



AFRICA ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICY FORUM

Entrepreneurship Policies for Regional Inclusive and Sustainable Development

Overview of Activities

Policy makers and representatives responsible for entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) met in Kigali, on 13 and 14 December 2017 under the cooperation framework of United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and Convention Bureau (RCB) and the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN). The objectives of the workshops were:

- Sharing experiences and views, learning from best practices and formulating avenues for strengthened cooperation at the regional and continental level.
- Enhancing the current role of the African Union and NEPAD on entrepreneurship promotion and SMEs development in the continent.
- Learn about technical aspects of developing and implementing national entrepreneurship policies based on UNCTAD's "Entrepreneurship Policy Framework"(EPF) methodology and existing good practices in Africa, including how to integrate entrepreneurship in the broader sustainable development agenda (SDGs).

The forum attracted over 120 delegates (31% were women) comprised of government officials, industry and finance executives, entrepreneurs, sector associations, business development service providers and members of the development community. It comprised of sessions categorized under six areas of Entrepreneurship Policy Framework: Formulating National Strategy, Optimizing the Regulatory Environment, Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education and Development, Facilitating Technology Exchange and Innovation, Improving Access to Finance and Promoting Awareness and Network with a focus on Regional Value Chains. The Forum was opened by the Resident Coordinator, Mr. Fodé Njyae and Ms. Parminder Vir the CEO of the Tony Elumelu Foundation. As guest of honor Hon. Clare Akamanzi, Chief Executive Officer, Rwanda Development Board addressed the audience. The Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry from Ghana Hon. Carlos Kingsley Ahenkorah gave a keynote speech in the first session. High level representation from the Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda and South Africa as well country Representatives from United Nations Development Programme, and the Organization for Migration (IOM), were among audience.

There were twenty countries represented in the Forum, including delegates from Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Spain, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Zambia. Participants appreciated the active participation of entrepreneurs, private sector foundations such as the Tony Elumelu and youth networks from across the African Region. This event shared good practices and lesson learnt in developing national strategies and action plans and mobilize the contributions of a wide range of stakeholders in forging a common global agenda for enhancement of entrepreneurship to sustainable development in



Africa, within the framework of the sustainable development goals. Participants also welcomed the video message sent by the Secretary General of UNCTAD – Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi - which in the concluding session provided support to the way forward in Africa for sustainable entrepreneurship development.

Summary and Highlights of Panel Discussions

Delegates noted that entrepreneurship and its contribution to the development has already been recognized by 2063 NEPAD and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, African governments under the umbrella of NEPAD and the African Union strategy for MSMEs engaged in promoting policies, initiatives and programmes that support the development of an enabling entrepreneurial ecosystem, employing specific measures aimed at removing any regulatory roadblocks, upgrading education and skills development, facilitating access to finance, developing innovation and technology exchanges and putting emphasis at raising public awareness, reinforcing local support and regional networks. Policy makers agreed that focused interventions are required in implementing entrepreneurship policies. The case of Rwanda was illustrated as an example of how entrepreneurship has been put at the centre of all development programmes. In addition, based on the high contribution of SMEs to the economy, special business development programmes have been put in place such as the business development fund, business advisory services and community processing centres.

The case of Ghana was illustrated by the Deputy Ministry of Trade as a good example of industrial growth strategy linked to entrepreneurship development. The Government of Ghana is also improving the business environment in the 200 districts in the country accompanied by a technology enhancement programme, connecting regions and promoting trade across boundaries.

According to the OECD African Economic Outlook for 2017 presented at the Forum, policies aimed at improving skills, business clusters and financing could remove important constraints on African private enterprises. The Small and Medium Size Enterprise Master Plan for Mauritius introduced by Empretec Mauritius provided an example of how this can be achieved. The main objectives of the Master Plan are: improve SME competitiveness and growth; foster high growth potential; upgrade skills and job opportunities by addressing skill mismatch and upgrading human capital; improve design and value addition by supporting research and develop innovation and increase market access and exports.

Delegates from Cameroon, The Gambia and Tanzania gave testimonials of the usefulness of the UNCTAD Entrepreneurship Policy Framework in initiating the national entrepreneurship strategies and action plans, which are already in different stage of implementation in each country. The representative of the Government of the Gambia illustrated the objective of the National Entrepreneurship Policy: to tear down obstacles and abolish burdensome requirements that hamper business operations, set efficient bankruptcy procedures and provide a fair second chance to honest failed entrepreneurs; to upgrade entrepreneurship education and skills, and to facilitate access to finance and support new businesses mobilizing innovation and technology to solve environmental challenges, and spreading ICT, recognizing



entrepreneurs as creators of jobs and prosperity with a focus on the inclusion of vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth. The representative of the Government of Tanzania assessed that despite recent positive development such as the launch of the National Entrepreneurship Strategy, the business environment is still considered unfriendly. Tanzania has consistently ranked above 100 among 195 economies in the annual World Bank Doing Business Reports. About 90% of all business is informal and the private sector continues to complain about complexity, multiplicity, unpredictability and high cost of the regulatory requirements. The adopted strategy will aim to build the national entrepreneurship ecosystem in Tanzania, for enhanced entrepreneurial spirit and performance of economic activities, leading to the creation of new start-ups and the formalization and growth of domestic MSMEs, upgraded productive capacities as well as innovative and sustainable solutions to current environmental and social challenges. This is to be achieved through addressing the critical gaps and barriers in the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Delegates stressed the need to strengthening MSMEs' participation in regional and global markets as one of the priorities. A delegate from ECOWAS urged the elaboration of regional entrepreneurship policies as a trigger to reforms at national level. Participants agreed that much work remains to be done to address the myriad challenges facing MSMEs, and pledged to give intensified attention to improving leadership and governance, fighting corruption and finding positive solutions to ease formalization, avoiding coercive measures.

There was a consensus to promote policy, business and regulatory environments that foster the long-term growth potential of MSMEs, recognizing the contribution of e-government and digitalization to improve transparency and fast track procedures. The examples of Mauritius and Rwanda have been showcased as examples of bold measures to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem (e.g. the sandbox regulatory, the visa simplification, the one-stop-shop for business establishment and e-registration).

Delegates concluded that entrepreneurship education was critical to strengthen African skills development and commended countries that embedded entrepreneurship education in the curricula such as Botswana, Rwanda and Tanzania. The Empretec model as well as the Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Programme (TEEP) in Africa were highlighted as good programmes to change the mindset and development of entrepreneurial skills. The CEO of TEEP stressed that for entrepreneurs to succeed, they need more than just financing capital. The mentoring, skills and capacity building are equally important to start and grow their businesses. The youth are at the centre to enhancing the entrepreneurial spirit, therefore participants pointed to the need to start with the mindset to foster and develop entrepreneurship skills. The important role of the diaspora has been highlighted and the case of the Africa Scotland Forum presented as a best practice mobilizing skills development, financing and networking.

The Ministry of Small and Medium Size Enterprises of Cameroon reinforced the lack of entrepreneurial education in national education systems and highlighted key proposals to respond to this growing need.



In particular, the need to include the civil society and bring together private sector and main administrations in charge of education, focus on the training of trainers and on Information and communication technologies (ICT).

Representatives of women networks elaborated on the needs of women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurial activities continue to be in the sectors with low productivity. Moreover, inequalities, the negative social and cultural environments are found to be the largest roadblocks for women. Entrepreneurship education for women was advocated. As a good practice, the WeCreate network, The African Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum of Women (AWIEF) and the Akilah Institute were presented. The latter institution based in Rwanda is the only University for women present in Africa, providing a platform for skills and entrepreneurship development.

Participants also stressed the important role that the digital economy plays in enhancing access to the global market and driving innovation for MSMEs and recognized the importance of leveraging the digital economy in Africa to expand internationalization opportunities for MSMEs by widening access to the internet and building capacities to enable MSMEs to adopt internet-based models. The importance of STEMs, to solve concrete challenges was highlighted. SDG Lab, provided a new example of a network to mobilize policy coherence and facilitate investing in SDGs, leveraging the power of cities and public private partnerships.

Campus such Sloane 22 in South Africa, with a continental reach, and co-organized by Nigeria and Kenya, are providing a conducive environment to power the next generation of African entrepreneurs. The cluster approach in Ghana has also been proved a valuable tool for decentralized development, providing solutions for technology exchanges. In this scheme, the government is only an enabler for private sector development. The factors affecting the upgrading of commodities dependent countries – input-output structure, geographic features, and governance - were define challenging for African countries. Participants shared the view that of crucial importance is the socio-economic and institutional context of the host (or producing) country; along with the governance structure of each commodity supply chain.

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With regards to access to finance, selected speakers pointed to the important role played by development financial institutions such Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) in South Africa that can take higher risks and build a pipeline for banks, facilitating funding without collaterals unless the loan is for purchasing



equipment. Managing risks for entrepreneurs is also important and insurance schemes can provide solutions. Fintech are innovative financial mechanisms. GroFin targets growing SMEs with growth financing, access to value chains, and it has provided measurable results by reducing SMEs mortality rates. Delegates also stressed the importance of financial literacy and inclusion, and endorsed the resolutions of the UNCTAD workshop held in Nairobi, July 2017.

Participants raised the importance of networks such as GEN Africa and ANDE to facilitate business development and market penetration for start-ups. The representative of the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency analysed the importance of public private sector partnership and engaging the civil society. Fairs, social media, and creating social spaces such as Sunday markets help positioning entrepreneurship. Peer to peer networks in Africa are still lacking to develop and tap in the African market. Opening borders as the Government of Rwanda has done sets a good example of how you could bring African entrepreneurs together creating a regional market.

Technology is helping networks building. For example, blockchain technology is offering new solutions to develop agriculture value chains, to record transactions and to reduce time from farm to market, integrating actors such as accreditation and certification bodies. E-commerce platforms, incubators and accelerators provide the pipeline of start-ups. They often are left out of policy consultation. Participants agreed on the importance of changing mind set about local appreciation of African goods and services, strengthening African networks, and having the vision for building the new generation of African entrepreneurs. Delegates appreciated the performance of countries such as Mauritius and Rwanda, that rose to first and second places to do business in Africa. They set an example that even tiny countries can tap into regional and global markets. The key concluding message was that Africans should trust more the quality of African goods, put in place the quality standards of excellence and believe more in what we can do together, coming together as one.

Conclusion and Way Forward:

This first edition of the Africa Entrepreneurship Policy Forum was insightful and it showcased credible and well performing initiatives in the region to the relevant and key stakeholders. It illustrated and provided examples of viable and successful case studies regarding private and public sector collaboration in entrepreneurship policy design and implementation.

Participants stressed the need to work on good governance, forging partnerships engaging private, public sector and civil society. It was also highlighted that entrepreneurs should lead the policy making in this area. Access to market and creating networks across countries in Africa will facilitate building new connections with players for sustainable development.

Despite time constraints and conflict with the agenda of other international and regional high level meetings, a satisfactory number and seniority level of attendants to the Forum have been mobilized. A general observation by participants was that the forum topics were of interest to the audience. The policy

makers present have shown a strong commitment in examining and implementing the appropriate policy actions adapted to their respective constituencies.

In addition, participants also showed a strong commitment in continuing collaboration at regional and continental level, and requested UNCTAD to facilitate this process. Participants also welcomed the video message sent by the Secretary General of UNCTAD – Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi - which in the concluding session provided support to the way forward in Africa for sustainable entrepreneurship development. The Secretary General stated “We can say the ingredients for a good entrepreneurship policy are known, but each country must choose its own recipe, and add the local flavours.”



Media Relations & Communications Activities:

Social Media Updates – The hashtag #AfricaEPF was used to collate all conversation on the conference. 44 users used the hashtag and the total reach of unique users who viewed the hashtag was 135,607.

Press Briefing - Several media sessions and interview took place during the conference where heads of UNCTAD, RDB, 22 on Sloane, SEFA and high level personalities addressed the media (including CNBC Africa) on the agenda and content of the conference.

Press Release – A press release communicating the objectives of the Africa Entrepreneurship Policy Conference was issued to media in attendance by co-organizers Global Entrepreneurship Network.

Pre Event Press Release: <https://genglobal.org/gen-partners-african-entrepreneurship-policy-forum>

Event Press Release: <http://22onsloane.co/news/gen-and-the-united-nations-partner-on-african-entrepreneurship-policy-forum>



Editorial Coverage: <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/225591/>

TV Coverage:

<https://www.cnbc africa.com/videos/2017/12/15/bridging-entrepreneurial-skills-gap-in-africa/>

<https://www.cnbc africa.com/videos/2017/12/15/overcoming-small-business-challenges-and-failures/>

<https://www.cnbc africa.com/videos/2017/12/14/transforming-africas-educational-system-to-empower-the-youth/>

<https://www.cnbc africa.com/videos/2017/12/15/argon-asset-management-founder-speaks-on-boosting-cross-border-trade-in-east-africa/>

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Evaluation results

In a post forum evaluation, 88% of the participants expressed the view that the overall conference was relevant, and 12% somewhat relevant. The ratings for the other aspects are reported Annex 3.

The following recommendations and remarks were made:

- “We have to open our borders and minds to put action to our discussions on each session.”
- “We will note the discussion points and collaborate with our government to enhance them.”
- “More entrepreneurs should be invited to the forum; and not only from urban areas but as well the rural.”
- “I appreciate the Empretec programme and recommend that is available to entrepreneurs in each country Africa.”
- “Well organized a good variety of players and speakers.”
- “Presentations and contact lists should be made available to ease of follow up and coordination.”
- There were suggestions to extend time to allow for in depth Q & A sessions
- Include information on local content policies and promotion/ commercialization of local products.
- Conference material to be provided upon confirmation of attendance.
- Carry out additional conferences and workshops of a similar nature on a regular basis.



Annex 1: Programme

13 December African Entrepreneurship Policy Forum

08:00 **Registration and Info Pack**

08:30 **Opening Remarks**

- Dr. Fodé Ndiaye, Resident Coordinator, United Nations, Rwanda
- Ms. Parminder Vir OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Tony Elumelu Foundation

Guests of Honor

- Hon. Clare Akamanzi, Chief Executive Officer, Rwanda Development Board

10:00 **Coffee Break**

Introduction

- Ms. Fiorina Mugione, Chief, Entrepreneurship Section, UNCTAD

10:30 **Session 1: Entrepreneurship and 2016/SDG agenda**

This session highlights the role and significance of entrepreneurs in promoting the sustainable socio-economic development of Africa. It will highlight efforts to foster business activity in economically stagnant regions and communities. Social and environmentally-related objectives as espoused by these goals open the door for 'green and social entrepreneurship', which has the potential to create 15-60 million additional jobs globally and at the same time creates vast scope for entrepreneurial innovation and activity.

Moderator: Ms. Roselyn Sinemani, Deputy Country Director, United Nations Development Programme

- H.E. Carlos Kingsley Ahenkorah, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry of Ghana
- Ms. Parminder Vir, Chief Executive Officer, Tony Elumelu Foundation
- Mr. Arthur Minsat, Head of Unit – Africa, Europe & Middle-East (Acting), OECD Development Centre
- Mr. Sanjay G. Mungur, Director, Empretec Mauritius
- Ms. Nambula Kachumi, Executive Director, WeCreate

Group Discussion led by Ms. Irene Ochem, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF).



12:00 **Lunch**

14:00 **Session 2: Discussions of EPF Pillars for Africa: Optimizing the Regulatory Environment**

Given the challenges that exist in each African country, what conditions and incentives need to be in place to create an enabling business environment to start and grow new enterprises at regional level.

Moderator: Ms. Fiorina Mugione, Chief, Entrepreneurship Section, UNCTAD

- Mr. Emmanuel Hategeka, Chief Operating Officer, Rwanda Development Board
- Mr. David Tarimo, Regional Head of Tax, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
- Mr. Edward Kessy, National Economic Empowerment Council, Tanzania
- Mr. Shumu Teferra, Director, University Industry Linkages Programme, Ministry of Industry, Ethiopia
- Mr. David Roger Njoungang, Technical Adviser, Ministry of Small and Medium Size Enterprises, Cameroon
- Mr. Aphrodice Mutagana, General Manager, K-Lab, Rwanda

Group Discussion led by UNCTAD

15:30 **Coffee**

16:00 **Session 3: Discussions of EPF pillars for Africa: Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education and Skills Development**

To strengthen African entrepreneurship education and skills development what solutions and challenges are educators facing to enhance entrepreneurial talent, managerial and labour skills.

Moderator: Ms. Jacqueline N. Semakula, Business Instructor, Akilah Institute.

- Mr. Ketema Meskella, Director General, Higher Education
- Ms. Owanari Duke, Director, Empretec Nigeria
- Mr. Hassan Gaye, Director Industry & Investment, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, The Gambia
- Mr. Awel Uwihanganye, CEO, LéO Africa Institute, Aspen Global Leadership Network
- Mr. Festus Olatunde, Executive Director, Africa Forum Scotland
- Mr. Achille Nagasam, Technical Expert, Ministry of Small and Medium Size Enterprises, Cameroon

17:00 Group Discussions led by Martin Ruvugabigwi, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Network of Young Entrepreneurs in Rwanda

Evening: Official Dinner



14 December African Entrepreneurship Policy Forum

09:00 Opening Remarks

- Ms. Tatiana Krylova, Head, Enterprise Branch
- Ms. Bisila Bokoko, Chief Executive Officer, BBES International

09:30 Session 4: Discussions of EPF pillars for Africa: Facilitating Technology Exchanges and Innovation

An examination of initiatives facilitating the promotion of innovation and access to technology affect the ability of SMEs to upgrade into high value-added activities, improve their productivity and compete in regional and international markets.

Moderator: Mr. Mooketsi Tekere, Botswana Chairman, Global Entrepreneurship Network

- Ms. Alesimo Mwangi, Research Director, SEA Africa & 22 ON SLOANE
- Mr. Ephraim Rwamwenge, Chief Executive Officer, Rwa Business Group
- Mr. Nana Tweneboah-Boateng, Senior Technical Advisor, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ghana
- Ms. Chichi Umesi, Advisor, SDG Lab

Group Discussion led by Mr. Charles Ocici, Director, Enterprise Uganda

10:30 Coffee break

11:00 Session 5: Discussions of EPF pillars for Africa: Improving Access to Finance

The aim of this session is to define the strategy for financial literacy, advancing financial education and financial inclusion. It will highlight key initiatives at regional level and clarify roles of financial inclusion institutions, continental investment funds and private sector.

Moderator: Ms. Irene Ochem, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF)

- Mr. Thakhani Makhuvha, Chief Executive Officer, Small Enterprise Finance Agency
- Mr. Lubega Ibrahim Kaddunabbi, Chief Executive Officer, Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda
- Mr. Mthobi Seseli, Founder & Executive Chairman, Argon Financial Group
- Mr. Walter Ogwal, Director - East Africa, GroFin Africa Fund
- Mr. Livingston Nkuusi, Branches Coordinator, Business Development Fund

12:30 Lunch

13:30 Session 6: Discussions of EPF pillars for Africa: Promoting Awareness and Networking



Negative socio-cultural perceptions about entrepreneurship can act as significant barriers to enterprise creation. The session will review regional outreach and awareness campaigns as well as how to strengthen existing regional networks among entrepreneurs. This panel will also provide an overview of regional value chains, including trends, emerging risks, challenges and business opportunities.

Moderator: Ms. Bisila Bokoko, CEO BBES International

- Mr. Momodou Drammeh, Director Enterprise Support and Project Coordinator Empretec Gambia at Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA)
- Ms. Mmbodi Rambau-Nesengani, Senior Impact Development Specialist Industrial Development Corporation (IDC)
- Ms. Josephine Mwangi, Communications Lead, Nailab
- Mr. Charles Ocici, Director, Enterprise Uganda

14:30 **Session 7: Way Forward**

- Mr. Fodé Ndiaye, Resident Coordinator, United Nations
- Ms. Diane Sayizonga, Head of SEZs and Export, Rwanda Development Board

Reports of the chairs of the discussions and breakout sessions on how to measure policy effectiveness by each area, open discussion, and adoption of outcome

15:30 **Closing Remarks by UNCTAD**

16:00 **Cocktail**

Annex 2: List of Attendees (Provided separately)

Annex 3: Evaluation Results

	Very Relevant	Somewhat Relevant	Not so relevant	Not at all
Q1. Overall rating of the conference	88%	13%		
Q2. How was the conference content?	83%	13%		
Q3. Did the workshop meet your expectations	71%	17%	4%	
Q4. Please assess each of the conference elements:				
Entrepreneurship and 2016/SDG agenda	63%	29%		
Optimizing the Regulatory Environment	63%	25%	4%	
Enhancing Entrepreneurship Education and Skills Development	67%	25%	4%	
Facilitating Technology Exchanges and Innovation	67%	21%	8%	
Improving Access to Finance	71%	17%	8%	
Promoting Awareness and Networking	67%	21%	4%	