UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF H.E. PRESIDENT ALI BONGO ONDIMBA

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TRANSFORMATION OF A CONTINENT

TASKFORCES

FOUNDED AND PRODUCED BY RICHARD ATTIAS & ASSOCIATES
PART OF WPP GROUP

TASKFORCE 1: AGRICULTURE

Panelists: Frank Braeken, Chief Investment Officer, Amatheon Agri Holding (Germany)
Moussa Seck, Chairman, Pan-African Agribusiness and Agro-Industry Consortium (Kenya)
Amine Tazi-Riffi, Director, McKinsey and Company (Morocco)
Massard Kabinda, Secretary General, Government of the Republic of Gabon
Fabrice Obingue, Falcon Ltd

Moderator: Hannah Edinger, Director, Frontier Advisory (South Africa)

Key question

- How can African countries develop methods of agriculture that ensure the most economically and sustainable use of resources?

Overview

The continent of Africa possesses large tracts of uncultivated but fertile land. Despite the enormous potential agriculture holds in terms of employment creation, food security and poverty alleviation, in many African countries agriculture remains a subsistence activity. Due to the current structure of agriculture Africa remains dependent on food imports. In addition to its important role in socio-economic development, agriculture plays an important role in the conservation of the environment and in the fight against climate change.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Assessment and stock-taking of status quo of agricultural and natural resources in each country

To formulate appropriate strategies to boost agriculture and to stimulate employment creation in the agricultural sector, countries require a detailed overview of the natural resources they have. Without the overview of a country’s resources, strategies will be less effective in meeting the objectives of the agricultural sector.

2) Development of sustainable strategies

The issue of sustainability is of paramount importance. Strategies for the agricultural sector have to be developed in such a way that they ensure the sustainable use of resources and minimize their impact on the environment. The prioritization of sustainability will also ensure that future generations will benefit from the natural endowment of their countries.

3) Foster dialogue among stakeholders

In order to ensure the development of the agricultural sector and to ensure sustainability, governments should foster dialogue among stakeholders including farmers, researchers, investors, government bodies and communities. Through dialogue countries are more likely to realize synergies and unlock their agricultural potential.

4) Investment in human capital

Countries should invest in human capital formation in the agricultural sector. The establishment of vocational training and research centers is likely to enable countries to develop more suitable farming techniques and increase sustainability of the sector in general. These investments will also reduce the import dependency of knowledge-intensive technologies. Investment in human capital will help change perceptions: agriculture is often regarded as a less desirable profession compared to white-collar employment.

5) Adoption of modern agricultural techniques

The introduction and adoption of modern agricultural techniques enables countries to develop a more productive and efficient agricultural sector. Modern techniques may also increase yields and reduce the use of already scarce resources such as water.

6) Investment into supporting infrastructure

Farmers often lack access to markets due to insufficient infrastructure including transport infrastructure and storage facilities. The lack of modern irrigation infrastructure and insufficient access to electricity reduce the productivity of the agricultural sector. Investments in supporting infrastructure will improve the operating environment of agricultural producers and will enable the development of an agro-processing sector.

TASKFORCE 2: WATER

Panelists: Kala Fleming, Water Research Scientist, IBM Research-Africa Lab (Kenya)
Grant Gibbs, Executive Director, Hippo Water Roller Project (South Africa)
Olivier Mukoko, Director General, Department of Water Resources (Gabon)
Paul Wood, Managing Director Africa and Arabia, Waterfund (UAE)
Moderator: Mel Brooks, Senior Finance Lecturer, Henley Business School (South Africa)

Key questions

- Are there ways to jumpstart water infrastructure?
- How can the public and private sector work together to solve the African dilemma?

Overview

Despite the discovery of significant underground aquifers in several regions of Africa, as much as 40% of the continent's population lacks access to clean water. The lack of access to clean water compromises the socioeconomic development of people affected by it and is impeding the development of economies on the continent.
Africa's population continues to grow at a fast speed. However, the development of appropriate water infrastructure is lagging behind, aggravating the absence of access to clean water. The example of Nairobi, Kenya, shows that despite the allocation of significant funds, water continuous to be wasted due to inappropriate infrastructure. Inappropriate infrastructure remains a serious problem in water-scarce countries.
Even in water-abundant countries, the financing and implementation of water-related projects remain challenging. Non-conventional models of finance have to be developed to address this challenge. This will require the development of partnerships between the public and private sector. Yet, in addition to improving the physical access to water, the matter of affordability has to be discussed.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Development and adoption of suitable technology and solutions

The development and adoption of solutions and technologies specifically tailored to meet African conditions has been suggested as a feasible method to alleviate water access challenges. In this context it is important that the technologies applied are suitable for the conditions in the geographies they are used. Furthermore, these technologies should be maintenance-light, durable and affordable.

2) Improvement of water governance

In order to curb the wasting of water and financial resources, a more appropriate set of regulations is required that ensure the transparent management of funds and to improve the accountability of companies involved in the management and provision of water.

3) Government incentives

In order to encourage private sector participation in the water sector, governments should provide incentives to private sector players. The reduction of taxes imposed on private sector companies involved in the water sector is a feasible way to also reduce the cost of water to consumers.

4) Human capital development

In order to make the proposed intervention workable and in order to implement them, investments in human capital development are required. Training and education programs targeting the water sector have to be developed and introduced.

TASKFORCE 3: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Panelists:	Madeline Berre, Managing Partner, Deloitte, and President, CPG (Gabon)
	Tara Fela-Dorotoye, Founder, House of Tara (Nigeria)
	Jon Gosier, Founder, D8A Group and Appfrica (United States)
	Dan Shine, Curator, The Innovation Hangar (United States)
Moderator:	Martyn Davies, Chief Executive Officer, Frontier Advisory (South Africa)

Key questions

- What are the ways for African countries to spark or continue to encourage their entrepreneurs?
- What are possible solutions to the obstacles new or potential entrepreneurs and even medium-sized businesses face in their daily operations?
- What is the long-term benefit of keeping African entrepreneurs on the continent?

Overview

Fostering and encouraging entrepreneurship is often hailed as a powerful intervention to address unemployment challenges in countries in Africa. Despite the positive impact that entrepreneurship has on employment creation, many governments are yet to provide a conducive environment in which entrepreneurs can build businesses and can contribute to economic development of their home countries and the continent.

African entrepreneurs, especially young entrepreneurs, do not need to be "created" in Africa: they already exist and they want to try out their ideas. Many of these entrepreneurs, however, fear the high cost and risk associated with starting a business in Africa. The best ways governments can foster entrepreneurial growth and mitigate the fears of entrepreneurs is by limiting bureaucratic costs to business start-ups and investing in infrastructure. African entrepreneurs should share their success stories and experiences of failure with others on the continent, and ultimately, should think of how their business can lift their society to a higher standard of living.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Change in culture and mind-set towards entrepreneurship

Often people shy away from engaging in entrepreneurial activities, because of the fear of failure. A mind-set change that fosters and encourages entrepreneurship is desirable as it takes away this fear of failure. In order to diminish the fear of failure, governments should work towards reducing the risks (real and perceived) associated with starting and running a business.

2) Improvement of regulatory environment

A key obstacle to small- and medium-size companies and especially to start-up companies is a cumbersome operating environment. Governments should create a favorable business environment and reduce bureaucracy in order to encourage entrepreneurship and to reduce the burden of compliance on entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs have to be provided with a business ecosystem in which they can focus on growing their businesses.

3) Improved access to enabling infrastructure

Regardless of the size of an organization, enterprises benefit from the existence of favorable infrastructure – both physical and institutional. Adequate infrastructure insures that transaction costs are reduced and that the risks to companies are lowered. Governments should facilitate the development of supporting and enabling infrastructure for entrepreneurs.

TASKFORCE 4: MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

Panelists: Yves Bigot, managing director, TV5 Monde (France)
Salim Cheick, Managing Director, 2M (Morocco)
Francois Deplanck, SVP channel and content, Canal+ Overseas (France)
Dominique Flaux, Director, Ecofin Agency (Switzerland)
Jean-Noel Tronc, CEO, Sacem (Fance)
Nadia Salah, Editorial Director, l'Economiste (Morocco)

Moderator: **Jon Foster-Pedley,** Dean & Director of Henley Business School Africa (South Africa)

Key questions

- How to create sustainable cultural industries?
- How to allow artists to benefit from their rights?
- What is the relation between the Internet and the traditional ways of communication?

Overview

The creative industries are the heart of the development of countries. They require imagination and application. This creative growth is important for Africa and its youth as the sector attracts young people and can be an important contributor to employment creation. The creative industry also feeds into and enables the growth of other industries.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Improved access to finance

In the media and entertainment sectors in Africa the access to finance for cultural activities is insufficient. There is a need for foreign and local investments, whether from the government or the private sector. Media in Africa does not reach its full potential in terms of attracting potential investors. Furthermore, artists are insufficiently or not remunerated at all. Government should create mechanisms that ensure a more attractive investment climate in the industry. The provision of tax incentives may be used to enhance the attractiveness of the media and entertainment industry for investors.

2) Change in mind-set towards arts

African societies do not value their art as much as they should. The importance of arts and its contribution to economic growth are often underestimated. In order to reap the socioeconomic benefits of the creative industries a mind-set change is required. This also requires a better understanding of the link between the arts and economic development.

3) Improvement of regulation, laws and politics:

Media in Africa is a sector prone to rent-seeking activities. The lack of independence of the media also impacts on the transparency within the sector and may render the sector less attractive to potential investors. In addition, piracy is a key issue that prevents the development of the sector and copyright policies are not emphasized enough. In order to boost the media and entertainment industry governments should overhaul regulations governing the sector to provide a more attractive environment to companies operating in the sector and investors seeking to enter the industry.

4) Enhanced training and infrastructure

Insufficient training and infrastructure remain obstacles to achieving countries' cultural potential and providing the support talented artists need to become successful. Investment in training and the provision of targeted educational programs are necessary to improve the professionalism within the sector and to turn media and entertainment into a more desirable and sustainable profession.

5) Embracing new technologies

Advances in technologies and the rapid spread of new technologies such as smartphones have changed the way media is consumed and accessed. Governments and media companies should embrace new technologies to accommodate changing consumption patterns. Companies operating in the media and entertainment industry have to rethink their business models in order to stay competitive.

TASKFORCE 5: HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Panelists: Rachel Adams, Associate Director Africa, Yale University (USA)
Nicolas Bussard, CEO and Co-founder, SkilledAfricans.com (France)
Philippe Mpeck, Director, CEGEP (Canada)
Francisca Okeke, Professor of Physics, University of Nigeria (Nigeria)
Mourad Taoufiki, Partner, McKinsey & Company (Morocco)
Moderator: Jon Foster-Pedley, Dean & Director, Henley Business School, Africa (South Africa)

Key questions

- Why is there a mismatch between education and labor market needs?
- How can the private sector become involved in creating vocational training schemes that deliver graduates with the appropriate skillsets?
- How can countries create a good education system that fosters economic growth and development?

Overview

Education is of paramount importance for sustainable economic growth. According to estimates by UNESCO, less than 5% of Africans are enrolled in formal, technical or vocational training. This leads to a huge deficit in qualified local labor across all sectors. As a result, skilled foreigners have to be recruited or companies have to reassess their operations. Furthermore, only one-third of Africans find formal sector employment and the shortage of qualified staff continuous to be an obstacle to unlock Africa's full potential.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Reassessment of curriculum

Most African countries have adopted and teach European/Western curricula that do not cater for the situations and challenges in African economies. The disconnect between the curriculum and the realities in African markets reduces student motivation and is sometimes linked to the development of a sense of inferiority among Africans. African governments should reassess the curricula taught at their schools and realign them to the requirements of the African context. By doing so countries are more likely to develop the required skills needed to fast-track the economic development of the continent and to increase the employability of their citizens. Furthermore, an Africanized curriculum will be beneficial to improve confidence levels of Africans and reduce the sense of perceived inferiority.

2) Investments in educational infrastructure

Insufficient and inadequate educational infrastructure and equipment hurt educational outcomes as students are often exposed to an environment at schools that is unconducive to learning. Investments into education infrastructure are required to rectify these shortcomings and to enable students to reach their academic potential. Furthermore the provision of modern equipment is necessary to enable teachers to apply modern techniques of teaching as well as to provide learners with better access to information.

3) Prioritization of education

Inadequate educational infrastructure is often a result of insufficient funds allocated by government to education. Governments have to recognize the importance of education and should prioritize education and spending on education. Increased budget allocations towards the education sector and better monitoring of use of allocated funds are crucial to overcome educational infrastructure shortages. Furthermore, increased education budgets allow governments to provide scholarships to deserving students, which are likely to encourage a stronger commitment to education from students.

4) Development of educational awareness campaigns

In certain circumstances, education is regarded as an unaffordable luxury. This leads to low enrolment rates as well as low levels of human capital development among the poorest of the poor. Governments should develop targeted awareness campaigns that highlight the importance and the benefits of education and are able to contribute positively to a mindset change towards education.

5) Promotion of vocational training

Often vocational training is regarded as inferior to more academic education, as it tends to equip students with skills that may not lead to white-collar employment but rather to blue-collar jobs. Yet, vocational training plays a crucial role in overcoming the skills mismatch that is prevalent in Africa. Governments should foster partnerships with private sector companies that will ensure employment opportunities for graduates from vocational training institutions and to change the mindset towards vocational training.

TASKFORCE 6: DIAGNOSIS THROUGH INNOVATION: WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP FOR HEALTHCARE DEVELOPMENT?

Panelists: Pilar Mateo Herrero, Founder, Inesfly Corporation (Spain)
Edna Adan Ismail, Founder and Director, Edna Adan University Hospital (Somaliland)
Ola Orekunrin, Managing Director, Flying Doctors Nigeria (Nigeria)
Allan Pamba, VP, Pharmaceuticals, East Africa and Government Affairs, Africa, GlaxoSmithKline (United Kingdom)
Sam Thenya, CEO, Nairobi Women's Hospital (Kenya)
Moderator: Mel Brooks, Senior Finance Lecturer, Henley Business School, Africa (South Africa)

Key questions

- How can costs for healthcare delivery be lowered?
- How can healthcare for all be provided and optimized?
- How can partnerships between healthcare providers and other entities be encouraged?

Overview

The healthcare systems in many African countries are evolving rapidly. Numerous researchers and healthcare professionals share a common desire to see both improvements in the healthcare service itself and a reduction of the cost of care and improved healthcare delivery to rural and geographically isolated areas in Africa. Each year, millions of people die and the causes of death remain largely uninvestigated. At the same time, with the growth of new healthcare technologies, innovative procedures and techniques are increasingly demanded. Understandably, allocation of resources is paramount in order to optimize healthcare access and delivery to communities. However, poverty, political instability and a lack of infrastructure remain serious barriers that prevent many Africans to access adequate healthcare services.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Investment in healthcare infrastructure

Due to a lack of income, the affordability of preventative care – such as routine screening for diseases such as cancer or diabetes – as well as medical care remains a key challenge in the majority of African countries. In order to improve access to healthcare and reduce the cost of healthcare, major investments into public healthcare infrastructure is required. Governments should increase their budgets for healthcare.

2) Adoption and introduction of new and low-cost technologies

In recent years great strides have been made in the medical technology sector globally. While the majority of African countries continue to rely on expensive equipment from developed economies in the West, the adoption and introduction of low-cost equipment developed for an emerging and developing market environment have a great potential to improve access to and affordability of healthcare services in Africa.

3) Introduction of telemedicine

The introduction of telemedicine has the potential to solve some of the actual issues encountered in Africa such as information management (patient information, appointment scheduling and patient records), improve the public healthcare delivery system, reduce cost of care and stimulate development of knowledge-based system for decision support, training and education.

4) Fostering a more efficient resource allocation

In the context of scarce resources, the allocation and management of these scarce resources has to be improved. Funds have to be directed to training of local healthcare workers and doctors. Furthermore, healthcare facilities such as hospitals should adopt more business-oriented management styles, which ensure resource maximization and the improvement of service delivery to patience.

5) Embracing homegrown solutions

Instead of importing and relying on foreign technology, African countries should focus on the development of local solutions. This requires the development of local talent and the development of a sense of confidence among Africans that African healthcare challenges can be solved with domestic resources. Instilling a sense of ownership in their healthcare system will enable African countries to encourage the development of homegrown solutions.

TASKFORCE 7: FINANCING INNOVATION

Panelists: Chinwe Effiong, President, JA Africa (Kenya)
Serge Mickoto, CEO, Gabonese Strategic Investment Fund (Gabonese Republic)
Mohamed Touhami El Ouazzani, Director General Morocco, Visa International (Morroco)
Stefan Heilmann, Managing Director, IEG Investment Banking Group (Germany)
Moderator: Rob Leblanc, Chief Investment Officer, The Awethu Project (South Africa)

Key questions

- How to capitalize the African market?
- How to identify finance for innovation?

Overview
Africa remains the continent with the lowest banking penetration and financial inclusion rates in the world. In order to improve access to financial services, financial innovation has to be promoted and encouraged. An inclusive and well-functioning financial services sector is of paramount importance for unlocking economic growth in an economy.

Key Interventions
The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Development and support of business incubators

While Africa is not short of ideas and entrepreneurial people, the access to support structures for entrepreneurs to develop their ideas is lacking. The development of business incubators is an effective way to overcome this challenge and to provide support to aspiring entrepreneurs.

2) Development of financial awareness campaigns

In order to improve the access to financial innovation and enhance the adoption of these innovations, governments should improve communication of innovation and raise awareness about financial innovation. Furthermore, mechanisms have to be developed to share success stories of financial innovation among countries.

3) Improvement of monitoring of financial assistance for innovation

Given resource constraints for financing financial institutions it is important to effectively monitor the use of funds made available for innovation and the development of new financial products and solutions.

TASKFORCE 8: TOURISM

Panelists: Karl Mootoosamy, Director, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (Mauritius)
Lee White, Executive Secretary, Gabon National Parks Agency (Gabonese Republic)
Abderrafie Zouiten, CEO, Moroccan National Tourist Office (MNTO) (Morocco)
Moderator: Hannah Edinger, Director, Frontier Advisory (South Africa)

Key questions

- How can tourism opportunities in Africa be expanded?
- How can Africa's business climate be transformed?
- How can tourism be utilized to stimulate job creation especially for women and people?

Overview

According to a World Bank report released at the end of 2013, African countries are able to compete with other tourist-rich regions of the world if tourism is a fully integrated cornerstone of their economies. To close the gap between regions registering a high share of tourism such as Asia Pacific (over 20%) and those with a lower share like Africa (5%), collaboration among governments and private sector is required to address obstacles such as land access and visa regulation. While tourism has great potential to stimulate economic growth and create employment, insufficient information, marketing, limited access to tourist destinations, lack of stability and insecurity hinder the expansion of the tourism sector in many African countries.

Key Interventions

The taskforce proposed the following interventions:

1) Development of targeted marketing and image campaigns

The ability of countries to attract tourists and enhance the attractiveness of their country as a tourism destination is strongly linked to the image the country enjoys abroad. Often western media presents an undifferentiated image of Africa. Because of this undifferentiated reporting, conflicts in one country often impact on the perception of another country and hence negatively impact the image in the country where potential tourists originate from. Given the role of perception and image, it is important that the media is sensitized for these issues and encouraged to provide more differentiated reporting and refrain from generalization. In this context the development of domestic media that can show the continent in a differentiated manner is important. Furthermore, the identification and recruitment of well-known African brand ambassadors may be an effective way to tell Africa's good story and to present Africa in a more positive and accurate light abroad.

2) Investment in training

Tourism is a service industry with direct customer contact. It is therefore important that service providers are well trained in customer care and are aware of cultural differences between various nationalities in order to be able to provide outstanding service. Staff in the tourism industry has to be educated in such a way that their mindset about the preconceptions towards foreigners is changed appropriately.

3) Investment in security and safety

Given the generalization that prevails in terms of reporting and the widespread perception that Africa is a dangerous destination, countries have to invest in security and safety measures. Countries that manage to showcase and ensure safety and security are more likely to attract foreign tourists and are more likely to attract tourism investments.

4) Development of government support mechanisms

Given its labor-intensive nature, tourism has a great potential to create employment opportunities and to reduce poverty. Governments have to be cognizant of the positive impact tourism has on the socioeconomic condition of their countries and should encourage foreign investments in the tourism sector. To facilitate and attract tourism investments governments should consider the provision of investment incentives to investors such as favorable tax rates.

5) Cooperation and collaboration with successful tourist destinations

A number of countries in the world have successfully used the tourism sector to support economic growth and to stimulate employment creation. African countries should not shy away from consulting these successful countries and collaborate with them in order to learn how these countries achieved their successes.