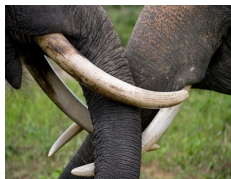


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Achieving prosperity through agriculture in Africa

Abidjan - The just ended 2017 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) “Accelerating Africa’s Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Africa” provided a platform for global and African leaders to develop actionable plans to help transform African agriculture.

Once again, Grow Africa played an active role in this year’s AGRF and hosted two agribusiness investment sessions on the prevailing situation of the rice production, processing, and marketing systems in Africa and showcased recently launched Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework (CAP-F).

The CAP-F breakfast session showcased the robust role CAP-F plays in supplementing CAADP country investment plans by stimulating private investments. CAP-F is the mechanism through which engagement between the private sector, producers and the Government will be structured to accelerate private sector investment in agribusiness and agro-industry. CAP-F will also provide a mutual accountability mechanism where all players can be held accountable for their role in transforming Africa agriculture.

In recognition of the importance of private sector investments in developing agribusiness value chains in African countries as part of the operationalization of the CAP-F, the session themed “Driving Regional Value Chain Development in Africa: Rice Value Chains” provided a forum to discuss roles of different providers to support goods and services delivery including governments, financial institutions, and processing technology providers. Partners who attended the session includes USAID, GiZ, EU, UNDP, AGRA, CAADP non-state actor, Rabobank, AUC and NEPAD.

The Rice Value Chain session aimed at supporting the development of initiatives and strategies of various links in the Africa rice value chain in order to: (i) modernize farming systems, (ii) process and enhance the value of local production, (iii) facilitate regional trade in order to curb external dependence of the continent in rice, (iv) promote rice development environment.

Like editions prior, this year the AGRF announced several new business contracts between the private sector, small and medium enterprises, and communities of smallholder farmers, especially in commodity value chains of interest to smallholder farmers. These included a Grow Africa announcements of a US \$ 223 million potato production and processing deal between BlackPace Group and the governments of Rwanda and Nigeria.



Protecting wildlife is a sovereignty challenge

Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency



Africa often makes headlines in the international media for poaching, which I deplore and strongly condemn. By 2015, a Minnesota dentist had provoked an international outcry by shooting down the famous Cecil lion in Zimbabwe during a “big game sport hunt”. But we forget that poaching does not only kill animals, it also kills our fellow citizens. A few weeks ago, famed South African elephant advocate Wayne Lotter fell in ambush in Dar es Salaam, killed in cold blood by two hooded men. Wayne Lotter was an icon of the honourable fight for the protection of wildlife in Africa, but let us not forget that every day thousands of people are involved in this cause, sometimes at the risk of their lives.

The trap would be to believe that these events, although repetitive, remain only isolated incidents. One could imagine that they are the act of some scattered traffickers or hunters with the archaic mentality of cowboys. The development of reserves and the strengthening of wildlife protection laws would almost lead us to believe that everything has been done to avoid the extinction of certain species on the African continent.

On 7 September, the NGO TRAFFIC published a study on illegal ivory trade in five Central African countries [1]. This study is overwhelming for two reasons: not only are more and more powerful criminal networks at work, but they benefit mainly from the weak governance of some African countries. While states have actually passed stricter legislation against ivory trade with increased enforcement efforts, small retailers and sculptors are the main victims. However, these initiatives remain insufficient in a context where transnational underground criminal networks increasingly take up ivory trafficking.

One of the factors explaining in particular the virtual disappearance of the local markets where ivory was sold for clandestinity is the new takeover of Asian traffickers, essentially Chinese, present from end to end of the chain of this shadow trade. Asia is the central source of demand for ivory, but supply is mainly in Africa. Faced with these transnational crime networks, states must deploy all means to prevent poaching and arrest these criminals. Unfortunately, a member of the NGO, Sone Nkoke, explains that traffickers regularly “benefit from the weakness of state governance as well as from collusion, confusion and corruption of authority”. Without the complacency and corruption of high-ranking people, it is indeed difficult to imagine that such trafficking can take place.

The problem of the illegal trade in ivory is a perfect example to illustrate the complexity of acting in a globalized world. At the local level, states must effectively strengthen their governance and law enforcement, raise awareness and involve local communities in these issues, which are ecological and human disasters. But transnational crime requires, as the name suggests, a global response. Cooperating with Asian countries to dismantle these trafficker networks and incite them to prohibit ivory trade is fundamental to the hope of saving African elephants. Surely, Beijing’s commitment to close its domestic ivory market by the end of the year is going in the right direction.

Protecting African elephants from extinction is therefore more than an ecological issue. It is also a human drama unfolding before our eyes. Poachers and criminals do not hesitate to assassinate our fellow citizens because of the greed of “white gold.” But it is also a matter of political sovereignty: as long as these traffickers are rampant in Africa, they will be a reflection of our failure to enforce and respect the law. Can a State that is not capable of protecting its wildlife be capable of protecting its fellow citizens? Surely, this is a question that all our governments must ask themselves today.

Mozambique focuses on agriculture to alleviate youth unemployment

By Charles Mangwiro, APA



Relative peace and stability since 1992, when the country's civil war ended, has made Mozambique attractive to investors. The economy has grown by more than seven percent each year over the last decade, with mining projects and recent discoveries of natural gas continuing to spur national economic growth. However, mineral and gas extraction projects create few jobs - less than four-thousand two years ago, according to ILO chief technical officer Igor Felice.

"We call these jobless activities in the sense that the investments have no direct impact on job creation, because they are capital intensive and not labour intensive," Felice explained.

The multi-national companies extracting natural resource create few jobs for a labour force that grows by the hundreds of thousands each year. The few jobs that Mozambique's megaprojects create tend to be highly qualified positions that are often taken by expatriates. Moreover, the private sector in Mozambique creates few jobs with proper rights and regulations to protect workers, the bulk of them youths, who enter the labour market yearly, according to Felice.

Indeed, lack of jobs in their immediate neighbourhoods has forced many Mozambicans to migrate and look for work in Maputo, the country's capital. Meanwhile, the country's impressive post-war progress in reducing poverty has stalled in recent years. However, the government is promoting agriculture and this is proving to be a major source of employment in the country. This is the backdrop to the story of Amelia Macie, whose childhood dream was to become a secondary school teacher. Growing up in the Mafuaine village of Namaacha district some 40 kilometres in the south-west of Maputo, the young woman, now 29, endured the difficulties of a rural girl-child.

"I only did my first year of primary education and I could not go further because of the war; and my poor parents wanted me to help them at home," she told APA.

Amelia is one of the millions of victims of the consequences of the armed conflict, which erupted between Renamo and the Frelimo government, soon after Portuguese colonial rule in 1975. Without formal education and having five children to look after, her dreams to become a teacher were unattainable; yet she and her dependents must survive. However, all was not lost. Amelia started working in a neighbour's fields, but the paltry wages forced her to look for employment elsewhere.

Five years ago, she got a permanent job with a farmer called Mariza Esculudes, whose business is agro-processing. Esculudes attended UN ILO training courses in 2015, and also did technical courses in business development for women, with particular focus on agriculture. Amelia's story is shared by the majority of young people in mineral-rich Mozambique which, ironically, is facing a dire youth unemployment crisis, despite the country experiencing impressive economic growth.

Thirty-three-year-old Salomao Massasse was a school dropout in his home province of Inhambane. He wanted to be a doctor, but had to migrate to Maputo to find work. He aspired to earn money to start his own business. Unfortunately, Massasse's income could only sustain him, and he also ended up working at Esculudes' farm in Mafuiane.

"I have been working here for three years now; and I'm happy that I earn a monthly salary, which I use to look after myself, my family and build a house."

The Open Society Foundation in a 2016 report estimated that 70 percent of people under 35 years of age, who form the majority of Mozambique's population of 25 million, cannot find stable employment. Unskilled youths like Amelia and Massasse, who are illiterate and speak Changana instead of Portuguese, Mozambique's official language, are worst off. Meanwhile, Mariza Esculudes believes strengthening Mozambique's agricultural sector will generate sustainable jobs for such youths. Gaining inspiration from their employer, Amelia and Massasse plan to invest in agriculture once they have saved enough money.

"I am happy here, and I learn new things every day. There is no lack of employment opportunities; just look around yourself and you will see a lot of opportunities," Massasse added.³ Meanwhile, Esculudes' recommendation is to make agriculture a national priority, so as to help reduce youth joblessness and poverty in Mozambique.

Africa telling its story on innovation

Magaliesburg, September 14, 2017 – The NEPAD Agency and two teams (Research and Development, and Innovation) of experts selected from Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda, CeSTII (South Africa), UNECA, AOSTII, and SANBio are drafting the 3rd edition of the African Innovation Outlook in South Africa from 11-16 September 2013.

The two teams are focusing on what the data collected from R&D and Innovation Surveys carried out between 2014 and 2017 is telling us. The outlook is expected to present a picture of R&D investments and how these investments are supporting the innovation processes in different African countries. In brief, a picture of how R&D and Innovation are contributing to socioeconomic development.

The drafting of African Innovation Outlook-2010 and African Innovation Outlook-2014 were outsourced. As a way of inculcating ownership of data use by African countries, the NEPAD Agency, together with partners under the African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) programme, decided to publish the 3rd edition of African Innovation Outlook (AIO3). The draft AIO3, expected two weeks after this meeting, will be reviewed by a panel of experts before publication.

The 3rd edition of the African Innovation Outlook will consider R&D performance in different sectors of the economy of African countries, the extent to which firms invest in R&D, assess the propensity to innovative by African firms, and the effects of innovation on the productivity of firms.



L to R: Dr Philippe Mawoko (AOSTI), Miss Imbasazethu Ngalo (NEPAD-SANBio), Prof Fiona Mbai (Kenya), Dr Moses Sithole (CeSTII-South Africa), Mr Patrick Mafabi (Uganda), Dr Gideon Nimako (NEPAD Agency), Dr Tichaona Mangwende (NEPAD Agency), Mr Richard Lutalo (Uganda), Mr Lukovi Seke (NEPAD Agency), Dr Ereck Chakauya (NEPAD-SANBio), Dr Victor Konde (UNECA), Ms Manana Mashologu (NEPAD Agency), Mr Richard Mavisi Liahona (Kenya) [*Mrs Rosemary Uside (Kenya) and Dr Thulasizwe Dhlamini (Swaziland) are not in the picture*]

Consultative and programme development mission to SADC

Gaborone, September 13, 2017 - Mr Symerre Grey Johnson, Head of Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Programme (RIITP) at NEPAD Agency and George Murumba, PIDA CAP M&E Officer undertook a mission to SADC to discuss mutual collaboration on the implementation of the PIDA programme. The parties also discussed the co-hosting of the 2017 PIDA Week in Swakopmund-Walvis Bay, Namibia under the auspices of SADC. Most importantly in this regard, the team discussed the postponement of PIDA week to 10-14 December 2017.

The team also met with the GIZ Botswana Office and provided an update on the PIDA programme. They discussed how to strengthen synergies between their partnership on PIDA implementation especially on the areas of PIDA project data collection and trade facilitation through the Continental Business Network - through the GIZ Botswana programme.

The Head of Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Programme also delivered a special message to the SADC Executive Secretary on behalf of Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of NEPAD. In the message, Dr Mayaki expressed gratitude for the Executive Secretary's acceptance to support the co-hosting of the 2017 PIDA Week in Swakopmund-Walvis Bay, Namibia under the auspices of SADC.

In addition, Dr Mayaki lauds the exemplary leadership of the Executive Secretary, Dr Tax, which has led to finalisation of the memorandum of understanding for the North - South Corridor. "This," Dr Mayaki notes, "is a key milestone of SADC's efforts to advance the implementation of PIDA. SADC's dedication and ownership is a shining example to other regional economic communities on how accelerating PIDA project can lead to the attainment of concrete results."



The Head of Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Programme Mr Symerre Grey-Johnson with Dr Thembinkosi Mhlongo



Announcement

NEPAD French website goes live

The NEPAD Agency has launched a French-language website, in an effort to showcase its work to more countries and regions, especially on the African continent.

The French version of the website has all of the features that users of the English site enjoy and will allow French-speakers to get the latest news, updates and resources in their own language.

“French is one of the official languages of the African Union, and there are 31 francophone countries on the continent, in which French is the first or second official language,” says Simon Kisira, Head of Strategy and Knowledge Management at NEPAD. “By launching a French-language website, we want to allow our French speaking users to experience NEPAD in a format they are comfortable with.”

The French site can be accessed here: <http://www.nepad.org/fr>

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