



NEPAD NEWS

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Agenda 2063 will work because it is about changing mind-sets

Midrand - "Agenda 2063, Africa's vision for peace, security and prosperity will work because it is about changing mind-sets," outgoing African Union Commission Chair, H.E Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma stated during a reception in Midrand, South Africa.

Dr Dlamini Zuma pointed out that Africa's vision for the next fifty years is bound to work as it was put together by the African people themselves through an inclusive continental, consultative process.

The NEPAD Agency held a reception to 'welcome home' outgoing African Union Commission Chair, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma on March 15. Dr Dlamini Zuma officially handed over to the new AUC Chairperson, H.E Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat on March 14, 2017.

In his welcome remarks, Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency lauded Dr Dlamini Zuma for her dedication and professionalism during her tenure at the African Union Commission.

"Dr Dlamini Zuma served with distinction as Chairperson of the African Union Commission for four and a half years from October 2012 until March 2017. The importance of her leadership at the AU Commission can never be underestimated. Her stewardship of Agenda 2063 has ensured that Africa has an implementable vision for the present and for the future," Dr Mayaki stated.

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Africa's vision for the next fifty years is bound to work as it was put together by the African people themselves

- Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma

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Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency and Outgoing African Union Commission Chair, H.E Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma at the NEPAD Agency

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Dr Dlamini Zuma maintained that the NEPAD Agency has not been 'supporting' the work of the African Union on the continent, but has actually been working alongside it in ensuring that the lives of Africans are transformed for the better. She also stressed that as outlined in Agenda 2063, the greatest resource that Africa has is its people. Dr Dlamini Zuma therefore called for an ardent need to invest in the youth.

Speaking at the same event, Mme Bineta Diop, AUC Chairperson's Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, described Dr Dlamini Zuma as an exemplary leader who has made African women proud to be who they are and to always aspire for more.

Zambia's High Commissioner to South Africa, H.E Mr Emmanuel Mwamba, spoke on behalf of the African diplomatic corps in the country. Mr Mwamba also pointed out the need for the continent to invest more in its people, and also to put the necessary infrastructure in place in order to continue to move forward.

The event at the offices of the NEPAD Agency was attended by representatives from several embassies in South Africa, representatives from Women in Maritime, the ANC Women's League, South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation, the Pan-African Parliament and numerous other organisations.

Pan-African effort needed to lead the global fight against TB

Forget AIDS, malaria, SARS or Ebola. The real threat to global health is an old and well-identified foe that caused nearly 25% of all deaths in Europe in the 18th century: tuberculosis. Unfortunately, the world is being complacent about it. The fight against TB has lagged behind. Who knows for instance that TB is among the top ten causes of death globally and the leading infectious cause of death with 1.5 million people dying every year due to the disease? The United Nations aims to eradicate TB by 2030 but in order to achieve this bold objective, policy makers and international bodies should remember some of the lessons learned during the fight against malaria and HIV/AIDS.

Today, the TB epidemic is particularly prevalent in Africa. But, beyond the huge challenges it poses to health and economic development on the continent, the hot spots found in Africa form pockets of resistance and hotbeds that could jeopardize the global control of tuberculosis and undermine global health. For instance, out of the estimated 10.4 million people who fell ill with TB in 2015, 2.7 million originated from Africa. The continent accounts for 281 new TB cases per 100,000 population. This exceeds the World Health Organization (WHO) emergency threshold of 250 per 100,000 and accounts for 34% of TB deaths.

Compounding Africa's response to TB is the proliferation of Multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB), which may be even more prevalent than previously appreciated. MDR TB, which infects an estimated 450,000 people worldwide every year, is not new. It has been recognised since the first WHO global survey on drug resistance in the late 1990s.

However, research shows that drug resistance has reached alarming levels with the emergence of strains that are virtually untreatable with existing drugs. The recent report of an outbreak of extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR TB) in South Africa, with its extremely high case-fatality rate, has drawn wide attention. Co-infection with HIV/AIDS also exacerbates the TB challenge in Africa. There is a real danger that these new forms of TB expand out of Africa because of the highly contagious nature of TB.

If the continent is to win the war against TB by 2030, efforts have to be targeted where it matters most: in the vulnerable communities and hot spots for the spread of the disease such as mining communities (more vulnerable because of silica dust exposure), transport corridors, labour sending communities, correctional facilities, migrants and refugees. The unique relationships between TB and HIV, TB and poverty, and TB and mining require a multi-sectorial integrated approach. For instance, involving organisations responsible for labour and mining will facilitate tackling TB as an occupational disease. Investment from the private sector can also accelerate the fight against TB in Africa.

Also, as is often the case, the best solutions to common challenges facing African countries are often found at the regional level. As a communicable disease, TB moves across borders and hence efforts need to focus on tackling the challenge as a regional public health challenge. The good news is that regional efforts have been initiated in Regional Economic Communities. For instance, the Southern Africa Development Community region adopted Harmonised TB Management Guidelines and Cross-border Referrals in the Mining Sector. This is the first true effort to coordinate a regional policy and should serve as a basis for future action.

African countries need to build on these initiatives by investing in rapid diagnosis and treatment of cases. Unfortunately, most health systems on the continent face huge challenges, including limited human resources and financing, weak laboratory diagnostic capacity, weak and non-standardised TB prevention and treatment strategies and protocols as well as weak occupational health systems.

The World TB day commemoration on March 24 presents African governments with an opportunity to take stock of actions being taken and galvanise efforts towards ending TB by 2030. One piece of good news on this front is that the UN has grasped the emergency and will hold a high level meeting on TB in 2018. This will allow the international community to define a global strategy that will also be the topic of a WHO global ministerial conference on the fight against TB to be convened in November 2017 in Moscow. Africa is preparing itself to defend a common vision to tackle the disease.

TB presents a huge challenge to Africa but this comes with an opportunity to completely rethink our health care systems. The continent also has the opportunity to take a collective stand and be a driving force against the spread of this disease. As the main victim of the disease, Africa certainly deserves international support, but it should also aim at proving it can lead the struggle for a world freed from TB.



L to R: Hon Roy Ugo, Permanent Secretary of Cabinet Affairs in Nigeria; Hon (Princess) Gloria Akobundu, National Coordinator and Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD Nigeria; Mrs Estherine Fotabong, NEPAD Agency's Director of Programme Coordination and Implementation; Vincent Oparah, Project Manager, NEPAD Agency; Per Börjegen, Project Manager for the Skills Initiative for Africa, GIZ

The goal of the Skills Initiative for Africa is to strengthen the occupational prospects of young people, especially women and youths.

Launch of the Skills Initiative for Africa programme in Nigeria

Abuja - The growing extent of youth unemployment poses a fundamental challenge for the whole of Africa.

In total, around 60 percent of the unemployed are under the age of 25 and young women are especially affected. It is against this backdrop that the Skills Initiative for Africa promotes occupational prospects of young Africans through the support of innovative skills development programmes and close cooperation with the private sector.

In response to the challenge of youth unemployment, the African Union Commission and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), initiated the Skills Initiative for Africa. Execution of this programme is being undertaken by the NEPAD Agency with support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale und Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and KfW Development Bank.

The goal of the Skills Initiative for Africa is to strengthen the occupational prospects of young people, especially women and youths. Implementing countries were selected to act as multipliers in their respective regions. The countries are Tunisia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa.

The Skills Initiative for Africa programme was launched in Abuja, Nigeria on 28 February by the NEPAD Agency. Speaking on behalf of HE Engr. Babachir David Lawal (Secretary to the Federal Government of Nigeria) during the launch, Honourable Roy Ugo, Permanent Secretary of Cabinet Affairs in Nigeria, commended the programmatic interventions of the NEPAD Agency on the continent, particularly in Nigeria.

Hon Ugo stated that the Skills Initiative for Africa programme is timely and aligns with the current administration's Change Agenda, to create economic opportunities in the country, especially amongst the youth. He pledged Nigeria's support to the programme, to ensure that it produces the desired positive effects on the employment sector.

Mrs Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, NEPAD Agency's Director of Programme Coordination and Implementation, informed attendees at the launch that the programme is informed by the need to address skills gap on the continent. In her opening remarks, she pointed out that there is a disconnection between education, training systems and the labour market.

"Therefore, it is incumbent upon the continent to think differently and come up with skill sets that could fill the employment opportunities, create entrepreneurs, as well as provide mentorship to trainees, so that they can effectively succeed in businesses after vocational training," Mrs Fotabong said.

The launch of the Skills Initiative for Africa programme was co-hosted by NEPAD Nigeria under the leadership of Hon (Princess) Gloria Akobundu, the National Coordinator/ CEO of NEPAD Nigeria. In her remarks, Princess Akobundu explained that the Skills Initiative for Africa presents an opportunity for the missing middle of society to actively engage in the economic sphere of the country, through gainful employment and entrepreneurship. She called on Nigerian youths to make good use of the opportunity provided by the initiative.



I nternational Women's Day: 8 March

Message from Dr Ibrahim Mayaki
CEO, NEPAD Agency

In recognising the achievements of women from different spheres of life, we commemorate the 107th International Women's Day. However, we take cognisance that gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights as enshrined in international laws, African Union and NEPAD policies and frameworks are not yet fully implemented on the African continent, nor claimed by women themselves.

In light of this, the World Economic Forum predicts that the gender gap will not be entirely closed until 2186. This, however, is too long a wait. It is for this reason that the NEPAD Agency is in full support of this year's theme, **Be Bold for Change**.

Despite noted policy inaction and setbacks, we celebrate the promotion of gender equality, increased capacities and autonomy of African women.

We recognise the advancement of gender equality, women empowerment and women human rights in various cultures and communities, that are promoting the attainment of inclusive growth and prosperity. We also celebrate men who are champions in contributing immensely towards the gender agenda.

As the NEPAD Agency, we have the desire to strengthen African institutions and organisations, including grassroots women organisations, to play a catalytic role in accelerating the attainment of a prosperous peaceful and secure African continent, in which its daughters and sons will fully enjoy and participate in the creation of a better future for all.

Together, let us continue making strides towards "The Africa We Want" - **An Africa where Development is People-Driven, Unleashing the Potential of its Women and Youth!**



NEPAD staff commemorating International Women's Day in Midrand, South Africa

P IDA making headway

Johannesburg - Senior Energy Advisor of the NEPAD Agency, Professor Mosad Elmissiry, says Africa is committed to fast tracking largescale provision of energy.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of Africa Energy Indaba [held last month] in Johannesburg, South Africa, Elmissiry said the continent is prioritising its energy generation and transmission to drive economic growth and job creation.

The NEPAD official said, "We want to increase people's access to energy and to make the access affordable, secure and reliable. We are focusing on massive infrastructural projects as a faster way to increase access to energy."

"Governments should play a leading role in working with unions, civil societies and private sectors to drive infrastructural projects," Elmissiry said.

PIDA expansion

The professor said this year the programme is targeting to link the East and Southern African power pools, through Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia and connect Central and West African power pools through Kenya and Tanzania, media reported.

"At the continental level, we want to connect four power pool corridors and eventually have one massive power pool. China has been playing a crucial role in this," Elmissiry said.

He added that the organisation is also looking forward to working with other development partners such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

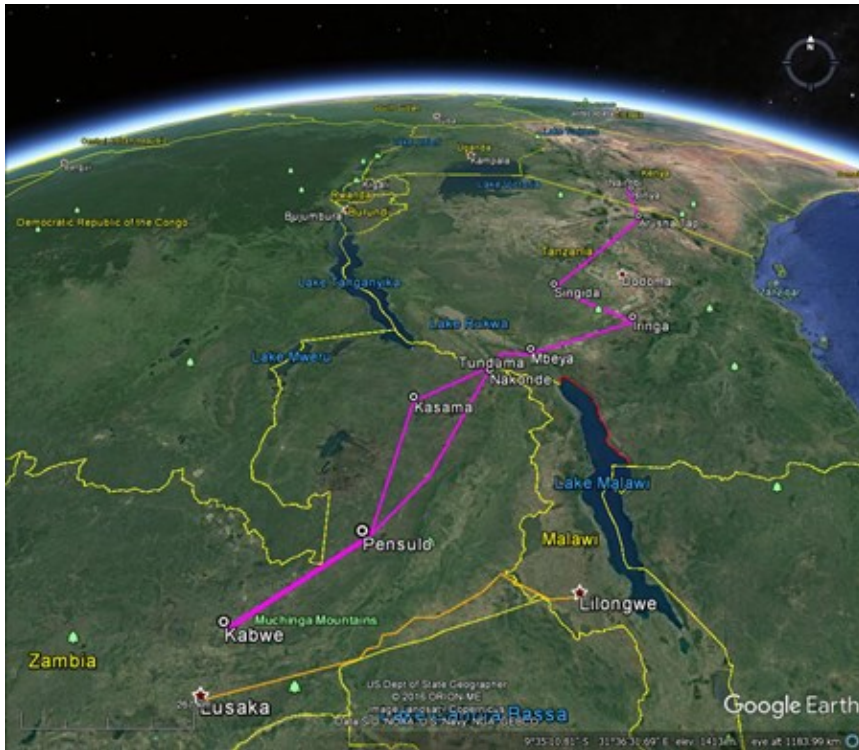
Bankable renewable energy projects

Elmissiry also stated that one of the challenges facing African countries is to have bankable renewable energy projects since priority projects have to be first identified by countries before planning and feasibility studies are conducted.

PIDA is anticipating an increase of Africa's installed power generation capacity to 700GW by 2040.

Through full implementation of the programme, the continent will reap savings on electricity production costs of \$30 billion a year through power interconnectors, media reported.

Source: ESI Africa



The ZTK Interconnector will link the Southern African Power Pool to the East African Power Pool, creating the largest power pool on the continent - stretching from Cape to Cairo!

Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya Interconnector project shows progress

The Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya (ZTK) interconnector is a power transmission line that originates from Kabwe in Zambia, passing through Tanzania to Nairobi in Kenya. The Interconnector will link the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) to the East African Power Pool (EAPP) thus creating the largest power pool on the continent stretching from Cape to Cairo!

It will enhance energy security in the two power pools by giving member states access to abundant thermal power resources in the South, hydro power resources (in Ethiopia, Zambia and Zimbabwe), renewable energy in the North (Sudan and Egypt) and the possibility of access to the European energy markets through Morocco via the North Africa Power Transmission line.

ZTK is one of the PIDA Priority Projects and the NEPAD Agency's Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Programme (RIITP) is working closely with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP) and the Office for Promoting Private Power Investment (OPPI) in Zambia to finalise the project packaging in order for construction to commence on the remaining sections. RIITP support is provided through the PIDA Capacity Building Program (PIDA CAP) funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

The Zambian segments consist of a multiplicity of bidirectional 330kV single circuit transmission lines, which will be constructed in two phases. Construction of the last segment of the first phase (i.e. 243km long Kasama – Nakonde section), commenced in 2017 through support from the Chinese government.

The Tanzanian segment of the ZTK is the longest section of the interconnector, stretching for 1248km from Tunduma (border with Zambia) to Namanga (border with Tanzania). It consists of four bidirectional 400 kV double circuit sections.

Construction of the Iringa – Singida section (Tanzanian segment) commenced in December 2013 and is scheduled for completion in 2017. This section was co-financed by the Government of the Republic of Tanzania, European Investment Bank, the World Bank, AfDB, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Korea Economic Development Cooperation Fund.

In addition the AfDB and JICA are also co-financing US\$91m for the Singida- Namanga Section (Tanzanian segment) whose construction started in 2016 and is expected to be completed in 2017.

The Kenyan section runs from the border with Tanzania at Namanga to Nairobi via Isinya. Construction of the section from Namanga to Isinya started in March 2016 and is being financed by AfDB and the Government of Kenya and is scheduled for completion in 2018. The section will be a 150km, 400 kV bidirectional double circuit transmission line with a design capacity of 2000MW.

Progress is also being made in the financial packaging of the remaining sections within the three countries. The Feasibility Study, Environmental Social Impact Assessment and detailed design studies for the Zambia – Tanzania link as well as phase two sections in Zambia are currently underway will be completed by October 2017. This will surely spell good news for the three countries and the rest of Africa as the ultimate aim is to interconnect Africa and to integrate the Continent.

Reducing post-harvest loss to increase the value of vegetable products

Food and nutrition security continues to pose a challenge to West African countries, taking into consideration the rapidly rising population growth, coupled with dwindling natural resources such as land and the stress posed on water resources by climate change. Vegetable production is one of the major options that can significantly contribute to food and nutrition security with limited risk associated to expansion of production land. Vegetables are known to be essential sources of micro nutrients which are critical for reducing high levels of under 5 malnutrition. Africa has about 10 percent of children who are moderate to severely wasted.

The potential of addressing these challenges is hindered by high post-harvest losses at various stages of the vegetable value chain. In many West African countries, vegetable production, although widespread, continues to be dominated by women and youth. Vegetable production is a major contributor to youth employment and a source of stable income for women folk, especially those from rural areas.

Decisive action in addressing post-harvest losses in the vegetable value chain can stem youth migration as well as reduce the income gap between men and women in the agriculture sector. On the economic front, a substantial amount of national income is spent on the import of exotic vegetable products, thereby widening the trade balance deficit. The availability of locally produced vegetable products that can compete with exotic ones in Africa's local markets will positively impact on the balance of payment and improve agricultural contribution to gross domestic products.

Currently, substantial amounts of vegetable products are lost through limited availability of technologies and related infrastructure for post-harvest activities. This negatively impacts on the income of vegetable growers and the pursuit for national food and nutrition security. Post-harvest losses in the vegetable value chain are associated with the perishable nature of the products and this is made worse by the weak links in the post-harvest value chain itself. Advocacy is mostly aimed at curbing post-harvest losses in the vegetable value chain focus on the cold chain and its related sophistication. However, for West African countries, proper training and orientation of stakeholder within the post-harvest value chain (producers, middlemen and women, and retailers) and other infrastructure and logistics-related actors is more critical than sophisticated machinery geared towards maintaining the cold chain.

Clearly, the inadequate supply of public goods that is largely provided by the public sector perpetuates the high rate of post-harvest losses in the vegetable value chain. Majority of vegetable producing centres are located in remote areas with poor road infrastructure and inadequate transport network. These conditions are disincentives for effective private sector participation in the vegetable post-harvest value chain, making the cost of transportation expensive for both producers and marketers. Coupled with these challenges are limited access to electricity and technical know-how for appropriate technologies to facilitate proper vegetable storage techniques and methods.



Realising the full potential of the contribution of vegetables in the national economy depends largely on addressing bottlenecks in the post-harvest value chain. However, limited investments in processing and packaging facilities are a major hindrance in improving quality and lengthening shelf lives of vegetables produced in West African countries. These factors, coupled with limited marketing outlets are contributing to product glutting and price volatility. Majority of producers produce the same type of crops, harvest around the same time and target the same markets. Consequently most of the products are not sold and thereby rendered lost or attract prices that provide no economic incentives for producers.

Recommendations are that:

- Governments ought to consider matching grants to private sector actors in the vegetable post-harvest value chain.
- Addressing post-harvest loss in the vegetable value chain requires strategic cooperation and communication between research and extension. In this regard, a strategic plan focusing on research and extension on the vegetable post-harvest value chain would be worth considering.
- Ministries responsible for agriculture together with the Ministries of Roads and Infrastructure need to produce an action plan for upgrading of feeder roads targeting vegetable production sites and mobilise resources to implement the action plan.
- Facilitation of market linkages with agribusinesses by developing strategic alliances with established marketing outlets such as supermarkets and hotels needs to be embarked on.
- Developing and implementing communication and sensitisation strategies and tools on appropriate timing and methods of harvesting is an ardent requirement.
- Developing and implementing nutrition education programmes is also key.

Source: Policy brief written by Momodou SW Sowe, Ministry of Agriculture CPCU The Gambia; Philip Conteh, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, Sierra Leone; Joseph S Koroma, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, Sierra Leone; Nicacio J Pereira, Ministerio da Agricultura & De Senvolvimento Rural, Gunee Bissau; Bakary KS Sanyang, Ministry of Agriculture Planning Services Unit, The Gambia

7 Things you need to know about the African Union (AU) Model Law on Medical Products Regulation

Officially endorsed by African Heads of State and Government at the African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2016

Legislative framework aimed at guiding AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in harmonising medical products regulatory systems

Developed as a result of the partnership between the African Union Commission (AUC), NEPAD Agency, Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and other key cooperating partners

The AU Model Law is available in four (4) different languages; English, French, Portuguese and Arabic to ensure that it is appreciated across African countries that speak different languages

Contributes to the AU Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (PMPA) and the Roadmap for Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for the AIDS, TB and malaria response in Africa

Strengthens national Laws on medical product regulation and promotes autonomous National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs). AU Member States are at liberty to domesticate and adapt the AU Model Law to ensure alignment with their Constitutional principles and legal systems

Satisfies World Health Organization (WHO) best practices on medical products regulation and is aligned with WHO recommendations and international safety and quality standards



Zanzibar uses AU Model Law to amend medical products legislation

Zanzibar – The Zanzibar House of Representatives approved the bill amending the legislation on medical products regulation based on the African Union (AU) Model Law on medical products regulation. Following this development, H.E the President of Zanzibar, Ali Mohamed Shein is expected to append his signature before the statute is officially published in the Government Gazette.

Other AU Member States that have already utilised the AU Model Law to review and develop their national laws include Lesotho, Seychelles, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast. The aim is to have at least 25 AU Member States using a version of the AU Model Law on medical products regulation that befits their country context by 2020.

The AU Model Law on medical products regulation addresses the challenges of weak or non-existent medical products regulatory systems and assists African countries in addressing the gaps and inconsistencies in their legislations.

The aim of the AU Model Law is to accelerate access to innovative, lifesaving health technologies to the African population by facilitating harmonisation of medical products regulatory systems on the continent.

Zanzibar Food and Drugs Board (ZFDB) Registrar, Dr Burhani Othman Simai thanked the different stakeholders and partners for their endless support and encouragement that has led to this achievement as it will benefit the people of Zanzibar.

The AU Model Law was officially endorsed by the Heads of State and Government at the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2016. Following the endorsement, Regional Roadmaps for implementation of the AU Model Law have been developed and African countries can enact a version of the AU Model Law to strengthen their national regulatory capacity.

The African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation (AMRH) Initiative played a critical role in getting the AU Model Law adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government. The AMRH Initiative is a partnership comprised of the NEPAD Agency, African Union Commission, Pan African Parliament, the World Health Organisation, World Bank, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and UK Department for International Development.

The goal of AMRH is to strengthen the capacity for regulation of medical products in Africa and promote harmonisation of medicines regulatory systems. The development process of the AU Model Law was also supported by the United Nations Development Programme. The AU Model Law is available in English, French, Portuguese and Arabic.

Land mapping brings peace to smallholder farmers, pastoralists and investors

Mbulu - The government in Tanzania has been tasked to fully utilise the new technology of drones and aerial imaging in land mapping in the country so as to reduce the conflicts between small scale farmers and the pastoralists. Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF) Executive Director, Audax Lukonge told this reporter that the current land mapping is not a countrywide project hence needs to be broadened.

“The technological advancement from traditional means of creating surveys and maps into aerial photos will build aerial surveys and volume measurements more quickly and efficiently, hence there is a need now for the government to upscale the project countrywide,” Lukonge said.

Katrina Hhaynihhi and her husband Simon have a positive story to tell following Farm Africa's Land Mapping initiative support. They could not be more proud of the piece of paper held in their hands: A title deed, which not only proves they are sole owners of their land but also ends an acrimonious dispute with their neighbours.

The couple are crop farmers and eke out a living on a small holding growing beans and maize in Tanzania's northern Mbulu district. For years they battled a neighbour who insisted on grazing his animals on their land. “This document means a lot to us. Our land is now secured and we do not expect any conflicts with our neighbours,” says Katrina.

The title which has brought peace to the Hhaynihhi family is known as a Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO) document. The Hhaynihhi family grows a variety of crops including sunflower seed. On their 11 acre farm they earn around Tanzanian shillings 5 million (€2,000) a year. For them, land title has made a big difference. It provides a sense of security.

“This land title has given us the confidence to carry out different farming activities to boost our income,” said Katrina. “We also sell some of our crops to get money.”

Land mapping

Katrina, 48, and Simon, 46, are just two of several hundred farmers in the Mbulu district in Tanzania's Manyara region who have benefited from Farm Africa's Land Mapping project. This project aims to build a detailed land-use plan to address conflicts.

While farmers across the country have used swathes of land for growing crops over many years, most do not have any documented evidence to prove that it is theirs, Farm Africa analysts report.



Villagers meet for a land mapping discussion in Mbulu district, in the Manyara region of Tanzania

Without adequate tenure or security, farmers are not only less likely to invest in their land but also become vulnerable to maltreatment from outsiders.

Beatrice Muliahela, Farm Africa's project coordinator, said securing village land is necessary to empower rural communities. This is because it gives them strong legal protection, both for the land itself, but also the resources that lie on it. According to Muliahela, since its launch two years ago, the project has resolved several land-related disputes. Most sparked by the expansion of agriculture and dwindling water and forest resources.

Respect for nature

Katrina Hhaynihhi says the land mapping project has changed her community. It has helped local people to understand the importance of conserving the environment and to take care of the land. Previously, very few villagers had the skills to address problems such as soil erosion and falling water levels. Now they have established a village environmental committee to take care of surrounding resources, Katrina explains.

A by-law has also been put in place to ensure that farmers are aware of no-go areas for grazing animals. Forest land is also marked out clearly so those with livestock have their own areas. Thomas Mbagwa, Farm Africa's project officer, said the villagers participated in creating the land use plan and the by-laws are approved by the village assembly.

Tanzania's Village Land Act of 1999 empowers village councils to make decisions on land use. This ties in with Farm Africa's aim to forge joint partnerships between villagers and local authorities on forest management. “If we had not received support from Farm Africa our lives would be worse because the forest cover would perish through tree felling and grazing,” Katrina claims.

Story submitted by Angel Navuri



The way forward is in organising the informal sector and recognising its contribution to economic development by raising government awareness, allowing better access to financing, and disseminating information.

Unleashing private sector potential – whereby the informal economy charts the way forward

Dr Ibrahim Mayaki CEO, NEPAD Agency

In every African neighbourhood, in every family almost, there is an entrepreneur with a side business who seeks funding from a tontine. Africa has more than 50 million micro small and medium businesses which contribute 33% of the continent's GDP (afdb.org). Today, the informal sector in Africa is not just a label, it is an established way of life, a tradition. Many of our big African enterprises started off small in the informal sector. NEPAD seeks to respond to the expectations of citizens in all matters of public service. One of our priorities is to nurture a dialogue between the public and the private sectors with the view to removing the hurdles to entrepreneurship and have the highest possible impact on the ground.

Although in the past little attention was paid to the role of the informal sector in fostering growth, the informal economy in Africa is big business. It is a huge employer and will continue to play a key role in the future development of Africa. It represents about three-quarters of non-agricultural employment across the continent, and about 72% of total employment in sub-Saharan Africa (theconversation.com).

Here are some trends that we need to take into account if we are to find ways of unleashing the full potential of the informal sector:

- The informal sector in most African economies offers opportunities to the most vulnerable populations such as the poorest, women and youth;
- People with higher levels of education are entering the informal sector as a career of choice;

- A closer look at the informal sector in Africa provides a glimpse of what could be achieved if Africa's economies and financial policies were more attuned to the continent's realities;
- The informal economy is often community-based in the spirit of social entrepreneurship, tapping into an indigenous African collectivist mode.

However, although the informal sector is an opportunity for generating reasonable incomes for many people, it continues to overlap with poverty because it does not cater for secure income, employment benefits and social protection. The way forward, therefore, lies in organising the informal sector and recognising its contribution to economic development by raising government awareness, allowing better access to financing, and disseminating information on the sector.

Formalisation goes hand in hand with the fear of taxes. Governments have a role to play in helping to nip this fear in the bud. In a context where better cellular telecommunication and access to cheap smartphones are a reality, we need to encourage informal sector workers to embrace modern technology, the internet and social media.

For example, ICT and Fintech offer innovative administrative solutions which can make insurance available to our entrepreneurs. Access to financial services allows people to earn and save more, build their assets and protect themselves against external shocks. However, financial inclusion also needs to be supported by education, skills development and training (including financial literacy) focused on sectors such as agriculture, food production and rural manufacturing. Finally, virtual platforms have the potential to provide the informal sector with greater visibility, voice and representation.

The informal sector has become a major driver of economic opportunity and innovation and NEPAD Agency remains determined to enhance the transitional intersection to the formal economy for beneficial impact on all actors.



NEPAD Agency's Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Programme staff with Mr Lofti Sebouai and Mr Mounir Benhammou from UMA

NEPAD Agency and Arab Maghreb Union strengthen cooperation on infrastructure development

Midrand – Through the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Capacity Building Project (PIDA CAP) project, the NEPAD Agency will be supporting implementation of key regional infrastructure projects, including transit and transport facilitation along the Trans-maghrebian Highway, projects on the North Africa Transmission Corridor, as well as the harmonisation and regulation of ICT in Maghreb countries.

The NEPAD Agency welcomed a technical team from the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) from 22 – 23 March in Midrand, South Africa. The purpose of the UMA mission was to define the areas of cooperation between the NEPAD Agency and UMA for the years 2017 and 2018. The two day working session considered the alignment of working arrangements and focus of NEPAD Agency support for project preparation, development and financing.

Both teams agreed to foster information-sharing and coordination on projects, programming, planning and forthcoming events of mutual interest. Through PIDA CAP, the NEPAD Agency deploys technical experts to Regional Economic Communities and provides financial assistance to support the early stage project preparation.

The first ever visit from UMA constitutes a milestone in the implementation of NEPAD Agency programmes and projects in the north African region, highlighting the Agency's expanding footprint continent-wide.

The first ever visit from UMA constitutes a milestone in the implementation of NEPAD Agency programmes and projects in the north African region, highlighting the Agency's expanding footprint continent-wide.

The meeting concluded with the signing of an Aide Memoire which concretises the agreement on the recruitment of two regional experts to be seconded to UMA for twelve months; providing financial assistance for regional project implementation, and; developing the 2017 work plan of UMA under the PIDA CAP framework.

The UMA delegation was led by Mr Lofti Sebouai, Director of Infrastructure and Mr Mounir Benhammou, Director for Finance and Administration. The UMA representatives expressed gratitude to the CEO of the NEPAD Agency, Dr Mayaki and NEPAD staff for their cooperation and assistance throughout their mission.

In concluding the meeting with UMA, Mr Symerre Grey-Johnson, Head of NEPAD Agency's Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade programme expressed appreciation on the excellent cooperation with UMA and commended the first leap towards the success of PIDA implementation in the Maghreb region.

Power of healthy eating and prevention of non-communicable diseases

Healthy eating means eating a variety of foods in the right proportions, consuming the right amount of food and drink to have a healthy body and maintain good health. Nutrients are ingested through the consumption of dietary intake of protein, carbohydrates, fat, water, vitamins, and minerals.

A healthy diet supports energy needs and provides for optimal nutrition without exposure to toxicity or excessive weight gain from consuming excessive amounts. Where lack of calories is not an issue, a properly balanced diet (in addition to exercise) is also said to be important for lowering health risks, such as obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and cancer. In addition, tobacco use, physical inactivity, unhealthy diet and the harmful use of alcohol increase the risk of non-communicable diseases.

The food pyramid below is a tool designed to make healthy eating easier per daily dietary intake



obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes. Non-communicable diseases, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease, are collectively responsible for almost 70% of all deaths worldwide.

Almost three quarters of all non-communicable disease deaths, and 82% of the 16 million people who die prematurely, or before reaching 70 years of age, occur in low- and middle-income countries. The rise of non-communicable diseases has been driven by primarily four major risk factors: tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets.

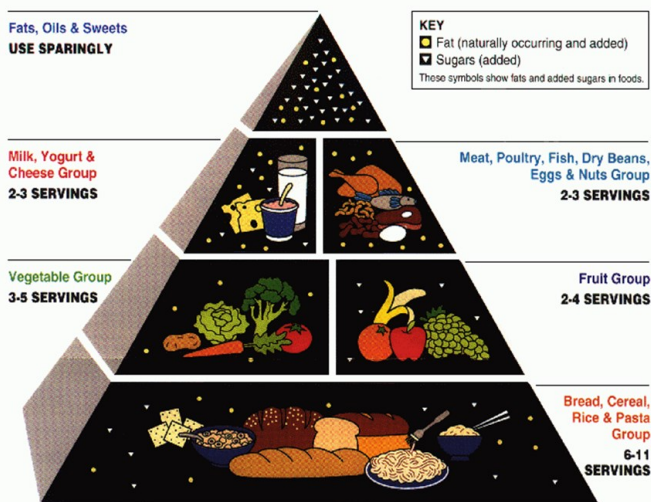
These diseases are driven by forces that include ageing, rapid unplanned urbanisation, and the globalisation of unhealthy lifestyles. For example, globalisation of unhealthy lifestyles like unhealthy diets may show up in individuals as raised blood pressure, increased blood glucose, elevated blood lipids and obesity. These are called 'intermediate risk factors' which can lead to cardiovascular disease, a non-communicable disease.

Non-communicable diseases' quick facts

- Non-communicable diseases kill 38 million people each year;
- Cardiovascular diseases account for most non-communicable diseases deaths, or 17.5 million people annually, followed by cancers (8.2 million), respiratory diseases (4 million), and diabetes (1.5 million);
- Four groups of diseases (cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes) account for 82% of all non-communicable disease deaths;
- Tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets all increase the risk of dying from a non-communicable disease.

Non-communicable diseases – primarily heart and lung diseases, cancers and diabetes – are the world's largest killers, with an estimated 38 million deaths annually. Of these deaths, 16 million are premature (under 70 years of age). If we reduce the global impact of risk factors, we can go a long way in reducing the number of deaths worldwide (WHO.2016 report).

Maintaining a healthy living style includes a balanced diet which plays an essential role in maintaining a healthy weight, which is an important part of overall good health.



Examples of making healthy living and food choices include: Increasing the consumption of wholesome foods such as indigenous foods and fresh produce (fruits and vegetables); reading food labels when shopping to check on their content; Improving cooking methods to maintain the nutrient value of food, for instance avoid frying as a method of cooking; maintaining a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise or physical activity; avoiding consumption of harmful substances and over processed foods which contain high amounts of sugar, fats and food additives.

Non-communicable diseases, also known as chronic diseases, are not passed from person to person. They are of long duration and generally slow progression.

The four main types of non-communicable diseases are cardiovascular diseases (such as heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (for example chronic

Upcoming Events

- 4 - 7 Apr 2017:** Launch of the 'Skills Initiative for Africa' in South Africa: Pretoria, South Africa
- 8 Apr 2017:** 2017 Ibrahim Forum: Marrakesh, Morocco
- 11 - 14 Apr 2017:** Fifth Steering Committee Meeting of the NEPAD/GEF/UNEP-SIP Project & RECs Technical Meeting: Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
- 3 - 5 May 2017:** World Economic Forum on Africa: Durban, South Africa
- 23 - 25 May 2017:** 2nd NEPAD Regional Conference on Arts Education in Africa: Cairo, Egypt

See also: www.nepad.org/events

Contact Us

NEPAD Communications

Tel: +27 (0) 11 256 3600

Email: info@nepad.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nepad.page

Twitter: www.twitter.com/nepad_agency

www.nepad.org

Proverb

“If you wish to move mountains tomorrow, start by lifting stones today”



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