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## AFRICA URGED TO FOCUS ON GREEN INVESTMENTS IN ENERGY FOR A GREEN RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

African countries should focus on green investments in energy for a green recovery in the aftermath of the deadly coronavirus pandemic, William Lugemwa, Director of the Private Sector Development and Finance Division at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) said Sunday, adding placing investments in sustainable energy among the central recovery goals was critical.

In remarks during a side event at the 53rd Session of the Commission and 2021 Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Mr. Lugemwa said, accessible, reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity will underpin more inclusive, economic, and

sustainable industrialization across the continent.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a global impact on lives, livelihoods, and economies, forcing a recession on the continent for the first time in 25 years.

“With over four million confirmed cases and over 100,000 deaths in Africa, the impact of the pandemic in terms of job losses and economic recession at national and continental level is expected to be significant,” Mr. Lugemwa said.

According to the ECA Director, the key elements for a better recovery and building forward better and faster were

right policies, right finance, and right investments.

“For this reason, placing a green recovery at the core of all economic recovery strategies is increasingly seen as the best way for countries to rejuvenate their economies,” he added.

Mr. Lugemwa said most African economies were heavily reliant on the production and export of primary commodities. Consequently, the participation of these economies in the global economy was limited to production and exportation of limited range of primary products, reducing their prospects for export-oriented industrialization.

# LOW INTERNET ACCESS CONTINUES TO AFFECT AFRICA'S WOMEN AND GIRLS



Inherent gender inequality and unequal internet connectivity are some of the reasons women and girls in Africa remain under-represented in the fields of science and technology, according to panelists at the African Girls Can Code Initiative (AGCCI) side event at the 53rd session of the Economic Commission for African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Addis Ababa.

Jean-Paul Adam, the Director for Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), speaking at the side event, said although the percentage of women in the labor force on the continent had over the years gradually increased, it

remained significantly lower in the technology sector.

"Women's lack equal connectivity is undermining their capacity to reach their economic potential. A situation that urgently needs to be addressed," said Mr. Adam.

"Girls face discrimination in the sector, because computer science has always been seen as a course for boys, not girls."

AGCCI is a program being implemented by UN Women in collaboration with the African Union, the ECA and the International Telecommunication Union. The four-year programme, initiated in 2018, is designed to equip

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## OFFICIALS CALL FOR INVESTMENT IN WOMEN AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS TO DRIVE AFRICA'S GROWTH

Investing to equip women and youth entrepreneurs with skills, resources and mentoring will drive Africa's growth, according to ministers, bankers and development experts.

They were speaking at an event on 'unleashing the potential of women and youth entrepreneurship in the digital age', which was held on 21 March as part of the annual session of the Economic Commission for African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The event, which featured a panel discussion, focused on the challenges women and youth entrepreneurs face, how they can leverage technology and which practices can promote entrepreneurship after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Addressing the participants, the ECA's Chief of the Urbanization section, Ms. Edlam Yemeru

said: "Africa's economic growth and prosperity depend on the ability of its entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into successful businesses."

She added: "Africa's high unemployment rate of 15 per cent particularly affects women and young people. Entrepreneurship in the digital era offers an enormous opportunity to create new jobs and enhance their participation in paid activities. To unlock this opportunity, our focus should be on women and young people."

Ms. Yemeru described "robust data on entrepreneurship, access to finance, enabling environment and skills development" as core ingredients that could help women and youth-owned businesses to survive and thrive in Africa.

Globally, Africa ranks high in terms of numbers of women and youth-led startups. However,



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# A GREENER AFCFTA POSSIBLE IF RIGHT POLICY, STANDARDS ARE ENFORCED, EXPERT TELLS ECA SEMINAR

A greener African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can be achieved if governments on the continent adopt proactive environment-friendly policies and enforce environmental standards, a trade economist said today at an event organized by The Economic Commission for Africa and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

Maximiliano Mendez-Parra, a senior researcher at the ODI gave the advice today during a webinar jointly organized by the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC), a unit of the ECA, and the ODI on the sidelines of the annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

"Trade in Africa will play a decisive role in the continent's transformation and climate change action should not restrict it," Mendez-Parra said at the virtual event on building back better through greening the AfCFTA. Instead, in itself, "the AfCFTA can increase resilience to climate change," he said.

Under the trading bloc which commenced transactions on 1 January this year, he said opportunities abounded to produce environment-friendly goods and services liberalization, harmonize and strengthen environmental standards, incentivize and facilitate the diffusion of green technologies as well as promote and facilitate green investment. Despite the opportunities, Mendez-Parra identified what he called "significant roadblocks" constituting barriers to climate action such as limited understanding of climate risks, lack of supportive policies, and finance.

While it contributes the least amount to the global greenhouse gas emissions, Africa bears the largest impact, a fact not lost on panelists at the session, including Fatima Denton, Director of the Institute for Natural Resources in Africa at the United Nations University (UNU-INRA). Others were Juliette Koudonoukpo, Director and Regional Representative for Africa, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);

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## AFRICA URGED TO FOCUS ON...

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Citing institutional investors, he said they held about \$100 trillion in assets globally. In Africa, the assets-under-management of domestic institutional investors were estimated at about \$1.8 trillion in 2020 from \$1.2 trillion in 2017.

"With just about 0.1% of the global assets and 12% of African assets, these institutional investors can help bridge the continent's annual infrastructure gap of \$107 billion

and contribute to the \$18 - \$30 billion annual financing needed for climate action and climate change adaptation in Africa over the next two decades," said Mr. Lugemwa.

Mr. Hubert Danso, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Africa investor (Ai) Group, also Chairman of the African Sovereign Wealth and Pension Fund Leaders Forum, in his remarks said a 5% agenda has been formerly endorsed by the

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## ECA LAUNCHES REPORT ON IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON E-COMMERCE IN AFRICA; SEEKS HARMONIZED POLICY UNDER AFCFTA

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) launched a report on the impact of COVID-19 on e-commerce on the continent where it calls on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to create a harmonized protocol to accelerate the growth of the digital economy on the continent.

"This important protocol, if harnessed correctly, has the potential to coordinate and facilitate cross-border e-commerce, regulatory cooperation, digitalization as well as the promotion of electronic goods and services originating from within Africa," says the report, adding that under the existing

arrangement across Africa, regulators employ different rules, which, coupled with the small sizes of their markets, prevent African tech companies from thriving.

The AfCFTA has the potential to create an e-commerce protocol applicable across the continent that can continue to consolidate the "African market in the digital sphere, and preclude other arrangements which could potentially undermine the liberalization and integration agenda," says the report, co-authored by Jamie MacLeod of the ECA and Guy Futi of the University of Oxford.

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# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION COULD BE A GAME-CHANGER FOR AFRICA; DRIVING INNOVATION, ECONOMIC GROWTH & JOB CREATION

Digital Transformation is a key driving force for innovation and sustainable growth that can ensure the fourth industrial revolution transforms Africa into a global powerhouse, says Bernardo Sarmiento, the Director of the Trade Capacity Building branch of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Mr. Sarmiento was speaking at UNIDO's side event titled, "Making the Fourth Industrial Revolution work for Africa" at the 53rd session of the Economic Commission for African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Addis Ababa.

"Africa's population is an opportunity to enable digital socio-economic development but digital transformation should be inclusive of all," he said.

Africa Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, Amani Abou-Zeid, said for industrialization to happen, African countries should invest in technology and innovations as it will promote regional integration, generate

inclusive economic growth, create employment and break the digital divide.

"This will eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities, ensure free movement of goods and services in the continent," said Ms. Abou-Zeid.

Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, South Africa's Minister of Communications and Telecommunications, said African countries should partner to transition to the digital economy and ensure that no country and no-one is left behind because that is where the world is heading. There is no industrialization without technology, she said.

"So far data indicate that only a few major towns in Africa - Lagos, Cape Town, Nairobi, Cairo and Accra - are our technology hubs. This is way below the level of the other continents," Ms. Ndabeni-Abrahams said.

"To leverage ourselves with the other continents, African countries should focus on including technology skills development, trainings, data coding, and entrepreneurship."



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## AFRICAN COUNTRIES MUST ADOPT DATA TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN 21ST CENTURY



Data is an essential resource for economic growth, competitiveness, innovation, job creation and societal progress. It is used in almost every sector. Its application ranging from supporting small scale farmers to increase productivity to modelling and tracing the spread of pandemics such as COVID-19 and the improvement of basic services such as healthcare, water and electricity supply chain.

This was said Saturday by Ms. Leila Ben-Ali, Head of the Statistics Division at the African Union, while presenting a paper on harnessing technology and innovation during a side event on Digitalizing Migration Response to harness Africa's Economic Development and Demographic Dividend in the COVID-19 Era

held on the sidelines of the 53rd session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

She said in October 2020 the African union had launched an initiative data usage programme aimed at ensuring that data economy drives equitable growth and socio economic progress across the continent.

"Data is the world's biggest, most expensive and most important commodity. It narrows both information and time gaps. Africa cannot afford to ignore its potential for policy makers and social economic development," Ms. Ben-Ali said.

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## LOW INTERNET ACCESS ...

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young girls with digital literacy, coding, and personal development skills.

Girls are trained as programmers, creators, and designers, placing them on-track to take up education and careers in ICT and coding.

Letty Chiwara, UN Women Representative to Ethiopia, the Africa Union Commission (AUC) and the ECA, said boosting women's digital literacy today would have far-reaching inter-generational implications.

"Women are uniquely suited to prepare younger generations to participate in the digital economy, a reason why governments should empower more women in the fields of science and technology," she said.

Cisse Mohamed, Director of Social Affairs at the AUC, said while women and girls were encouraged to take up technology, there was no conducive environment for them to do so.

"African governments should create computer literacy programs, targeting women from rural areas, in particular. Improving access to information and communications technologies, especially Internet-enabled mobile phones, would go a long way toward supporting these efforts," said Ms. Mohamed, adding that data safety and protection was important in this digital era.

Andrew Rugege, ITU Regional Director for Africa, said COVID-19 was a health hazard but had shown the continent the importance of ICT.

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## AFRICA URGED TO FOCUS ON...

*Cont'd from page 3*

African Union Heads of State and represented a pact between African asset owners, principally pension and sovereign wealth funds and African governments, under a new more aligned institutional investor, public partnership framework.

Mr. Danso believes that the 5% agenda will enable African leaders to work collaboratively on project designs, and better alignment of infrastructure investment policy regimes.

For his part, Shaun Kingsbury, Chairman, Renewable Power Capital and former CEO of UK Green Investment Bank, said there was a

huge opportunity for in greening Africa's infrastructure. He urged African countries to create a new independent entity to focus on green energy. Currently no such institution exists in Africa.

"Get the people who can do it. People with long experience in the field. Give them the capital and they must be independent. You need an institution that can do it, and it has to be green and profitable," said Mr. Kingsbury.

The side event was held under the theme: "Institutional Investors and Green Investments in the Context of COVID-19."

## OFFICIALS CALL FOR ...

*Cont'd from page 2*

their economic contributions remain limited because of challenges such as poor access to finance, training and technology.

For instance, Africa's gender gap in internet access has increased from 20 per cent in 2013 to 33 per cent in 2019. At the same time, youth represent 60 per cent of Africa's unemployed population. Evidence suggests that these inequalities are widening due to the pandemic.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director of the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), said: "Much of the digital potential remains untapped, particularly for women and girls.

"Digital technologies present several entry points to building forward better from the COVID-19 crisis while accelerating progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals."

She said specific measures could include a fund to support digitalization, cross-sector partnerships, digital inclusion policies and gender-specific financial products.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Sidi Ould Tah, Director General of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) said: "Some people often say the problem is access to finance while others think the issue is the lack of education. A few believe the challenge is the poor infrastructure.

"These wide-ranging observations require a holistic response because any partial approach to this problem is bound to fail... That is why we have started working on a multi-stakeholder coalition to support women and youth entrepreneurs in unleashing their full potential."

## A GREENER AfCFTA POSSIBLE ...

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Robert Hamwey, Economics Affairs Officer, UNCTAD; and Dominic McVey, an ODI Director. ATPC Coordinator David Luke moderated the event.

The webinar was part of a wider partnership between ECA and ODI to assess the trade and climate change nexus in the context of the AfCFTA. The partnership includes two dedicated research publications on "Mapping the climate and trade nexus in a context of economic fragility" and "African trade strategies in a climate constrained world". This research is expected to help support advocacy efforts for mainstreaming climate change considerations within the remaining AfCFTA process, including phase II and III negotiations, national-level implementation, and inform a

common African position on discussions at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The AfCFTA provides an opportunity for Africa to create the world's largest free trade area with the potential to unite more than 1.2 billion people with a gross domestic product of more than \$2.5 trillion which is expected to usher in a new era of development. Trading under the pact commenced on 1 January this year after a postponement for six months as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ECA, through ATPC, works with the African Union Commission (AUC) and member states of the AU to deepen Africa's trade integration and effectively implement the agreement through policy advocacy and national strategy development, with the financial support of the European Union (EU).

# LE FAIBLE ACCÈS À INTERNET CONTINUE D'AFPECTER LES FEMMES ET LES FILLES AFRICAINES

L'inégalité inhérente entre les sexes et l'inégalité concernant la connectivité Internet sont quelques-unes des raisons pour lesquelles les femmes et les filles en Afrique restent sous-représentées dans les domaines de la science et de la technologie, selon les panélistes de l'évènement parallèle, de l'Initiative « Les filles peuvent coder » (AGCCI), à la 53ème session de la Commission économique des ministres africains des finances, de la planification et du développement économique à Addis-Abeba.

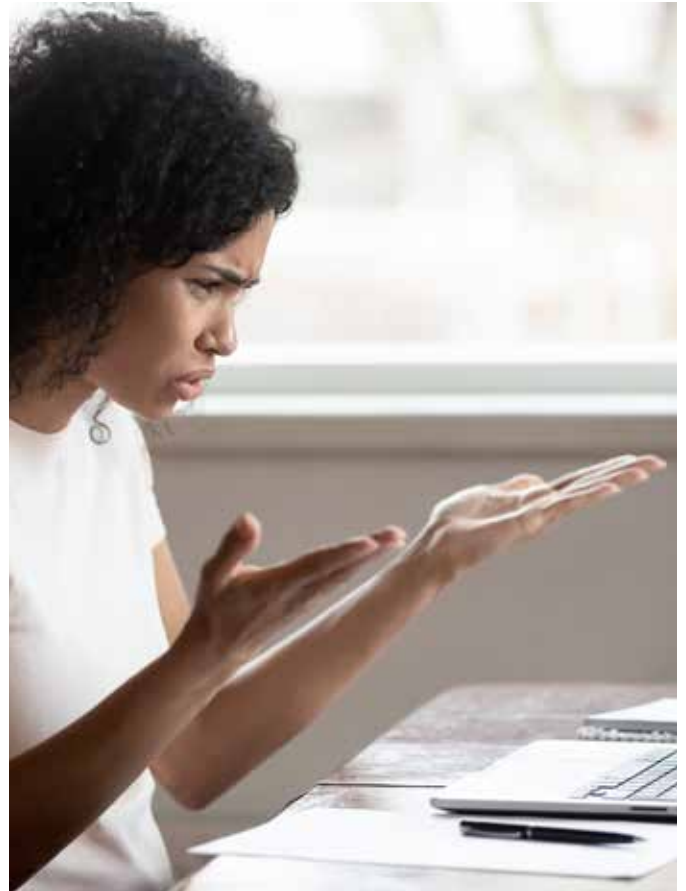
Jean-Paul Adam, Directeur de la Division de la technologie, du changement climatique et de la gestion des ressources naturelles, à la Commission économique pour l'Afrique (CEA), s'exprimant lors de l'évènement parallèle, déclare que bien que le pourcentage de femmes dans la population active sur le continent ait

progressivement augmenté, il est resté nettement inférieur dans le secteur de la technologie.

« L'absence de connectivité égale des femmes compromet leur capacité à réaliser leur potentiel économique. Une situation à laquelle il est urgent de remédier », déclare M. Adam.

« Les filles sont confrontées à la discrimination dans le secteur, car l'informatique a toujours été considérée comme un cours pour les garçons et non pour les filles ».

L'AGCCI est un programme mis en œuvre par ONU Femmes en collaboration avec l'Union africaine, la CEA et l'Union internationale des télécommunications. Le programme de quatre ans, lancé en 2018, est conçu pour doter les jeunes filles de compétences numériques, de codage et de développement personnel.



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## LES PAYS AFRICAINS DOIVENT ADOPTER LA TECHNOLOGIE DES DONNÉES POUR UNE CROISSANCE DURABLE AU 21ÈME SIÈCLE



Les données sont une ressource essentielle pour la croissance économique, la compétitivité, l'innovation, la création d'emplois et le progrès social. Elles sont utilisées dans presque tous les secteurs. Son application va du soutien aux petits exploitants agricoles pour augmenter la productivité à la modélisation et au suivi de la propagation des pandémies telles que la COVID-19 et à l'amélioration des services de base tels que les soins de santé, l'eau et la chaîne d'approvisionnement en électricité.

Telles sont les paroles prononcées ce samedi, par Mme Leila Ben-Ali, Chef de la Division des statistiques, à l'Union africaine, lors de la présentation d'un document sur l'exploitation de la technologie et de l'innovation, au cours d'un évènement

parallèle sur la numérisation de la réponse aux migrations pour exploiter le développement économique et le dividende démographique de l'Afrique dans le contexte de la COVID-19, tenu en marge de la 53ème session de la Conférence des ministres africains des finances, de la planification et du développement économique, de la Commission économique pour l'Afrique.

Elle déclare qu'en octobre 2020, l'Union africaine a lancé un programme sur l'utilisation des données visant à garantir que l'économie des données entraîne une croissance équitable et des progrès socio-économiques à travers le continent.

«Les données sont le produit le plus important, le plus cher et le plus important

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# LES RESPONSABLES APPELLENT À INVESTIR DANS LES FEMMES ET LES JEUNES ENTREPRENEURS POUR STIMULER LA CROISSANCE DE L'AFRIQUE

Selon les ministres, les banquiers et les experts du développement, investir pour doter les femmes et les jeunes entrepreneurs de compétences, de ressources et d'encadrement stimulera la croissance de l'Afrique.

Ils s'exprimaient lors d'un événement intitulé, « Libérer le potentiel des femmes et des jeunes entrepreneurs à l'ère du numérique », qui s'est tenu le 21 mars, dans le cadre de la session annuelle de la Conférence des ministres africains des finances, de la planification et du développement économique, de la Commission économique pour l'Afrique.

L'événement, qui comprenait une table ronde, s'est concentré sur les défis auxquels les femmes et les jeunes entrepreneurs sont confrontés,

comment ils peuvent tirer parti de la technologie et quelles pratiques peuvent promouvoir l'entrepreneuriat après la pandémie de COVID-19.

S'adressant aux participants, la Chef de la Section de l'urbanisation de la CEA, Mme Edlam Yemeru, déclare : « La croissance économique et la prospérité de l'Afrique dépendent de la capacité de ses entrepreneurs à transformer leurs idées en entreprises prospères ».

Elle ajoute : « Le taux de chômage élevé de 15% en Afrique touche particulièrement les femmes et les jeunes. L'entrepreneuriat à l'ère du numérique offre une énorme opportunité de créer de nouveaux emplois et d'améliorer leur participation à des activités rémunérées. Pour libérer cette

opportunité, nous devons nous concentrer sur les femmes et les jeunes ».

Mme Yemeru décrit « des données solides sur l'entrepreneuriat, l'accès au financement, un environnement propice et le développement des compétences » comme des ingrédients de base qui peuvent aider les femmes et les entreprises appartenant à des jeunes à survivre et à prospérer en Afrique.

À l'échelle mondiale, l'Afrique occupe une place élevée en termes de nombre de femmes et de jeunes entreprises dirigées par des jeunes. Cependant, leurs contributions à l'économie restent limitées en raison de problèmes tels qu'un accès limité au financement, à la formation et à la technologie.



Par exemple, l'écart entre les sexes en Afrique en matière d'accès à Internet est passé de 20% en 2013 à 33% en 2019. Dans le même temps, les jeunes représentent 60% de la population africaine au chômage. Les données suggèrent que ces inégalités se creusent en raison de la pandémie.

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## OFFICIALS CALL FOR ...

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Contributing to the panel discussion, which included ministers, bankers and development experts, Ethiopian entrepreneur Ms. Samrawit Mersiehazen urged banks to create a special lending criterion for small businesses.

She said: "When I applied for a loan for my business, the bank required me to comply with the same stringent requirements that are set for large corporations. These can be tough to meet, especially if you are running a micro or small business."

Mr. Samuel Mugisha, whose startup has delivered health services to half a million Ugandans, highlighted the need for mentorship opportunities for young people.

He said: "It is easy to start a business in Uganda. But 70 per cent of startups close before their fifth anniversary. Customized mentorship is extremely important to understand what do businesses need to do to survive in a competitive environment."

Additional proposals put forward by the panelists included earmarking a specific portion of public funds for female startups and engaging banks to offer gender-sensitive services.

The ECA hosted the virtual event in partnership with UNFPA and BADEA.

## LE FAIBLE ACCÈS ...

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Les filles sont formées en tant que programmeuses, créatrices et conceptrices, ce qui les place sur la bonne voie pour entreprendre une éducation et une carrière dans les TIC et le codage.

Letty Chiwara, Représentante d'ONU Femmes en Éthiopie, auprès de la Commission de l'Union africaine (CUA) et de la CEA, déclare qu'aujourd'hui, renforcer l'alphabétisation numérique des femmes aura de profondes implications intergénérationnelles. « Les femmes sont particulièrement adaptées pour préparer les jeunes

générations à participer à l'économie numérique, raison pour laquelle les gouvernements devront autonomiser davantage de femmes dans les domaines de la science et de la technologie », dit-elle.

Cisse Mohamed, Directrice des affaires sociales à la CUA, déclare que si les femmes et les filles sont encouragées à adopter la technologie, il n'y a pas d'environnement propice pour le faire.

« Les gouvernements africains doivent créer des programmes d'initiation à l'informatique,

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## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ...

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Bogolo Kenewendo, former Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Botswana, said the continent must address the challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment to smoothly transition to the digital economy.

"It is important to look at digital transformation and digital economy from our indigenous knowledge systems or products if we really want to be inclusive," she said, adding that there was a gap between policy makers, implementers and the people, which is a hindrance to smooth digital transformation for Africa.

"We do not need to invest millions in order to create innovation hubs. It does not require millions to put up structures. All that is required is a simple structure that can nurture youth start-ups and entrepreneurs."

Ms. Kenewendo said failure by African countries to work with what they have,

"simply means that we are never going to deliver the fourth industrial revolution because countries think they must first be at the level of Silicon Valley."

She said African countries should formulate and implement laws, policies and regulations required to accelerate digital transformation for national, regional and continental development.

"To implement the policies and strategies, Africa needs to invest in diverse education, STEM and ensure access to internet for all. Innovation has to meet the needs of the continent, and address cyber security," she said, adding that there was need to create awareness on issues that affect technology, including data protection.

The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is being held under the theme; Africa's sustainable industrialization and diversification in the digital era in the context of Covid-19.

## ECA LAUNCHES REPORT ON ...

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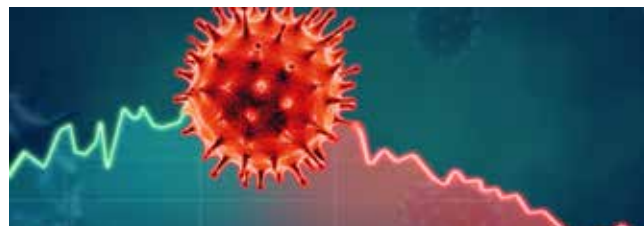
The trading bloc, the world's largest since the creation of the World Trade Organization with the potential to unite more than 1.2 billion people with a gross domestic product of more than \$2.5 trillion, is expected to usher in a new era of development for Africa. Trading under the pact commenced on 1 January this year after a postponement for six months as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the virtual launch on the sidelines of the annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Futi identified poor internet penetration and high cost of data as among bottlenecks

hindering e-commerce and digital economy in Africa.

Torbjorn Fredriksson of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Iffy Ogo of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Ayman Elsherbiny of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and Nanno Mulder of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also spoke of the impact the pandemic on poor countries in Africa and other regions.

Link to the report: <https://bit.ly/3vNbPxF>



## AFRICAN COUNTRIES MUST ADOPT ...

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She proposed that data science by Africa for Africa led by African scientists can play a key role in addressing many of the continent's challenges.

"One example is sharing data across borders, ensuring that data meets the aspirations of Africa," Ms. Ben-Ali said.

There are fragmented efforts in Africa to fill the skills gap needed for more data units that are professional that will collect, store, analyse, interpret and visualise data.

"Challenges to a digital economy in Africa includes low internet penetration, which stands at 20% to 21.8 % of the population, leaving the rest offline. The AU is leading 15 innovations to harness digital technology to support AfCFTA

implementation and achieve a digital single market by 2030," she said.

But, Ms. Ben-Ali added, there was a half-hearted response by Member States, citing that only one of five countries has a digital legal framework and only 11 countries have adopted cybercrime laws.

In her presentation, Ms. Janet Edeme, Head of Rural Economy and Agriculture Division at the AUC, said human migration has lately 'reached unprecedented levels and is a defining feature of our time'.

"Migration is dynamic and migration trends and patterns on the continent have changed over the past 10 years," she said.

"Cross border migration in Africa is an important livelihood and coping strategy during times of ecological and economic downturn, lack of employment and decent work, and is key to understanding as well as forecasting the onset and evolution of humanitarian disasters," said Ms. Edeme.

Over the last decade, deteriorating political, environmental and socio economic conditions as well as armed conflicts, insecurity, environmental degradation and poverty have been significant root causes of mass migration and forced displacement in Africa.

The globalisation process has also facilitated the movement of people cross the various regions of Africa and

to other regions outside the continent. As the number of migrants continues to increase, migration is a major issue in the 21st Century and poses a major challenge for policymakers engaged in the management of migration for the betterment of the continent.

Migrants face challenges of being viewed as people who will take up jobs, accept low wages, stretch social and health services.

Environmental factors play a key role in causing population movements and conversely migration has an impact on the environment.

Giving recommendations, Ms. Edeme said internal migration has an impact on local environments and there was therefore need to make cities safe, resilient and sustainable.



# LE FAIBLE ACCÈS ...

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ciblant en particulier les femmes des zones rurales. Améliorer l'accès aux Technologies de l'information et de la communication, en particulier les téléphones mobiles compatibles Internet, contribuera grandement à soutenir ces efforts », affirme Mme Mohamed, ajoutant que la sécurité et la protection des données sont importantes à l'ère du numérique.

Andrew Rugege, Directeur régional de l'UIT pour l'Afrique, indique que la COVID-19 est un danger pour la santé mais a montré au continent l'importance des TIC. « Plus de la moitié de nos femmes et jeunes filles ne sont pas connectés à Internet. Il est nécessaire de réduire l'écart entre les sexes en augmentant la

possession de téléphones portables et l'accès à Internet par les femmes et les jeunes filles », déclare M. Rugege. « Les jeunes filles doivent être formées aux programmes TIC plutôt qu'être simplement consommatrices des innovations ».

Hendrina Doroba, Chef de division, éducation, capital humain et emploi au Groupe de la Banque africaine de développement (BAD), déclare que les filles qui ont participé aux ateliers pratiques de l'Initiative « Les filles peuvent coder » ont déjà ce qu'il faut pour convaincre les gouvernements d'incorporer les TIC dans les programmes d'enseignement. « Nous devons impliquer les décideurs politiques au niveau des pays, pour

faire pression pour l'inclusion des TIC dans les programmes d'enseignement dans tous les pays africains », affirme Mme Doroba, ajoutant que la BAD a lancé des initiatives visant à étendre les infrastructures d'apprentissage numérique dans divers pays, y compris le Kenya, le Rwanda, la Côte d'Ivoire et le Sénégal.

Le premier groupe de filles qui a remporté le concours de l'Initiative « Nous pouvons coder » du Sénégal, de la Tanzanie et de l'Afrique du Sud a présenté leurs projets de programmation sur la robotique et l'animation lors de l'évènement parallèle.

L'Initiative « Les filles africaines peuvent coder » doit toucher plus de 2 000 filles à travers 18 ateliers pratiques de codage (2 internationaux, 12 régionaux et 4 en Éthiopie) d'ici 2022.

En septembre 2018, le programme a réuni 88 filles âgées de 17 à 20 ans de 32 pays africains lors du premier atelier pratique de codage. D'ici 2022, 14 ateliers pratiques de codage seront organisés pour porter le programme à plus de 2 000 filles à travers l'Afrique.

Il a été annoncé lors de l'évènement parallèle que les prochains ateliers pratiques hybrides se tiendront au Cameroun et au Congo.

# LES PAYS AFRICAINS ...

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au monde. Elles réduisent à la fois les informations et les intervalles de temps. L'Afrique ne peut pas se permettre d'ignorer son potentiel pour les décideurs politiques et le développement socio-économique », affirme Mme Ben-Ali.

Elle propose que la science des données par l'Afrique pour l'Afrique, dirigée par des scientifiques africains, puisse jouer un rôle clé dans la résolution de nombreux défis du continent.

« Un exemple est le partage de données à travers les frontières, garantissant que les données répondent aux aspirations du continent », déclare Mme Ben-Ali.

Il y a des efforts fragmentés en Afrique pour combler le manque de compétences nécessaire pour plus d'unités de données professionnelles qui collecteront, stockeront, analyseront, interpréteront et visualiseront les données.

« Les défis d'une économie numérique en Afrique comprennent la faible pénétration d'Internet, qui se situe entre 20% et 21,8% de la population, laissant le reste hors ligne. L'UA dirige 15 innovations visant à exploiter la technologie numérique pour soutenir la mise en œuvre de la ZLECAf et réaliser un marché unique numérique d'ici 2030 », dit-elle.

Mais Mme Ben-Ali ajoute que les États membres ont répondu timidement, citant que seul un pays sur cinq dispose d'un cadre juridique numérique et que 11 pays seulement ont adopté des lois sur la cybercriminalité.

Dans sa présentation, Mme Janet Edeme, Chef de la Division de l'économie rurale et de l'agriculture, à la CUA, déclare que la migration humaine a récemment « atteint des niveaux sans précédent et constitue une caractéristique déterminante de notre époque ».

« La migration est dynamique et les tendances et les schémas de migration sur le continent ont changé au cours des 10 dernières années », dit-elle.

« La migration transfrontalière en Afrique est un moyen de subsistance et une stratégie d'adaptation importants en période de ralentissement écologique et économique, d'absence d'emploi et de travail décent, et est essentielle pour comprendre ainsi que pour prévoir le début et l'évolution des catastrophes humanitaires », déclare Mme Edeme.

Au cours de la dernière décennie, la détérioration des conditions politiques, environnementales et socio-économiques ainsi que les conflits armés, l'insécurité, la dégradation de l'environnement et la pauvreté ont été des causes profondes importantes des migrations massives et des déplacements forcés en Afrique.

Le processus de mondialisation a également facilité la circulation des

personnes à travers les différentes régions d'Afrique et vers d'autres régions en dehors du continent. Alors que le nombre de migrants continue de croître, la migration est un problème majeur au 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle et constitue un défi majeur pour les décideurs politiques engagés dans la gestion de la migration pour le mieux-être du continent.

Les migrants ont du mal à être considérés comme des personnes qui acceptent un emploi, des bas salaires, étireront les services sociaux et de santé.

Les facteurs environnementaux jouent un rôle clé dans les mouvements de population et inversement, la migration a un impact sur l'environnement.

Faisant des recommandations, Mme Edeme indique que la migration interne a un impact sur les environnements locaux et qu'il est donc nécessaire de rendre les villes sûres, résilientes et durables.

# LES RESPONSABLES APPELLENT ...

*Suite de la page 7*

S'exprimant lors de l'évènement, Mme Diene Keita, Directrice exécutive adjointe du Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (FNUAP), déclare : « Une grande partie du potentiel numérique reste inexploité, en particulier pour les femmes et les filles.

« Les technologies numériques présentent plusieurs points d'entrée pour mieux sortir de la crise de COVID-19 tout en accélérant les progrès pour atteindre les Objectifs de développement durable ».

Elle indique que des mesures spécifiques peuvent inclure un fonds visant à soutenir la numérisation, des partenariats intersectoriels, des politiques d'inclusion numérique et des produits financiers tenant compte de la dimension genre.

Dans son allocution liminaire, M. Sidi Ould Tah, Directeur général de la Banque arabe pour le développement économique en Afrique (BADEA) déclare : « Certains disent souvent que le problème est l'accès au financement tandis que d'autres pensent que le problème est le manque d'éducation. Quelques-uns pensent que le défi concerne les mauvaises infrastructures.

« Ces observations de grande envergure nécessitent une réponse holistique car toute approche partielle de ce problème est vouée à l'échec... C'est pourquoi nous avons commencé à travailler sur une coalition multipartite pour aider les femmes et les jeunes entrepreneurs à libérer leur plein potentiel ».

Contribuant à la table ronde, qui comprenait des ministres, des banquiers et des experts du développement, l'Entrepreneure éthiopienne Mme Samrawit Mersiehazen exhorte les banques à créer un critère de prêt spécial pour les petites entreprises.

Elle dit : « Lorsque j'ai demandé un prêt pour mon entreprise, la banque m'a obligé à me conformer aux mêmes exigences strictes que celles établies pour les grandes entreprises. Celles-ci peuvent être difficiles à respecter, surtout si vous dirigez une micro ou une petite entreprise ».

M. Samuel Mugisha, dont la start-up a fourni des services de santé à un demi-million d'Ougandais, souligne le

besoin de possibilités de mentorat pour les jeunes.

Il déclare : « Il est facile de démarrer une entreprise en Ouganda. Mais 70% des start-ups ferment avant leur cinquième anniversaire. Un mentorat personnalisé est extrêmement important pour comprendre ce que les entreprises doivent faire pour survivre dans un environnement concurrentiel ».

Les propositions supplémentaires avancées par les panélistes comprenaient l'affectation d'une partie spécifique des fonds publics aux startups féminines et l'engagement des banques à offrir des services sensibles au genre.

La CEA a accueilli l'évènement virtuel en partenariat avec le FNUAP et la BADEA.

# LOW INTERNET ACCESS ...

*Cont'd from page 5*

"More than half of our women and youth are not connected on the internet. There is need to close the gender gap by increasing the mobile ownership and access to internet by women and youth," said Mr. Rugege.

"Young girls should be trained on ICT programs rather than just being consumers of the innovations."

Hendrina Doroba, Division Manager, Education, Human Capital and Employment at the African Development Bank Group (AfDB), said girls who have participated in the Africa Girls Can Code Initiative camps, already had what it takes to convince governments to incorporate ICT into the education curriculum.

"We need to engage policymakers at the country level, to push for inclusion of ICT in education curriculum in all the countries in Africa," said Ms. Doroba, adding that the AfDB had created

initiatives of expanding infrastructure on digital learning in various countries, including Kenya, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, and Senegal.

The first group of girls who won the "we can code initiative" competition from Senegal, Tanzania and South Africa presented their programming projects on robotics and animation at the side event. The African Girls Can Code Initiative is expected to reach more than 2,000 girls through 18 Coding Camps (2 international, 12 regional and 4 in Ethiopia) by 2022.

In September 2018, the programme brought together 88 girls aged 17-20 from 32 African countries at the first coding camp. By 2022, 14 coding camps will be organized to take the programme to more than 2,000 girls across Africa.

It was announced at the side event that the next hybrid camps will be held in Cameroon and Congo.



# COM2021 IN PICTURES

