



5th EDITION
PROSPERITY
AFRICA
2022



**SMALL
BUSINESS
EXPORTERS
CONFERENCE**



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**Pan African Chamber of
Commerce and Industry**

Africa's Largest Business Organization

The **VISION** of the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) is to take the lead in shaping a diverse and strong continental economy where businesses and industry flourish and the community prospers.

PACCI's **MISSION** is to strengthen, support, and promote the economic vitality of Africa's business community.

With help from its Executive Council and members **PACCI** has developed a four year strategic plan with focus on four priority areas:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This strategic plan is designed to create alignment for all programs, services, and public policy work provided by PACCI. This includes an assessment of all current programs and services to ensure their purpose supports one or more of our strategic priorities

BOOSTING INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE

IMPROVING PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY AND BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

SUPPORT COMMUNITIES WELLBEING PROGRAMS

CHAMBER AFRICA CONNECT

About the Fifth Edition of Prosperity Africa Conference Series – 2022 Small Business Exporters Conference

The inaugural Prosperity Africa Conference was launched in 2012 to create a dialogue and knowledge sharing platform on the pertinent issues experienced by SMEs across Africa.

The 2022 fifth edition of the Prosperity Africa Conference edition on Small Business Exporters' was organized by the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI), the Association of SADC Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCCI), and Business Botswana, in close collaboration with UNECA Africa Trade Policy Centre (UNECA ATPC), United Nations Development Program – (UNDP), and Afrexim Bank in partnership with the African Union Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, International Trade Center (ITC), Shared Value Africa Initiative (SVAI), Ecobank – Ethiopia, Initiative Africa, East Africa Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (EACCIA), and the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce, and Industry (FEWACCI).

The Conference was held on 17- 18 May, with an additional optional day to visit exporting companies in Gaborone, Botswana. It was envisioned that through knowledge exchange and learning among international participants involved in SME export trade and the sharing of innovations, this meeting would identify best practices and develop recommendations to eliminate bottlenecks thus maximizing the potential of SMEs for the achievement of the AfCFTA.

Close to 120 participants – including ministers, diplomats, academics, business people, chambers of commerce and business association leaders, and civil society activists – shared expertise and broad experience, through lively and dynamic discussions.

The conference included seven (7) plenary sessions, eleven (11) expert sessions, speed networking coffee breaks and a business exhibition organized by Business Botswana. An additional four hundred (400) participants attended the meeting virtually.

The main discussions focused on the broad issues affecting exports by African small businesses; issues related to the AfCFTA, investment, quality and standards, value chains, financing, sustainability, certification, and others. The discussions delved further into ways to accelerate the use of the AfCFTA using tools such as the Africa Trade Observatory for market understanding, AfCFTA Country Business Index (UNECA/ATPC), and the Private Sector Gender Equality Seal Program (UNDP). The meeting identified the desired structural changes in policy, technology, and investments to address various challenges limiting exports.

This report provides a summary of the discussions, and links to video-recordings from the conference (identified by a video icon).

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The overall objectives of this conference were to discuss:

- a) Measures to be taken to maximize the potential of SMEs to increase export activities, including under the AfCFTA
- a) Development of concrete effective measures which will help business owners to adjust to new realities, keep their business going and make steps towards its further development.;
- b) Access to information the various tools advancing the AfCFTA, notably, the pan-African payments and settlements system (AFREXIMBANK); AfCFTA Country Business Index (UNECA/ATPC), Gender Equality Seal Program (UNDP), and the African trade observatory (ITC).



RECAP DAY 1: MAY 17th

Title of the session:	Opening Remarks
	<p>Mr Gobusamang Keebine, President Business Botswana</p> <p>Mr Kebour Ghenna, Executive Director, Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI)</p> <p>Dr Balázs Horváth, Resident Representative of UNDP, Botswana</p> <p>Mayor Father Mapongo, The Mayor of Gaborone City</p> <p>Hon. Beauty M. Manake, Assistant Minister of Trade and Industry (Botswana)</p>



Mr Gobusamang Keebine,
President, Business Botswana

“The AfCTFA hinges on tariff reduction. When tariffs are reduced with high-quality logistics there is bound to be some increase in trade.”

The Conference was attended by over 120 participants mostly from SMEs from across the continent, and over 400 registered participants for virtual participation. It (the Conference) symbolized the increasingly important role that trade plays in our economic relationship in Africa.

Speakers who participated in the Opening Session explored how government – private sector partnership will be shaped, discussed the need for all stakeholders to take an active role in the implementation of the AfCFTA, especially by enabling enterprises to grow and create jobs, and to support the private sector to play a stronger role in Africa’s Economic Integration.



Mr. Kebour Ghenna,
Executive Director, PACCI

“An AfCFTA that does not embrace solidarity is doomed to fail and fail swiftly. An AfCFTA that expands inequality and only empowers the rich economies of the world should not be acceptable.”

The speakers identified common challenges faced by SMEs such as: Access to funding, limited management and business skills, low integration with the medium and large scale businesses, and market access and more. They echoed the importance of small and informal businesses in creating jobs, boosting and diversifying exports, strengthening the livelihoods of families and individuals, and reducing poverty and inequality.

Small businesses are not only producers of goods and services but are also essential parts of the regional and global value chains, relying on the free movement of goods, services, people, and capital across borders.

Speakers stressed that governments must create and maintain policies, strategies and regulations responsive to the needs of the private sector, so that they can produce and bring competitive products to the market. Business need, among others, supportive industrial development policies, investment and export promotion strategies, globally recognized product standards, and access to credit facilities. Business also needs to be enabled to productively use digital approaches to doing business.

“UNDP has endeavored to strengthen partnerships with the private sector, aiming to help it develop sustainably, so that it uses available resources to create value for the current generation while not compromising the livelihoods of future ones.”



Dr. Balázs Horváth,
UNDP Resident Representative
Botswana,

It was also noted that attention should be given to ease the movement of goods from factory, field or farm to the port or border or next country. The quality of a country's logistics, not only advances cross border trade. When tariffs are reduced with high quality logistics there is bound to be increase in trade.

Other important points include:

- The need to focus on investing in hard and soft infrastructure – ports, railways airports, as well as addressing inadequate border management logistics, and inefficient cross-border arrangements to facilitate trade connectivity to benefit from the AfCFTA;
- The need to put in place reliable institutions that publish statistics of trade in goods to help companies carry out market research and define their commercial strategy.
- The necessity for government leaders and representatives to regularly engage with the private sector to discuss risks undermining the ability to take advantage of new technologies, the capacity to regulate in a timely and trade facilitative manner, or the ability to transform manufacturing and industrial production.

Dr. Balázs Horváth, UNDP Resident Representative Botswana, explained that Botswana's aspiration is to be an inclusive high-income economy by 2036. An ambitious, but achievable objective, if all stakeholders, from government, civil society, non-governmental organizations, small businesses and development partners all work towards it, he said. He maintained that MSMEs in the formal and informal sectors contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Development Agenda (SDGs) and Botswana's national economic development objectives.



Mayor Father Mapongo
The Mayor of Gaborone-Botswana

“We are in the process as well, of establishing a Mayor’s Fund whose purpose primarily would be to assist small businesses in terms of up skilling them. Your partnership in this regard is welcome.”

Mayor Father Mapongo also indicated that Botswana’s private sector has long contributed to the development of the Southern Africa region, and Botswana’s investors have long recognized this potential. “Today, we see a growing number of Botswana’s small and medium enterprises looking for new opportunities in Africa” he said. Gaborone is actively opening its doors to investors and encourages African businesses to consider Gaborone as an investment destination of choice.



Honorable Madame Beauty M. Manake,
The Assistant Minister of Trade and Industry Botswana

“Rules-based trade establishes stability and predictability in trade relationships to ensure balance and fairness. That is why we believe a well-crafted AfCFTA generates new opportunities for businesses, particularly SMEs.”

The Honorable Assistant Minister indicated that the partnership between Business Botswana and the Government of Botswana has been the cornerstone of policy-making in all businesses, with Business Botswana representing the voice of all the private sector businesses. She explained that this symbiotic relationship has been cemented through the High-Level Consultative Committee (HLCC), chaired at the highest political level and drawing reports from Sectoral consultative councils, at ministerial level, where the private sector is also a member.

She also stressed that participation in the AfCFTA requires careful planning, hard work, sometimes long hours, and the ability to follow through with the journey during tough times.



SESSION ONE

Title of the session:	New opportunities for Young Business women and Men under the AfCFTA		
Moderator:	Mrs. Neo Tlhaselo – Founder and MD, Conversation with Africa Conference		
Speakers:	Ms Sheila Onyango	Mr. Hervé Azemtsa	Mr Siita Sofo Hissan (virtual)
	CEO, Okapu bags	CEO, S2 Services SARL	President of the AfCFTA young entrepreneurs



Mrs. Neo Tlhaselo, – Founder and MD,
Conversation with Africa Conference



Mr. Hervé Azemtsa , CEO, S2 Services SARL
Ms. Sheila Onyango, CEO, Okapu bags

Key takeaways:

Information is the largest asset for African businesses, AfCFTA related information and data need to be accessed in a simplified comprehensible manner in the language most people understand.

Measures should be put in place to enable youth to do business. Higher taxes should not be imposed on smaller businesses. The focus instead ought to be on the scaling and sustainability of business which will have a compounded effect of scale change and job creation.

- Young people must think big to trade regionally, continentally, and globally. Many young business people would like to export, but don't know much about selling across the border or overseas, or where to get help.
- Lack of knowledge is the biggest barrier. Focus should be on developing a collaborative initiative between the government, the private sector and other stakeholders to assist Africa's small businesses to use technology for exporting.
- Governments need to commit to free movement of people and encourage investment as set out in the AfCFTA to keep people informed at every stage of the process and to provide an effective flow of information about the AfCFTA.
- There is need to encourage and support young people to effectively advocate for their right to education and training, to prepare youth for the digital economy.



SESSION TWO:

Title of the session	Maximizing market opportunities for Industrialization and Trade under the AfCFTA (by UNDP)	
Speakers	Mr. Komi Tsowou Regional AfCFTA Advisor, UNDP	Ms. Boitumelo Mbaakanyi Program Manager of ATISA Supplier Development Programme, UNDP Botswana



Mr. Komi Tsowou, Regional AfCFTA Advisor, UNDP



Ms. Boitumelo Mbaakanyi, Program Manager of ATISA Supplier Development Programme, UNDP Botswana

Key takeaways:

- Unleashing the AfCFTA's potential requires increasing investment in key areas, particularly regional and cross-border infrastructure projects. In addition to diversifying Africa's exports and building a more resilient economy, the AfCFTA helps promote the competitiveness of African economies and their integration into regional and global value chains, increasing economies of scale and attracting investment to the continent.
- Most of the economies rely on air transport to move goods which is quite expensive, so the AfCFTA reducing tariff will not be enough. It has to be complimented by investment in other infrastructure.
- As at May 2022, 43 of the 54 signatories (80%) have ratified the AfCFTA which includes South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, and Morocco recently ratifying which means there is potential to do business toward those large markets.
- Governments should help businesses to comply with the various trade rules for instance the rule of origin.

“Currently the AfCFTA classifies products into 3 categories; most of the products under the non-sensitive category will be liberalized first i.e. tariff of certain products will be progressively reduced to zero. Sensitive products are those going to be liberalized over a longer period - countries are given room to protect some industries within certain limit. Lastly, the products that are excluded from liberalization.”

- **F**or the AfCFTA to be a game changer, MSMEs must identify where opportunities exist for market and value chains integration. Understanding the AfCFTA rules is critical, especially rules of origin, service regulations, mutual recognition of standards, licensing and certification of services suppliers, as well as modalities of liberalization of trade in goods and services.
- UNDP Botswana has been contributing to realizing inclusive and structurally transformational AfCFTA benefits by increasing participation of MSMEs (especially those led by women & youth) in the regional and continental markets. Through UNDP's flagship programme, **ATISA Supplier Development Programme (SDP)**, local MSMEs have been assisted to increase their capacity to not only identify available diversification opportunities but to be more competitive in African trade markets, especially through the AfCFTA.
- Focus industries include; Mining, Energy, Infrastructure, Agro-processing, Leather, Textiles, Digital, Health and Other Manufacturing. **Youth Connect**, another UNDP flagship programme, has been launched as part of the SDP. UNDP Botswana, in its contribution towards realizing inclusive and structural transformation, is active in supporting national/regional institutions that have the capacity to drive the AfCFTA agenda of sustainable economic opportunities. That is business associations, MSMEs, investment trade centres. Examples of such support include; Business **Botswana's Market Intelligence Information System (MIIS)** and its Private Sector Recovery Strategy, **Botswana Chamber of Mines' Database Management System**, Capacity Building Workshops for SDP Suppliers etc. 7
- ATISA provides three key solutions for challenges faced by MSMEs: i) It ensures access to business knowledge through application of the supplier development methodology on selected value chains. ii) To ease access to finance, ATISA has signed MOUs with five commercial banks and two development banks to obtain preferential lending rates for the SDP Suppliers enlisted to the program. iii) Access to markets is guaranteed through the buyers who are on the program.



SESSION THREE

Title of the session	Securing capital to trade under the AfCFTA for SMEs		
Moderator	Kiprono Kittony - Head, Nairobi Stock Exchange		
Speakers	Mr. Zemedeneh Negatu - Global Chairman, Fairfax Africa Fund	Dr. James Kanagwa - Country Representative, Ecobank Ethiopia	Dr. Samuel Kanga - Group Financial Controller, Sasini PLC
	Mr. Rassim BENGHANEM - General Manager, BG ICC	Mrs. Neneh Sainey Secka – Founder Creative Director, Lineage	



(Right to left): Mrs. Neneh Sainey Secka , Mr. Zemedeneh Negatu, Dr. James Kanagwa, Mr. Kiprono Kittony, Dr. Samuel Kanga, Mr. Rassim Benghanem

Key takeaways:

- There is need to have access to trade information including updated import/export data in order for business operators to determine, and stakeholders to assess the opportunities in the different African countries. This should tie in with extensive investment and export promotion.
- The implementation of AfCFTA demonstrates to the world that Africa is emerging as a leader on the global trade agenda.
- Successful implementation will require sustained commitment and collaboration of the private sector.
- Some of the main challenges inhibiting business growth and effective competition in the market are: Ambiguous legal and regulatory frameworks, poor governance, inadequate and inaccessible finance, unsuitable infrastructure, poor education, scarce foreign market information, insufficiently healthy and unskilled labor, insufficient commitment, limited, market research and joint ventures. These problems should be addressed in a more comprehensive manner
- There is no lack of capital around the world in fact. there is plenty of it. Stakeholders need to come up with good projects and Africa, which has the potential to grow, can then become a focal point for investment.
- Africa should look at integrating in its education system throughout the continent the African languages or at least French & English to ensure mutual understanding and better, greater business exchanges and cooperation.



SESSION FOUR:

Advancing Gender Equality in the business sector, Gender equality seal for private sector

Mrs. Cleopatra Phiri-Hurungo

Program Specialist
Gender of UNDP
(Virtual)

Dr. Gudala Naiga Basaza

Co-founder of Guide
Leisure Farm

**Dr. Simon
Tumusime Isabula**

Medical Doctor of
The Medical
Concierge Group



R-L: Dr.Simon Tumusime Isabula, Medical Doctor of The Medical Concierge Group

Dr. Gudala Naiga Basaza, Co-founder of Gudie Leisure Farm

Key takeaways:

- The Gender Equality Seal (GES) <https://www.genderequalityseal.org/programme/> is a UNDP led innovative programme engaging the private sector to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the business world.
- The tool contributes towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 5, 8, 10 and 17) by reducing gender gaps and promoting gender equality and competitiveness simultaneously.
- The key issues that the gender equality seal seeks to address are: Eliminating gendered based pay gaps, increasing women's role in decision making, enhancing work life balance, enhancing women's access to non-traditional jobs, eradicating sexual harassment and sex-based harassments at work.
- The three countries currently implementing the GES in Africa include: Uganda, the Gambia and Rwanda with more than 60 companies engaged in the process. Private sector plays a key role in addressing gender disparities in the business world.
- The UNDP developed GES, <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-gender-equality-seal-initiative-undp-entities> helps to develop public policy, foster constructive dialogue, invite companies to go from commitment to action and provide hard-evidence of gender mainstreaming efforts to tackle the most pressing gender inequalities.



SESSION FIVE

Title of the session	Leveraging Business Engagement for a Transformative AfCFTA towards the SDGs and Agenda 2063 under the AfCFTA – by UNDP	
Speakers	Tomas Sales, Private Sector and SDG Investments Special Advisor, Africa Sustainable Finance Hub, UNDP	



Mr. Tomas Sales, Private Sector and SDG Investments Special Advisor, Africa Sustainable Finance Hub, UNDP

Key takeaways:

- Regional and international trade is an important source of finance to **both the private and the public sector** in developing countries.
- Trade policies should take into account interactions between social and environmental sustainability.
- The transformational ambition of the AfCFTA requires a level playing field for African businesses in addition to helping **businesses readiness** for sustainable and resilient outcomes in new and larger markets
- **The role of the Private Sector to support AfCFTA.** Governments can engage Private sector to develop: i) National and regional digital infrastructures for freedom of movement (Agenda 2063), ii) Investment in emerging digital financial services, including for cross border trade, ii) Regulation to enable trade finance, insurance and e-commerce, iv) Project finance trade infrastructure with local content requirements, v) Blended Finance & PPPs for infrastructure and small business development along trade corridors.

- The New Africa Private Sector Collaborative Platform- APSCP**

UNDP Africa Sustainable Finance Hub based in Pretoria is developing the concept and is actively looking for interested stakeholders to join the *Africa Private Sector Collaborative Platform* whose goal is to promote SDGs and impact investment on the continent and foster greater innovation towards growth, resilience, and sustainability. This initiative is intended to become a premier Pan-African collective action platform with the specific aim of advancing the role of both large and small companies, reinforcing, and supporting existing private sector associations and business and investor networks, and positioning and enhancing the private sector as a key actor and contributor to Africa's transformation. The platform has three Partnership Enabled Pillars: *Collaboration, Facilitation, Integration*.
- Integration:** First and foremost, the Africa Private Sector Collaborative Platform and its regional scope online website will be established. Detailed selection criteria and application guidelines for different types of the platform membership will also be developed
- Facilitation:** Leveraging UNDP's existing resources, methods and toolkits, the Platform will develop and strengthen the research and knowledge-generating capabilities to fuel the stakeholders' collaborations and interactions through broad and deep insights.
- Collaboration:** The Africa Private Sector Collaborative Platform will promote longer-term interaction among stakeholders and communities through holding a yearly award event and a series of networking events. In addition, the regular networking activities of the Public-Private Dialogues (PPD) series and the matchmaking series will aim at bridging the gap and facilitating exchange & communication on regulatory frameworks, investment opportunities as well as business incubation.





SESSION SIX:

Title of the session	Boosting Intra-African Trade by Transforming and Facilitating Payment Transactions (PAPSS)
Speakers	Ms. Monica Oraro PAPSS Program Officer, Afrexim Bank

K

ey highlights:

- There are four supporting pillars of the AfCFTA:
 - 1) Trade Finance facility to support SMEs
 - 2) African Trade gateway
 - 3) AfCFTA Adjustment Facility
 - 4) Pan- African payment and Settlement System (PAPSS)
- PAPSS, <https://papss.com/>, is a central financial market infrastructure to support payment for the purpose of expanding the international trade of African states, and facilitating economic and financial integration. It supports safe and efficient flow of payments across the continent.
- PAPSS is used to immediately run essential checks and validation. And it takes as little as 120 seconds for the whole processes. PAPSS is working with local SMEs to foster fertile ground for entrepreneurial growth and a thriving business ecosystem in Africa.
- PAPSS is expected to reduce the losses financial institutions make when they settle intra-African transactions with third currencies.
- Commercial banks, payment service providers and other financial intermediaries connecting to PAPSS benefit from a simplified process that reduces the costs and complexities of foreign exchange for cross-border transactions, providing an instant and secure cross-border payment capability to their customers.





SESSION SEVEN:

Title of the session	The AfCFTA Country Business Index (ACBI)
Presenter	Dr. Wafa Aidi , Economic Affairs Officer, African Trade Policy Center, Regional Integration and Trade Division

Key Takeaways:

- The AfCFTA Country Business Index (ACBI), <https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/47540>, analyzes the viewpoints of African businesses and presents it in an index that rates nations according to how successfully they are executing the AfCFTA. The scores can be interpreted on a scale from 0 to 10; a score above 5 indicates that businesses have a positive perception of the area's influence on their operations or their capacity for international trade and investment; a score of 5 implies a neutral perception; and, on average, a score below 5 suggests that businesses have a negative perception of the area of interest.
- By highlighting trade regime bottlenecks that must be resolved to allow intra-African trade, the AfCFTA Country Business Index can make a substantial contribution to Africa's trade and inclusive development.
- At the national and continental levels, trade policy actions must be implemented to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers and streamline administrative processes. This can be accomplished by successfully implementing the AfCFTA in accordance with the demands of the private sector.
- <https://uneca.org/stories/eca-unveils-afcfta-country-business-index-%28acbi%29-report>





SESSION EIGHT:

Title of the session:	Digital Intra – African trade: Opportunities for SMEs to Scale across Borders.
Presenter:	Mr. Komi Tsowou Regional AfCFTA Advisor, UNDP



Mr. Komi Tsowou, Regional
AfCFTA Advisor, UNDP

Key takeaways

- UNDP's interventions with digital landscapes aims to support various stakeholders to harness the power of digital technology and innovation to respond more effectively to development challenges. UNDP is committed to support Innovation centers, including accelerators to develop thriving local digital ecosystems and advance the AfCFTA.
- The African Union Head of states have validated the Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa that will provide a framework for digital trade. Ongoing work with the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol will strengthen such a regulatory framework.
- UNDP looks forward to working with the wide range of partners involved in the Digital Public Goods to help ensure that everyone can reap the incredible benefits of our new digital world.



SESSION NINE

Title of the session:	How to do business with Botswana?
Presenter:	Mr. Monty Robert Head of business development at Business Botswana



Mr. Monty Robert, Head of business development at Business Botswana

Key takeaways:

- In Botswana protection for property rights are ensured; Botswana is perceived as the least corrupt nation in Africa, among the five best governed countries in Africa with relatively strong institutions which deliver macroeconomic stability, and adherence to the rule of law.
- On investment incentive: Zero tolerance to corruption, sound legal system, political stability, sustained economic growth, labor market stability, no foreign exchange control, no restrictions on remittances and full repatriation of profits and dividends, no restriction on business ownership and very low Taxation.
- Opportunities that exist are commercialization of agriculture and agribusiness sector, mining and resource beneficiation, manufacturing, services, transport and logistics, energy, tourism and hospitality.
- Botswana has a 5.3% growth recorded in the ICT sector since the pandemic. ICT opportunities in Botswana come in the form of capacity building, formation of partnership, education and so on.
- Botswana has different economic zones in different areas. It (Botswana) is looking for manufacturing investors. The Country imports as Agro-processing/ Agri-business, Leather products, clothing and textiles.
- About energy, most of Botswana's coal resource remains undeveloped and need investors to unpack the coal value chain. Botswana is also planning to setup medical supply factories.
- Botswana's current production on dairy product is only 50%, opportunities are there.
- It takes 48 Hours to register a company in Botswana. In terms of trade license, the easiest way is to pass through the Botswana Investment and Trade Corporation.



SESSION TEN:

Organized by Shared Value
Africa Initiative (SVAI)

Title of the session:	The African Entrepreneurs Trade Journey			
Moderators:	Shorn Molokwane Senior Product Design, Botswana institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI)			
Speakers:	Botho Chalebgwa Creative Director, Botocyt Creations	Tumi Mabitsela Managing Director, Mpilo Mobile Healthcare	Robert Chidzugwe Founder & MD, Athel Technology (Virtual)	Vuyo Lutseke Director, SVAI
	Sazini Mojapelo, Shared Value Africa Initiative (Virtual)	John Bee, Former Nestle Regulatory and Scientific Affairs Regional Head in Sub-Saharan Africa and Shared Value Expert (Virtual)		



(Right to left): Vuyo Lutseke, Botho Chalebgwa , Tumi Mabitsela , Shorn Molokwane

Key takeaways:

- Aside from tariff reduction, AfCFTA negotiators should consider the idea that different parts of the [African Union](#) member states should [integrate](#) at different levels and pace, depending on the political situation in each individual country. Product Registration for food, cosmetic and pharmaceuticals is hard in many countries of the continent.
- Having access to information is the key for AfCFTA success; Shared Value Africa Initiative (SVAI) is trying hard to address the problem through various platforms such as Jamii Trade in collaboration with PACCI.
- From a survey conducted by Shared Value Africa Initiative, 70% of SMEs don't have enough information about AfCFTA, 42% SMEs don't feel well supported by business network, two thirds of SMEs find it hard to access AfCFTA information and 87% would use an App to learn and connect.
- Increase trade by consciously structuring financial support for SMEs is a must' supporting innovative approaches to the SMEs is critical.
- Majority of small business try to approach the commercial banks but their chances of getting loans is small. Most of the loans come from micro finance at prohibitive interest rate. Support should be given to small businesses to finance their startup without passing through a traditional bank.
- It is also important for traditional banks to start looking at how to develop innovative funding solutions. Blended finance can bridge the investment for SMEs to scale. Most banking systems are not geared for startups, fin-tech, and tech startups. It is, therefore, necessary to broaden the range of financing instruments available for SMEs and entrepreneurs in order for them to push for investment, growth, innovation, and employment
- Shared Value Africa Initiative, <https://svai.africa/>, advocates for SMEs to be supported in their ecosystem by the three principles: reconceive products and markets, redefine productivity in the value chain and enable local cluster development. For SMEs, opportunities for trading are plentiful but capacities to produce and market understanding are lacking. Not enough wholesalers, and distributors to scale operations.
- For exporters, most of their problems occur mostly on documentation (what is required and ways of reporting), and navigating the bureaucracies. The main challenge SMEs face is identifying dependable partners to establish successful business relationships.



SESSION ELEVEN:

International Trade Centre & AU

Title of the session:	Harnessing the Power of Data to Accelerate Regional Integration in Africa - the African Trade Observatory (ATO)
Speaker:	<p>Mr Mondher Mimouni Chief, Trade and Market Intelligence Section, International Trade Centre (ITC)</p> <p>Ms. Jacqueline Salguero Huaman Trade and Market Intelligence Section (ITC)</p> <p>Representatives – International Trade Center, AU Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals</p>



Key takeaways:

- The Africa Trade Observatory (ATO) <https://ato.africa/> is a useful instrument being designed to assist businesses identify and compare opportunities across the continent by providing reliable data. The main activities of ATO is Improving data availability and quality, improving access to information; The ATO dashboard, expanding data coverage, and setting ATO trade Analysis unit.
- ATO will also help member states, government agencies and policy makers in monitoring AfCFTA implementation process; providing trade intelligence will assist the Pan African Entrepreneurs to identify opportunities across the continent.
- ITC research shows that there is an estimated room for intra African export growth by 20 billion dollars in 2026 just by removing barriers and improving the business environment.

Ongoing ITC business consultation shows more than 50% of companies are not aware of AfCFTA and it is required to make the AfCFTA known for all key players. AfCFTA will help by removing trade barriers, lowering trade costs and advancing industrialization across the continent.

Through the African trade observatory, African businesses can have access to new opportunities, including trade and trade related information, be in a position to analyze trade information.

ATO dashboard is available in four African Union Official languages it targets policy makers and businesses. Focuses only on Africa, Free [digital] access to reliable and essential trade- related information across the continent and help ensure that the economic gains from trade are also accessible.

The key beneficiaries from the ATO Business intelligence dashboard will be Companies, Chamber of Commerce, Businesses Associations and Trade support institutions.

ATO is planning on expanding data coverage, Tutorial Video and webinars based on demand in the coming months.



SESSION TWELVE:

Title of the session:	Harnessing the Power of Data to Accelerate Regional Integration in Africa - the African Trade Observatory (ATO)
Speaker:	<p>Mr. Mondher Mimouni Chief, Trade and Market Intelligence Section, International Trade Centre (ITC)</p> <p>Ms. Jacqueline Salguero Huaman Trade and Market Intelligence Section (ITC)</p> <p>Representatives – International Trade Center, AU Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals</p>



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**Mr. Hillary Kumwenda****Mr. Papy Luzala**

Key takeaways:

- The first Intra-Africa Trade Fair (IATF) took place in 2018 in Cairo and was a resounding success. IATF brought together continental and global players to showcase and exhibit their goods and services, explore business and investment opportunities in Africa.
- IATF provides a platform for B2B and B2G exchanges and to serve as a marketplace where buyers and sellers of goods and services meet and explore business opportunities. The platform is meant for sharing trade, investment and market information with various stakeholders including investors, SMEs, the informal sector and Africans in Diaspora.
- IATF provides a platform to discuss topical issues relating to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, as well as issues affecting Intra-African trade and investment, to identify and offer practical and effective solutions to address the challenges.
- The second edition of the IATF took place in 2021 instead of 2020 because of COVID 19. It took place in Durban, South Africa with one thousand five hundred (1500) participants.
- The upcoming 3rd Intra-African Trade Fair(IATF2023), to be hosted by the Republic of Cote D'Ivoire in Abidjan from the 21- 27 November 2023. Themed "Building Bridges for a successful AfCFTA", a strong focus will be placed on recognizing growth opportunities for Intra-African cross border trade and investments. It is expected to have 43 billion US dollars in trade and investment, thirty-five thousand (35,000) attendees, one thousand six hundred (1,600) exhibitors and seventy-five (75) countries to be present. The 2023 IATF will run non-stop for seven days and will consist of speakers, and live performance. It will include a trade exhibition, trade investment forum, creative Africa, B2B and B2G networking opportunities, IATF Virtual, IATF AU and Youth startups. For more information:
<https://www.intrafricantradefair.com/en>



SESSION: THIRTEEN:

Title of the session:	AfCFTA Economic integration: The importance of experience sharing and peer-to-peer review
Speaker:	Mrs. Chiraz Bensemmane CEO, Pitch World Fast

Mrs. Chiraz Bensemmane,
CEO, Pitch World Fast



Key takeaways:

- The African Webinars by Pitch World Fast, <https://pitchworldfast.com/>, was created following the Covid-19 pandemic, at the time Africa, as a continent lacked one a united voice to access to measures to curb the pandemic.
- The webinars, <https://pitchworldfast.com/africaprojects/>, take place every month between African authorities to share experiences and improve economy and healthcare systems on the continent.
- Round tables are organized where stakeholders of specific countries meet to discuss and benchmark good practices to improve their healthcare sector and economies
- Rationale for the webinars: Countries that have similar challenges might be able to work together to solve problems. So far 23 Countries have participated. The webinars promote experience sharing, peer to peer review, working on perception, keeping the conversation, it is not about duplicating rather walking the talk.
- The webinars have become a knowledge sharing platform and serve in building the capacity needed on the continent and a better understanding of Africa needs and realities fostering greater collaboration.
- Africa should keep the conversations going, 'talk and learn', and be open ensure the integration within the AfCFTA goes smoother.





SESSION FOURTEEN:

Title of the session:	Building authentic relationships and growing your export business within Africa and Beyond.			
Moderators:	Mr Hakim Benbadra- Family Business Director, AFRICA CEO FORUM			
Speakers:	Mrs Sivi Malukisa	Mrs. Chiraz Bensemmane	Dr. Penninah Gasheri Mugao	
	CEO, Manitech	CEO, Pitch World Fast	CEO, Sheth Naturals Limited	



(Right to left): Ms. Chiraz Bensemmane, Mrs. Sivi Malukisa , Dr. Penninah Gasheri Mugao , Mr. Hakim Benbadra

Key takeaways:

- Businesses that joined the Kenyan Association of Manufacturers benefitted on formalization and standardization.
- Good competition in different African countries helps grow businesses.
- When moving into a new market you have to first give it a try; it is critical to find a right partner to help understand the rules, culture, and where you should invest. Companies need to take action and ensure to adapt their strategies to the realities and be flexible.
- When exporting to other East African countries, the company has to test its products in every country even after adopting the required standards.
- It's important to sort out trade dispute issues amicably. Most SME's struggle with government and different rules in the country which will not let them grow to be players at international level.
- Educating people about exporting system and payment methods should be one of the things African business support organizations should work on. SME's will have difficult time when it comes to finance, so AfCFTA should work with banks on that too; banks that rethink their SME-lending businesses can increase their market share and promote profitable growth.



SESSION FIFTEEN:

Title of the session:	Education-Industry Linkage to facilitate Research and Development for SMEs	
Speakers:	Mr. J. Wendell	Dr. Ekwow Spio Garbrah
	The chairman of African Private Sector Summit (APSS)	Chairman Africa Education Trust Fund Committee

**Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah****Mr J. Wendell**

Key Takeaways

- Help is on its way through the private sector bill of right enabling environment for business across the continent.
- The Africa Education Trust Fund (AETF) brought together the private sector and the Association of African Universities to sign an MoU.
<https://africaprivatesectorsummit.org/africa-education-trust-fund-aetf/>
- The AETF is derived from the operationalization of the MoU between AAU and PACCI for rebooting African education for funding the changes in African infrastructure, curriculum, research, data development, and other activities that are urgently needed to develop Africa as an economic powerhouse.
- The human elements skill sets, training and the capacity of people to produce quality product without excessive supervision have to be considered.
- Africa has less than 50% of its population who can read and write. The Africa Education Trust Fund aims to be a bridge many of this illiteracy skill sets and educational gaps throughout the continent.
- Association of African Universities (AAU), Pan Africa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) and African Private Sector Summit (APSS) took the lead to bridge the gap in Academia –Industry linkages,
- African Education Trust Fund is in the process of putting together subcommittees of experts who can address issues that are organizational, curriculum development, content development, legal, finance and fundraising among other to be able to put the fund the next few years.
- University-industry linkages are at their nascent stages in Africa, the Foundation aims to strengthen successful universities to become more entrepreneurial and play an active role in the economic development process.



SESSION SIXTEEN:

Title of the session:	SME Blue pages for listing “Made in Africa” Building Brands, Loyalty and Revenue with the AfCFTA.
Presenter:	Mrs. Linda Onyango CEO, SME Support Center



Mrs. Linda Onyango

Key Takeaways:

- The SME Blue Pages, <https://smebluepages.sme-supportcentre.com/>, is a Pan-African initiative led and created by the SME Support Centre that aims to showcase the “Made in Africa Brands” and ultimately show the world the Africa’s innovation potential. Its aim is to make it the go to trade platform for all the innovative Made-in-Africa brands.
- The platform provides an aggregated brand exposure to the listed brands and provide a platform for each of them to further access global markets, investments and any other aggregated trade, logistics and advertising opportunities that can make them scale.





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ACTION PLAN OF THE PROSPERITY AFRICA CONFERENCE



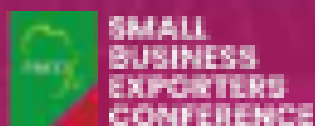
Prosperity Africa – Small Business Exporters’ Conference took place in Gaborone, Botswana, on 17-19 May 2022. It resulted in a focused business outcome document which contains practical ideas for implementing the AfCFTA. This Action Plan, which aims to reinforce the voice of small and medium sized businesses in Africa, sets out the main orientations and specific priorities of the Conference’s recommendations for the upcoming two years. The content of the action Plan comes from the discussions held at the Conference.

The Prosperity Africa Conference is a collective body comprising the national chambers of commerce and industry associations of Africa.

Several recommendations follow logically from the Conference. These recommendations are based on subject matter expertise, presentations and discussions, participant evaluations and recommendations

General Recommendations

1. Participants recognized the importance of enhancing the efforts of PACCI to consistently promote interaction and exchange of best practices among chambers and industry associations in Africa.
2. Participants advised PACCI should strengthen contacts and develop partnership among chambers to improve performance and services for members.
3. Participants recommended that PACCI take all necessary and appropriate steps to collaborate with the Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry to organize the 6th Prosperity Africa Conference in Kampala in 2024.
4. Participants recognized the importance of enhancing the efforts of business associations and chambers of commerce to build local support in support of the implementation of the AfCFTA.
5. Participants requested business associations and chambers of commerce to share information on significant progress of negotiations in key areas such as goods, services, investment, dispute settlement, intellectual property and many others.
6. The Conference recommended that PACCI develop and execute continental campaigns that shape key policy processes, as Africa’s leading business organization and advocator for an enabling Intra-African trade environment.
7. The Conference also recommended that governments should support business models that foster resilience, inclusiveness, sustainability and ride the digital wave.
8. Participants encouraged governments and UN and international organizations to take the lead in enabling SMEs to thrive within a digital, global economy geared towards resilience, inclusiveness and sustainability.



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AfCFTA Implementation Program



1. The Conference requested business associations and chambers of commerce to elaborate policy positions to influence intra-Africa trade agenda by undertaking various actions including conferences and seminars, surveys and studies and supporting the participation of women at all levels of activity.
2. Participants invited business associations and chambers of commerce to advocate in favor of efficient import/export processing mechanisms and the integration of PAPSS and other mechanisms to assess and eliminate bottlenecks and facilitate the full realization of the AfCFTA's potential.
3. The Conference requested that PACCI should maintain strong and regular contact with AfCFTA Secretariat to assist businesses in their quest to benefit from the AfCFTA.
4. Participants advised PACCI to use its position as the indispensable representative of Africa's private sector to work closely with AU, Member States, relevant government offices, national and local chambers of commerce, business associations, UN organizations and other appropriate entities.
5. The Conference recommended PACCI should strengthen national chambers' capacity to champion and lead the implementation of the AfCFTA at national level.
6. The Conference also advised business associations and chambers of commerce to encourage SMEs participation in IATF 2023 and seek financial support from donors to support participation of its members in the IATF.
7. Participants requested business associations and chambers of commerce to organize roundtables, panels, workshops and training sessions to bolster exporting/importing SMEs.
8. Participants also requested governments and financial institutions to help expand and facilitate access to trade finance for SMEs, including those run by young women and men.
9. Participants recommended business associations and chambers of commerce to develop capacity building actions to promote cross-border trade in goods and services and simplify the movement of business operators.



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Environment and Energy



1. The Conference requested business associations and chambers of commerce to develop and promote business priorities on mitigation, adaptation/resilience, energy efficiency, including enabling investment conditions with a focus on innovation, finance, energy access, trade, and substantive business engagement.
2. Participants call on business associations and chambers of commerce to develop a Green Business Action Plan to implement and scale up solutions that advance business growth, societal development, and environmental stewardship.

Gender Representation on Matters of Trade



1. The Conference requested PACCI to achieve 50-50 gender balance within its Executive Council and advocate the same for business associations and national chambers of commerce in the coming 5-8 years.
2. Participants recommended business associations and chambers of commerce to encourage business to support the UNDP led Gender Equality Seal initiative.
3. The Conference requested PACCI to establish and support a PACCI women wing with focus on empowerment for women owned businesses.

Private Sector Engagement for the SDG and Agenda 2063



1. In an effort to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, participants welcomed the establishment of the “Africa Private Sector Collaborative Platform”; a mechanism to support African countries to respond and recover better from the COVID-19 pandemic and reignite the Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is aligned with the Africa Union Agenda 2063.



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ANNEX I: CONFERENCE OUTPUT

Event Photos to be accessed via PACCi Flickr page (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195689000@N07/>)

Video recordings:

Interviews and Day 2 uploads: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-SctASip3AsoZ8HmD36xPg>

DAY 1 full day at: <https://fb.watch/ddEy18rrbb/>

ANNEX II: PLANNED CONFERENCE AGENDA

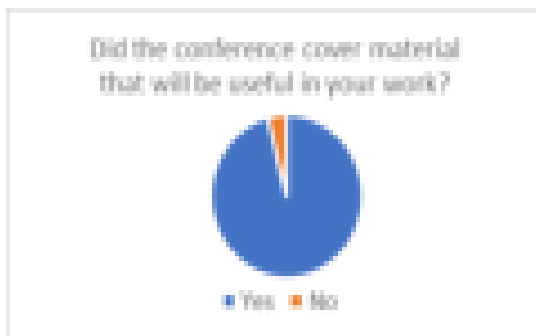
[English Version](#)

[French Version](#)

ANNEX III: PARTICIPANTS LIST

[Download List](#)

ANNEX IV: FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS



What part of the conference was most valuable to you?

- *Listening to Entrepreneurs*
- *Financing for startups and small entrepreneurs*
- *Networking opportunities, Diversity of attendants was amazing*
- *Insight on opportunities arising from AfCFTA*

What Session would you like to see next year?

- *Discussion on exports*
- *AfCFTA implication for business*
- *Testimonials on how Africa has advanced the AfCFTA agenda as well as statistics trade wise*
- *More on access to finance*
- *More progress on a visa-free travel for Intra-Africa country travel*

CHAMBER AFRICA CONNECT

*A Digital Transformation
Project to fast track the
implementation of the AfCFTA*



Pan African Chamber of
Commerce and Industry
Africa's Largest Business Organization

For more information:
www.pacci.org

