national, regional and international levels.

Ndiaye Badjo, President, Grand Lahou Cooperative, Côte d’Ivoire, pointed to some challenges relating to the TRIPS agreement, which deals with trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights between all the member nations of the World Trade Organisation. Although the agreement provides for significant improvements to the standards of protection for GIs, the problem of hierarchical levels of protection based on an arbitrary categorisation of goods remains. “The false and deceptive use of GIs is detrimental to legitimate producers who, in Africa, are starting to notice that misappropriation may not be just hypothetical. Indeed, quality products are often the victims of their own success,” he said.

To end on a positive note, Celine Meyer, African Representative of oriGIn, said that producers were no longer alone in fighting for their rights. Since 2003, this non-governmental organisation has been supporting producers in international negotiations and reporting on cases of abuse.

The participants concluded that historically, GIs have been used in international trade to convey a certain quality or reputation based on the geographical origin of the product. Contemporary evidence of protected GIs, either under the Lisbon Agreement or under EU Regulation, is testimony to geographical specialisation across product categories. In addition, there is strong commercial potential for African countries, as GI-goods tend to be from the rural, agricultural and handicraft sectors.

“The African Union is seeking to go beyond creating awareness and is looking for concrete results. Since over 60% of Africa’s population is employed in agriculture, and most GIs apply to agricultural and cultural products, finding innovative solutions for the sector is a top priority.”

Diana Akullo
Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Identify which African products could benefit from a GI registration.** Many potential products in Africa are still not protected as GIs; over time this could jeopardise their reputation and deprive producers of the associated social and economic benefits.

2. **Understand how to protect GIs** at the national and international level. Nationally there is the need for *sui generis* legislation, certification marks, administrative systems (eg. labelling), as well as rules for unfair competition. At the international level, protection is achieved through regional bodies like the EU or OAPI, Africa’s intellectual property organisation, or with regional rulings, and bilateral and multilateral agreements, such as TRIPs and the Lisbon Agreement.

3. **Educate consumers about the benefits of GIs**, including higher prices for producers, job creation, environmental benefits and the preservation of tradition.

4. **Develop ways to address abuse cases.** Producers, for example, can work with NGOs like oriGIn to report such cases.

5. **Look to successful case studies** to understand more about what GIs can deliver both within Africa (eg. Penja Pepper) and further afield (Darjeeling Tea in India).

6. **Promote a shared vision for Africa** by engaging stakeholders at the regional and continental level.

7. **Recognise that the promotion of GIs requires more than the mere protection of geographical names.** Product, place of origin and quality must all be considered. Collective action is essential.

8. **Campaign for further improvements** to, for example, the Lisbon System so that it becomes more attractive for users and new members.
Leveraging Digitisation for Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture

**ABOUT**

Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) and the rise of mobile and big data have shown huge potential to rejuvenate and transform African agriculture. But challenges remain, specifically infrastructure constraints, securing funding and achieving scale. Panellists reflected on best practices to leverage ICT in agricultural value chains, the challenges of integrating ICT into agricultural business models, and the role of an EU-Africa partnership in delivering solutions. Specific agribusiness opportunities for investment and growth were explored including how technological innovation, such as drones, could be used to transform the sector and help to close the gap in data gathering. Participants in this session included young ICT4Ag entrepreneurs, farmer organisations and cooperatives and government officials, who shared perspectives and experiences, as well as future digitisation opportunities for the sector.

**Moderator**

Michael Hailu, Director of Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)

**Speakers**

Ishmael Sunga, CEO, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU);
Hamza Rkha Chaham, Head of International Strategy, Airinov; Henri Danon, Coordinator e-Agriculture Programme, Ministry of Communication, Digital Economy and Postal Services, Côte d’Ivoire; Van Jones, Co-founder & Head of Marketing, Hello Tractor;
Gerald Otim, Chief Operations Officer, Ensibuuko; Jihane Ajijti, Head of Projects and Development for Southern Africa, OCP; Edson Mpyisi, Chief Financial Economist and Coordinator ENABLE Youth Programme, African Development Bank

**SUMMARY**

This session explored how innovative ICT technologies can modernise and empower agriculture and make it more profitable for African youth through the creation of decent jobs. Panellists examined how the European Investment Plan (EIP), and other financial instruments, can support African agribusiness to encourage greater cooperation between European and African businesses and deliver on local potential.

For young entrepreneurs and farmers who wish to develop their agricultural businesses, there are significant challenges, particularly for those based in more rural areas. Michael Hailu, Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), pointed out how access to finance remains a significant obstacle to agricultural development in Africa. However, ICTs can help to tackle this through, for instance, digital payments to farmers.

Gerald Otim, chief operations officer of Ensibuuko, a Ugandan start-up that provides cloud-based micro-finance software for community-level financial entities, spoke about the reluctance of banks to lend money to young people and farmers, in particular those living in rural areas. Consequently, both groups are being excluded from mainstream financial services. Ensibuuko is changing this by offering digital accounting services to...
farmers via their mobile phones. Their services help Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) become more efficient and attractive to farmers, the youth, and other members of society.

Edson Mpyisi, chief financial economist and coordinator of the ENABLE Youth Programme at the African Development Bank (AfDB), said the bank is facilitating access to finance for young entrepreneurs, through bespoke indirect financial instruments. In April 2017, the AfDB held a workshop in Nigeria where young ‘agripreneurs’ pitched projects, where about half of the proposals focused on ICT. “We’ve noticed there is huge interest in this area and so, as a bank, we’re there to support that,” he added. AfDB is also pushing for greater availability of agricultural statistics for elements like soil, farm size, and production. He said they work with incubators in the domain of ICT to boost agriculture.

Having more information at the fingertips of farmers and policymakers offers huge potential for developing agribusiness. Henri Danon, Coordinator e-Agriculture Programme, Ministry of Communication, Digital Economy and Postal Services, Côte d’Ivoire, pointed out how important it is to provide farmers with real-time information on everything from crop pricing to soil data. “Farmers who know how much their crops sell for in town can clearly negotiate a better price with buyers,” he said. Having access to pricing information is an important step in lifting small farmers out of poverty. Noting that ICT is one way to ensure Côte d’Ivoire’s digital savvy youth become more involved in agriculture, he said: “We need to get young people to develop applications that will serve the agricultural world”.

Echoing Danon’s emphasis on the power of pricing information, Ishmael Sunga, CEO, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), said: “Technology makes agriculture more transparent in the sense that you’re able to get information

“ICTs increase farm productivity, resilience and incomes while reducing costs – all things that make agriculture more profitable and therefore attractive to a new generation of farmers. An EU-Africa partnership can play a key role in promoting ICT innovations and investments across the agricultural value chain.”

Ishmael Sunga
CEO, Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions
AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS

Leveraging Digitisation for Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture

about markets and prices on a wide-ranging area.” In addition, ICT is going to increase productivity, improve incomes and reduce costs – all issues that will make agriculture more effective and attractive to a new generation of farmers.

On the issue of how farmers can be encouraged to adopt ICT solutions, Jihane Ajjiti, Head of Projects & Development for Southern Africa, OCP Africa, said: “Deploying innovation and ICT is one thing, but having high adoption from smallholder farms is something else”. To scale up ICT agricultural tools, technology needs to appeal directly to smallholder farmers rather than be forced on them.

Hamza Rkha Chaham, Head of International Strategy, Airinov, said that partnering with local entrepreneurs helped his French drone company make inroads in Africa. “We were able to leverage CTA’s network from their understanding of existing ecosystems.” He added that Airinov uses local partnerships in many of the African countries in which it does business.

Innovative communication and understanding local digital networks are key to success, according to Van Jones, Co-founder and Head of Marketing, Hello Tractor, a start-up that lets farmers request tractor services via text messaging. He said it was necessary to tap into a local network to boost the adoption of ICT solutions. Hello Tractor, for example, is using local ‘booking agents’ in Nigeria to more easily connect farmers with tractors. ICT tools have opened up a new frontier of agricultural data for entrepreneurs to exploit, which could result in wide-ranging benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To meet the challenges ahead a number of steps need to be taken:

1. **To ensure financing from banks, smallholders and farmers in rural areas should join forces in cooperatives** and then seek innovative banking solutions through digitisation.

2. **Create a discussion platform** where people can exchange information on issues regarding ICT as an enabler for agricultural development and job creation for African youth.

3. **Develop rural connectivity**. There needs to be a good connection between all partners (producers, farmers, buyers, government) to ensure transparency and build a sound agricultural development climate. A well-structured information system must be made available.

4. **Support youth digital entrepreneurship in agriculture**. Encourage young people to offer services to digitise agriculture, making the sector simpler, more efficient, easier to access and more profitable for everybody.

5. **Encourage B2B collaborations** between young ICT entrepreneurs and less duplication of platforms.
FACILITATING COLLABORATION
How to Set up and Scale up EU Chambers of Commerce and Industry in African Countries

ABOUT
This session aimed to give representatives from existing EU Chambers of Commerce and Industry in third countries (outside Europe) the opportunity to share their experience and best practices with participants wishing to set up or develop EU chambers in African countries. The session was also an opportunity for existing or emerging EU chambers to find out about membership of the European Business Organisation Worldwide Network (EBO WWN https://www.ebowwn.com/). Among its functions, the network represents European business interests in markets outside the EU. The session looked at how an EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry can be set up and scaled up in Africa, and the requirements for becoming a member of EBO WWN. The network currently has approximately 40 EU chambers from all over the world.

Moderators
Philippe de Taxis du Poët, Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission; Alex Lambeth, Chief Operating Officer, European Business Council for Africa

Speakers
Renato Pacheco Neto, Chairperson, European Business Organisation Worldwide Network; Jason Collins, CEO, European-Australian Business Council; Adam Dunnet, Secretary General, European Union Chamber of Commerce in China; Nico van Staalduinen, Executive Director, European Business Organisation, Ghana; Jean-Luc Ruelle, President, EU Chamber of Commerce in Côte d’Ivoire; Abraham Nahom, Executive Director, EU Business Forum in Ethiopia; Almut Roessner, Executive Director, European Chamber of Commerce, Vietnam

SUMMARY
European Business Organisation Worldwide Network (EBO WWN) Chairperson Renato Pacheco Neto explained that his organisation represents European business interests in markets outside the EU. EBO WWN is a network active in over 35 key markets and serves European multinationals, as well as micro, small, medium and large enterprises. EU chambers within the EBO Worldwide Network work with delegations of the EU across the globe on a daily basis to support European companies.

“Our mission is to provide a platform for European business organisations at global and regional levels to share best practices, and to advocate for European business in markets outside of Europe,” he said.

Any business chamber or organisation representing European business interests in a third market is eligible for EBO WWN membership. However, membership is restricted to one organisation per country. Those applying should be a registered as non-profit organisations and must be verified by the delegation of the EU to the third country.
In explaining the role of the European-Australian Business Council, CEO Jason Collins said it enables business leaders to engage in high-level dialogue on economic and public policy issues with Australian and European political leaders, senior officials, diplomats and business delegations. Since it was set up in 1999, EABC members have forged stronger business and institutional links between the EU and Australia, working in close partnership with the official agencies of the European Commission and the Australian Government, and other business organisations.

Adam Dunnet, secretary general of the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, introduced his organisation, which was founded in 2000 by 51 member companies. Their shared goal: to establish a common voice for various business sectors of the EU and European businesses operating in China. Now they have more than 1,600 members in seven chapters operating in nine cities. The chamber is recognised by the European Commission and the Chinese authorities as the official voice of European business in China. It is recognised as a foreign chamber of commerce with the ministry of commerce and China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. “One of our key features is that we make recommendations to create a better environment for Chinese companies and citizens also,” Dunnet said.

Jean-Luc Ruelle, president of the EU Chamber of Commerce in Côte d’Ivoire, said his organisation had faced hurdles because it was set up at a time when French and European interests were threatened in the country due to political unrest. However, he went on to say that the EU chamber is currently in a strong position, thanks to its efficient governance. “It creates services and generates funds for its members,” he said.

In response to a question from the floor, Neto noted that funding of EU chambers generally comes from membership fees and paid services that generate profit for members. Another question concerned the absence of EU chambers in many African countries. In response, Neto said that the network is open to new members, which saw applicants from Senegal, Ethiopia, Sudan, Nigeria and Mauritius expressing their interest. Neto concluded that nobody should feel reticent about approaching EBO WWN members, because they are ready to give their support wherever and whenever it is solicited.

After the session, a number of bilateral meetings took place between potential EU chambers in African countries and existing EU Chambers from Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Brazil, China, Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Korea, Laos, FYROM, Myanmar, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Trinidad & Tobago and Vietnam.

Renato Pacheco Neto  
Chairperson, European Business Organisation Worldwide Network
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Strong business initiative.** EU chambers are fundamentally bottom up initiatives in the hands of business. Rather than working as fragmented individual companies or member states chambers, together they are stronger. EU chambers in third countries play an essential role in improving the business and investment environment.

2. **Interaction.** An efficient way to help set up and scale up EU chambers is to encourage them to become members of EBO WWN. In doing so, they can share information, experience and best practice. EBO WWN is ready to provide help wherever and whenever it is solicited.

3. **Links with SB4A.** Links at the country level of the EU chambers with the Sustainable Business for Africa platform and actions supporting structured dialogue with the private sector should be promoted.
How to Export to the EU Market?

ABOUT

To export to the EU, there are numerous rules and regulations that companies need to understand and adhere to. Among these: health, safety, marketing and technical standards; rules and proof of origin; internal taxes in the importing country; and product trade statistics. This practical and interactive session addressed some of the trade challenges facing producers, shed light on the role of the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), and considered how the EU is working to level the playing field for trade. In particular, participants gleaned insights into what producers and investors need to know and what the expectations are, including the rules, regulations, and likely benefits from a trade agreement.

Moderator
Luisa Santos, Director for International Relations, Business Europe

Speakers
Patrick Illing, Trade Affairs Manager, European Union Delegation, Côte d’Ivoire;
Peter Van Gilst, Team Coordinator Africa, CBI, Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries; Remco Vahl, Senior Expert, Directorate-General for Trade, European Commission; Joseph Owona Kono, Chairman, Afriubana

SUMMARY

Thanks to their geographical proximity, there is every reason for Europe and Africa to forge a new and mutually beneficial trading relationship. As speaker Joseph Owona Kono, President, Afriubana, a pan-African association supporting the needs of Africa’s fruit producers and exporters, put it: “The future of Europe is Africa, and future of Africa is Europe.”

Kono, who was talking about import-export relations between the two continents and the need to build stronger, better relationships, went on to outline some of the challenges. Citing the banana value chain as an example, Kono explained that almost 80% of Africa’s bananas are exported to Europe. Yet, despite clear demand, existing barriers and regulations, which don’t consider the reality on the ground in many African countries, continue to represent a serious obstacle.

“The future of Europe is Africa, and future of Africa is Europe.”

Joseph Owona Kono
President, Afriubana
With the exception of the UK, in Europe the price a consumer pays for a banana has remained largely stable since 2001, yet the import price has dropped by as much as 20%. Price pressure from buyers, coupled with rising production and living costs, have hit Africa’s farmers hard. Kono pointed to a “kind of hypocrisy” that has developed in banana value chains. Often, for example, many producers simply can’t meet the cost of certifications demanded by buyers. Kono argued that negotiating and setting a minimum price for producers, rather than being subject to sudden vagaries of the market, could help. For example, retailers have been known to axe a deal in the commercial low season for bananas, when European consumers have more local choice.

Although this might be considered an unfair trading practice (UTP) which the EC defines as an act that deviates from ‘good commercial conduct’, and is ‘unilaterally imposed by one trading partner on another’, research shows that suppliers are unlikely to complain. The reason is the so-called fear factor: the worry that more powerful European partners may cancel future trade agreements.

According to Peter Van Gilst, CBI’s team coordinator in Africa, there are two issues to address. Firstly, there is a need to develop value chains with a focus on the requirements of export markets. For example, understanding what the demand is for a particular product, who the competition is, the regulatory environment and how prices might fluctuate, are among the issues that companies need to understand. On this score, CBI is working with numerous firms to produce detailed analysis of the value chain and what is required to tackle obstacles. Secondly, there is a need to build stronger partnerships in Europe, to increase exports and improve performance in the value chain.

CBI is currently involved in developing a number of new projects in many different sectors. In Côte d’Ivoire, for example, it is investigating cashew nuts for sustainable development, while in Senegal markets for fish and tourism are being explored.

According to Van Gilst, each year CBI publishes around 300 studies about the European market, and the emerging opportunities and requirements of importers. It also helps producers find prospective European buyers.
For exporters, the main issues are to understand market trends, the specific nature and requirements of a particular product, and the demand of the country of destination. Bearing in mind that consumers differ from country to country, exporters can benefit from market intelligence that helps them to understand the regulatory and legal environment, and other market requirements. In addition, inclusive focus groups organised between groups of producers, consumers and exporters, tackling social and safety aspects, can go some way towards finding solutions.

On the subject of safety, participant Siriki Tuo, a commercial counsellor for Côte d’Ivoire’s ministry of commerce, said that while Africa’s big exporters – those that produce bananas, coffee and cocoa – face difficulties, it is even tougher for smaller players. One of the obstacles they face are the stringent sanitary and phytosanitary measures required to, as the World Trade Organisation puts it, “ensure that food is safe for consumers and to prevent the spread of pests or diseases among animals and plants”.

While it’s entirely understandable that international agencies want to regulate to ensure public safety, for small producers, the requirements can prove onerous. On this score, firms like CBI can help by providing support to small companies.

The panel also discussed the European Union’s recently issued strategic blueprint for trade, which seeks to streamline a number of issues including effective implementation, dealing with unfair trade issues and how to support production. Some programmes are already up and running, and can provide trade capacity and advise on expectations. A notable example is the EU’s recently launched External Investment Plan, which aims to adopt a more systematic approach to development policy in the future. It will also help to identify relevant value chains and consider ways to improve situations in particular countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Reduce import taxes** to open the way to new initiatives.
2. **Review the certification process** and amounts charged, which can be very costly, especially for small producers.
3. **Remove unreasonable and cumbersome barriers** such as requirements to stick to a colour scheme relevant to the commercialised product such as the box colour or printing materials.
4. **Build direct networks with producers** to avoid middlemen and large institutions promoting their own interests.
5. **Ensure that the EU takes a strict approach to developing fairer regulations**, and implementing them.
6. **Find ways to connect** Africa’s small-to-medium enterprises with European companies.
7. **Standardise and harmonise** export rules across sectors wherever possible.
8. **Organise focus groups** between groups of producers, consumers and exporters that take into account social and safety aspects: these can go some way to finding solutions.
How to Comply with EU and African Quality Standards

ABOUT

The new EU Plant Health Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/2031), introduced in December 2016, becomes fully applicable on 13 December 2019. In light of this, this session examined the challenges that the agricultural sector and the relevant authorities will have to overcome to comply with the regulation, while avoiding jeopardising existing value chains. The mango industry was used as an illustrative case study. Participants also examined what has been done historically to meet the requirements of the export market and attempt to anticipate new demands from local and international customers. Key questions for discussion included: how quality standards are evolving and the main trends in the EU and African markets; what does the evolution of the EU phytosanitary regulation mean for small and medium horticultural businesses in Africa; and how agribusiness has met EU and African market requirements in the past and how it can be better prepared for the future.

Moderator

Babacar Samb, Bioscope General manager (Senegal) and COLEACP expert

Speakers

Eric Bambara, Exporter from Côte d’Ivoire and RISA chairman - Réseau Ivoirien pour la Sécurité des Aliments; Moctar Fofana, AOM General Manager, COLEACP Director and ARMAO Vice Chairman (Bureau Provisoire de l’Alliance Régionale, Mangue de l’Afrique de l’Ouest); Fataye Akamou, Deputy Director Direction de la Protection des Plantes, Ministère de l’Agriculture de Côte d’Ivoire; Victor Nembelessini, representative of the Mango value chain in Côte d’Ivoire (AREXMA OCAB OBAM-CI)

SUMMARY

Panelists began the session by presenting the evolution of AU-EU quality standards to date. Sanitary quality requirements from 2000 have taken into account chemical contaminants. Phytosanitary requirements are related to pests, quarantine organisms and have meant limited exports particularly to the EU. In fact due to this, mango exports to the EU are now threatened because of the fruit fly issue. For this, a new regulation EC 2016-2031 will come into force as early as December 2019. This presents a difficult situation for the exporters of mangoes to the EU, particularly since volumes of exports from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) are already very small.

Éric Bambara, President of RISA, a food safety network in Côte d’Ivoire, shared the story regarding evolution of mango exports to the EU since 2002. He explained that initially quantities were relatively small, but as quality standards became the norm and were complied with, customers increasingly demanded more. However, he noted, this commercial success was due to “a lot of training as well as investment”.

Victor Nembele, representing mango producers in Côte d’Ivoire, highlighted the comparative decline in mango production versus that of Latin American countries such as Peru and Brazil. One of the main reasons, he said, was the low-density of production in relation to the acreage. In an equivalent area, Peru and Brazil produce two to three times higher than Côte d’Ivoire. He stressed: “Production must adapt to the needs of the market, as it will not be the market that adapts”. In addition, climate change has also taken its toll, previously exporting took place over a period of three months, but now it happens over just one month.
I am an exporter of mangoes from Mali. I handle 1,000 producers including 200 who have been certified. I joined COLEACP almost 20 years ago (...) I went from 300 tons in 2005 to 2000 tons today. In my country, production has grown to 40,000 tons of mango. There was an interesting ripple effect. Continuous training of producers is essential to control the risks in production and to meet the requirements of the target markets.

Moctar Fofana
AOM General Manager, Producer-Exporter, Mali, COLEACP Director

Fataye Akamou, Deputy Director of Plant Protection, Ministry of Agriculture, Côte d’Ivoire, congratulated the COLEACP project, which has facilitated several training programmes in the mango sector. “This training is vital to the survival of the sector and thanks to it, the number of necessary quality control inspections has been significantly reduced.” In an interactive discussion, session participants discussed whether Africa considered the same quality standards for the products sold in local African markets. Paul Jeangille, Central Organisation of Producers and Exporters of Pineapple, Banana, Papaya, Mango and other tropical Fruits from Côte d’Ivoire (OCAB), stressed that standards for fruit sold in Côte d’Ivoire and the sub-region have been validated by CODINORM, the Ivorian organisation for normalisation that certifies consumable products.

The session concluded by thanking speakers from both the public and private sectors for sharing their wealth of experience. The messages and recommendations regarding access to the African agricultural product market and AU-EU regulatory requirements were laid out, and would be put forward to leaders of the Africa-EU Summit. This would go some way to ensure that agriculture continues to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Offer further training** to all players in the sector in order to adapt to the market and reach quality standards.
2. **Continue the modernisation** of production, processing and product logistics upstream.
3. **Create a new generation of African agricultural actors** capable of modernising in the short, medium and long term.
4. **Build on the capacity of professionals** - especially small producers - to make their activities economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.
5. **Strengthen the capacities of the competent authorities**, in particular in the systematisation of the data collection necessary for the sanitary and phytosanitary risk assessment work required under the new EU regulation.
6. **Promote access to financing** that is adapted to the agricultural sector.
7. **Facilitate access to rural land** for young agricultural entrepreneurs.
The closing ceremony of the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum provided an opportunity for leaders from the public and private sector to share their views on the day’s proceedings, and to provide high-level recommendations.

Business prizes were awarded to individuals that had shown entrepreneurial excellence. Entrepreneur of the Year 2017 went to Ken Etete, Chief Executive Officer of Century Group, an oil and gas services firm. In accepting the prize, Etete said much was being done, but still more that could be done to make Africa more competitive.

Receiving the award of Young Entrepreneur 2017 was Vérone Mankou, Chief Executive Officer of VMK, a Congolese tech start-up behind the first PC and smartphone to be designed in Africa. The prize, he said, was a big incentive to ensure “that the future Twitter, Google and Facebook will be made by an African”.

Andrus Ansip, European Commissioner for Digital Single Market and Vice President of the European Commission, congratulated each person named Inspiring Entrepreneur. These young business leaders from Ghana to Bulgaria, France to Côte d’Ivoire, Finland to South Africa, and more, had developed relevant, quality products for their respective markets.

Before the official closing speeches, the co-chairs of the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum-Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, the chief executive officer of ACT Group and Tania Habimana, a fashion entrepreneur and TV host- an open discussion. Feedback on the 6th EU-Africa forum in Abidjan proved mainly positive, but there was widespread agreement that it should lead to concrete action.
We need a ‘new deal’ between Africa and Europe, a deal of equal partners where we set our priorities together, we identify the problems together and we all take responsibility for reaching our common goals. This is exactly why we launched the External Investment Plan, we will try to accompany private sector investments in the areas that need it the most, making it possible and convenient for private investors to do so.

H.E. Federica Mogherini
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President, European Commission


After briefly outlining the role of her organisation, which represents 4,000 private companies across Africa, Taylor reminded the audience that profit and social good should not be mutually exclusive motivations. Indeed, investments in African markets can be both profitable and work to support the public interest. All stakeholders have an important role to play in shifting the views on doing business in Africa. Africa is a uniquely diverse and inspiring business destination; with opportunities in more traditional sectors like extractives and hydrocarbons, as well as cutting-edge industries such as fintech and renewables.

Next to speak was Harrison, who stressed the role of agribusiness and renewable energy in alleviating poverty, driving economic growth and creating jobs.

Then Mogherini took to the stage to highlight Africa’s incredible energy and desire for change. “All of us here believe that this continent, Africa, has immense potential for growth and human development,” she said.

While there are still ‘massive challenges’, relating to insecurity, corruption and an unstable business environment in some places, if the public and private sectors work closely together, these challenges could be overcome. As Europe’s closest neighbour, “a strong, peaceful and secure Africa, is also a condition to make Europe strong,” she said.

Europe is also Africa’s biggest funder of development aid but, as Mogherini pointed out, this was no longer enough; there needed to be a paradigm shift which made the EU-Africa relationship a partnership of equals. She cited the European Investment Plan, which has committed €44 billion by 2020, as evidence of Europe’s strong commitment to boosting private sector investment in Africa. In particular, the focus would be on creating decent,
sustainable jobs through investment in micro, small and medium enterprises, which are not only the backbone of Africa’s economy, but Europe’s too.

In his closing comments, Adama Kone, Minister of Economy and Finance, Côte d’Ivoire, reinforced the need for a strong public-private partnership that put Africa’s young people first. The forum, he said, had highlighted the issues of mutual importance to both Africa and Europe. Top of the agenda was the need for investment in renewable energy, strong public-private partnerships and a thorough review of university education.

In closing the EU-Africa Business Forum on behalf of Côte d’Ivoire’s president, H.E. Alassane Ouattara Kone, said that by 2050, Africa would be home to one third of the world’s youth. For this reason, the continent’s young people, and especially women, must hold a special place in any transformative vision for Africa.

“The private sector should be aware of the unique role and responsibilities it has in supporting economic development and diversification in African markets. While European businesses naturally seek profits and new opportunities, we must always hold ourselves to the highest standards and encourage fair, transparent and sustainable business environments.”

Karen TAYLOR
President, European Business Council for Africa
The 6th EU-Africa Business Forum took place on 27 November 2017 in Abidjan. Organised back-to-back with the 5th AU-EU Summit, the EABF brought together over a thousand business and political leaders from Africa and Europe. Discussions revolved around how to stimulate more investment for jobs in Africa, and collaborate more closely to support economic development, while making the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) a reality. The forum was the culmination of wider mobilisation in Europe and Africa that took place during the previous year and brought together public and private sector constituencies. Inputs and recommendations tabled by the private sector highlighted:

- The importance of continuity of sustainable economic development policies
- The expected benefits from supporting the common interests of an EU-Africa business agenda
- The need to strengthen business organisations
- The benefits of a more permanent and structured arrangement, comprising dialogues between private and public actors; this would help to achieve synergies and ensure better implementation of the economic development measures adopted by both regions

An important concern of policymakers is how to reconcile the business objectives of the private sector with the public policy objectives of Investing in Job Creation for Youth. Discussions focused on the sectors of agribusiness, sustainable energy and the digital economy. There was discussion about how to: increase investment and improve value chains; support viable and sustainable industrialisation; increase productivity; and connect to micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). The forum also covered the need to articulate and explain business investment objectives and to achieve maximum impact, with the support from the European External Investment Plan.

The deliberations are summarised below as the key general messages that were delivered to the 5th AU-EU Summit:

- The business sector is ready to scale up and facilitate investment in critical areas, support productivity and competitiveness to create prosperity, if the right policy environment is in place. We look forward to an improved climate for investment by both European and African investors, which will also contribute to progress in achieving the SDGs. Agriculture and manufacturing should be among the priority sectors for viable business initiatives and for creating more and better jobs. European and African organisations are keen to encourage public policy measures to facilitate investment flows that contribute to sustained economic growth. We count on rapid and efficient deployment of the important resources of the EIP to accelerate the implementation of the joint vision of prosperity for both continents.

- By establishing more dynamic private sector activities, including partnerships with the public sector, we welcome measures to control risks, remove barriers, improve labour mobility, share knowledge, promote and use the digital economy to better integrate our economies and societies. This should enable the younger generation to thrive, and should support African entrepreneurs and businesses to also expand their activities across the continent. We will work together with authorities to promote experience and best practice to create new jobs on the African continent.

- Public and private sector organisations should work together to identify new and innovative ways for SMEs in Africa to access finance and support to help grow domestic businesses across the continent.

THE JOINT BUSINESS DECLARATION

6th EU-Africa Business Forum Joint Business Declaration

Abidjan, 27 November 2017

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- Public and private sector organisations should work together to identify new and innovative ways for SMEs in Africa to access finance and support to help grow domestic businesses across the continent.
- We also call for a larger and more flexible supply of microcredit in order to satisfy the need for investment capital, particularly for MSMEs. This will be especially important to support the large number of women entrepreneurs in many African countries since access to capital is a key challenge. We are ready to participate in the design of microcredit programmes that take into account both banking realities and development objectives.

- European governments, which share the objectives of African development, should encourage companies to engage in business activities in Africa through practical measures, such as providing political dialogue and guarantee instruments for trade and investment.

- To improve the general business environments, African governments are invited to maintain efforts to ensure legal certainty and stability, smooth and transparent administrative procedures with good governance, and to uphold social and environmental standards in public calls for tenders. Furthermore, the implementation of joint initiatives within the G20 framework such as the ‘Compact with Africa’ should be pursued efficiently to improve investment conditions for the private sector such as sustainable investments in infrastructure.

- We invite public authorities to work together with private bodies to promote entrepreneurship, and develop efficient strategies that allow an easy transition from school to work. A better integration of education systems with the business world, through mechanisms which further develop work-based learning, such as apprenticeship schemes and Technical and Vocational Education and Training programmes, can go a long way to reduce skills gaps and enhance opportunities for the youth in both rural and urban areas. Some good practices of ‘Dual System Professional Training’ which exist in Europe, can be tested in, adapted and transferred to Africa with the support of European enterprises, particularly SMEs.

- We call for the creation of additional exchange programmes between African school systems, universities, enterprises and technical institutes with European enterprises. The mobility between African and European students and employees should be encouraged strategically following the tested format of the Erasmus exchange schemes, like Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE), Erasmus Pro and MobiliseSME.

- The private sector sees the untapped potential of women as entrepreneurs, professionals and leading executives of African companies, and wishes to work with public authorities on focused training and empowerment programmes, to enhance this.

- We welcome platforms, such as Sustainable Business For Africa (SB4A), which offer the opportunity to break new ground for public-private sector dialogue and partnerships, embracing transparency, accountability, connectivity, open access and citizens’ trust. This structured dialogue, which aims to include all voices, will help better frame a shared vision for how to improve conditions for investment and market development, which translate into inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Within SB4A, structured sectorial dialogue, such as an agribusiness platform, will be realised. In this context, initiatives like Food&Drink Africa are welcome.

- Sustainable energy: Africa needs universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and secure energy in order to develop and grow. Doing ‘business as usual’ is not going to bridge the financial gap between existing investments and what is needed to meet the SDGs. There is also a need to enhance bilateral dialogue between business, authorities and research institutions, to speed up activities and to closely link research and the commercialisation of cutting-edge technologies. Innovative finance instruments should be used to reduce risks, create more decentralised energy production, (e.g. in agriculture and in cooperative schemes with SMEs), as well as large-scale investments and the development of a stable climate for major infrastructural energy investments.

- Digital economy: connectivity remains a challenge that affects African countries’ development. Digitalisation and better infrastructure needs to be accelerated urgently. Enhanced collaboration is needed between government and business to address technological disruption and harness the huge development opportunity that digital technology and services offer. As such, cooperation in digital infrastructure should become one of the flagship activities of EU-Africa business cooperation.
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The Joint Business Declaration

- Africa and Europe need to strengthen their high-tech cooperation, by making better use of ICT solutions for the urgent challenges facing the two continents. In line with this, we propose to the governments of the member states of the AU and EU, some broad initiatives including the installation of earth observation satellites to better monitor climate and environmental developments, improvements in water management and to fight illegal deforestation, fishing and human trafficking in Africa.

- Agriculture and agribusiness: there is an urgent need for public policies to attract investments and to implement climate smart agriculture. Innovative technology and data can help farming communities to thrive through better market access, enabling products to be sold at higher post-harvest prices and can encourage the interest of the youth in the sector. Cooperation between Africa and the EU is essential to transform African agriculture and feed a growing population.

- We call for the institutionalised establishment of a consultative forum, where the needs and interests of European and African SMEs can be communicated directly to political decision makers and administrators within the EU and AU.

- We want to have the opportunity to break new ground for public private sector dialogue and partnerships, embracing transparency, accountability, connectivity, open access and citizens’ trust. Such a dialogue will help better frame a shared vision on how to improve conditions for investment and market development, which translate into inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

- We believe that an institutional mechanism providing continuity to the strategic partnership between Europe and Africa is needed, in order to guarantee an effective follow-up of proposals tabled by the public and private sectors from both continents. The creation of a working group composed of public and private sector representatives is highly recommended in the short term. Such a working group should establish a common plan of action for future activities and oversee the implementation of existing recommendations and pertinent measures for the benefit of both sides.

- We trust that the collective voice of business organisations, as expressed with this Joint Business Declaration of the 6th EABF will be taken into consideration by political leaders and contribute to successful discussions during the 5th AU-EU Summit. As representatives of European and African businesses, we look forward to continuing business-to-business and business-to-government cooperation and dialogue in the most efficient and constructive manner.

### LIST OF ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACET</td>
<td>African Center for Economic Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific</td>
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<td>AEEP</td>
<td>Africa-EU Energy Partnership</td>
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<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<td>AGRA</td>
<td>Green Revolution in Africa</td>
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<td>AGRI</td>
<td>European Commission’s Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<td>AO</td>
<td>Appellations of Origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>AREXMA</td>
<td>Association Régionale des Exportateurs de Mangues</td>
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<td>ARMAO</td>
<td>Alliance Régionale, Mangue de l’Afrique de l’Ouest</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>AUC</td>
<td>African Union Commission</td>
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<td>BMZ</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>CBI</td>
<td>Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEA-PME</td>
<td>Confédération Européenne des Associations de Petites et Moyennes Entreprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>CEPICI</td>
<td>Centre de Promotion des Investissements en Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Climate Innovation Centre</td>
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<td>CODINORM</td>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire Normalisation, Ivorian organisation for normalisation that certifies consumable products</td>
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<td>COLEACP</td>
<td>Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee</td>
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<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>COO</td>
<td>Chief Operating Officer</td>
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<td>CTA</td>
<td>Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation</td>
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<td>D4D</td>
<td>Digital for Development</td>
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<td>DB</td>
<td>Design-Build</td>
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<td>DBO</td>
<td>Design-Build-Operate</td>
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<td>DEVCO</td>
<td>European Commission’s Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, EuropeAid</td>
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<td>DFIs</td>
<td>Development Financial Institutions</td>
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<td>DG</td>
<td>Directorate General</td>
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<td>EABF</td>
<td>EU-Africa Business Forum</td>
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<td>EARSC</td>
<td>European Association of Remote Sensing Companies</td>
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<td>EaSI</td>
<td>EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation</td>
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<td>EBCAM</td>
<td>European Business Council for Africa</td>
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<td>EBO WWN</td>
<td>European Business Organisation Worldwide Network</td>
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<td>EBRD</td>
<td>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
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<td>IPE</td>
<td>Investment Plan for Europe</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>EDF</td>
<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>EDFI</td>
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<td>EFSD</td>
<td>European Fund for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>EGNOS</td>
<td>European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service</td>
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<td>EIB</td>
<td>European Investment Bank</td>
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<td>EIP</td>
<td>European Union’s External Investment Plan</td>
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<td>ENI</td>
<td>Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EYE</td>
<td>Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs</td>
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<td>GIs</td>
<td>Geographical Indications</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
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<td>IFOs</td>
<td>Intermediary Financial Organisations</td>
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<td>IFIs</td>
<td>International Financing Institutions</td>
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<td>JAES</td>
<td>Joint Africa-EU Strategy</td>
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<td>MBD</td>
<td>Multilateral Development Bank</td>
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<td>MobiliseSME</td>
<td>Mobilities for professionals and qualified employees of MSMEs</td>
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<td>MOOCs</td>
<td>Massive Open Online Courses</td>
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<td>MSMEs</td>
<td>Micro-, Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<td>OAPI</td>
<td>Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle</td>
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<td>OBAMCI</td>
<td>Organisation des producteurs –exportateurs de Bananes, Ananas, Mangues et autres fruits de Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>OCAB</td>
<td>Organisation Centrale des producteurs exportateurs d’Ananas et de Bananes</td>
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<td>PACCI</td>
<td>Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry</td>
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<td>PIDA</td>
<td>Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa</td>
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<td>PIDA-PAP</td>
<td>PIDA Priority Action Plan</td>
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<td>RECP</td>
<td>Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme</td>
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<td>RISA</td>
<td>Réseau Ivoirien pour la Sécurité des Aliments</td>
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<td>SACAU</td>
<td>Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions</td>
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<td>SACCOs</td>
<td>Savings and Credit Cooperatives</td>
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<td>TRIPS</td>
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<td>TVET</td>
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More information about the EU-Africa Business Forum can be found on
www.euafrica-businessforum.com

and on the Africa-EU Partnership website
www.africa-eu-partnership.org