

AFRICAN HERITAGE INSTITUTION

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Newsletter

The information Bulletin of the African Heritage Institution

Actualising the Gains of WEFA

African countries have been urged to harmonise the resolutions made at the just concluded World Economic Forum on Africa (WEFA) into immediate actionable activities so that the continent can begin to reap the multiplier effect of foreign direct investment and utilisation of modern technology. The Executive Director of AfriHeritage, Dr. Ifediora Amobi made this submission at special sessions on WEFA on Channels Television on May 9, 2014 and Dream FM, Enugu on May 12, 2014.



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WEFA with the theme, "Forging Inclusive Growth Creating Jobs" was held in Abuja, Nigeria from May 7 to 9, 2014 with the highest attendance of heads of states since inception 24 years ago. Leaders in government, business and civil society came together to debate how to tackle Africa's biggest challenge; how to create a continent of increased prosperity and strong communities, of strong governments delivering quality services and leaving no one behind.

Dr. Amobi, who was one of the

participants, tasked African countries to work relentlessly on how to achieve regional integration which came up severally at the Forum. According to him, when there is strict restriction in the movement of goods and people within the continent, direct flow of investment would be impeded and that will continue to be a clog in the wheel of African's economic development.

"Start from Nigeria, the host of the Forum, the leaders must tackle the visa restriction rules within the continent. Imagine a genuine investor finding it difficult to criss-cross the continent because of the cost and bureaucratic procedures of securing visa. Some of the head of states present signed to work on it and we expect positive steps immediately," he noted.

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Lessons of TTIPEC Kenya 2014

The coming together of leading think tanks across African English speaking countries has presented opportunities to learn lessons that would enable the participants sustain or expand their policy influencing capabilities. The workshop took place in Nairobi city of Kenya between April 28 to 30, 2014, and AfriHeritage was represented by the Executive Director, Dr. Ifediora Amobi and the Communications Manager, Mr. Sola Oluwadare.

Since the inception meeting of the Think Tank Initiative's Policy Engagement and Communications Programm (TTIPEC) to support Anglophone African think tanks in Ghana last year, think tanks have been working with individual mentors to diagnose their PEC shortcomings and prepare and execute strategic work-plan. The goals of the Kenya meeting are to explore common themes and priorities that emerged from mentorship activities and progress made on these activities, provide technical support on key issues mentioned in diagnostic and mentorship activities and explore strategies for sustaining policy engagement and communications learning beyond the end of the

project.

The general aim of PEC is to share learning in cultivating, synthesizing and disseminating research in ways that will heighten policy engagement and impact. The participants at the workshop were put through stakeholder mapping, developing effective institutional and project specific communications, monitoring and evaluation, strategies for PEC, messaging and packaging and other beneficial topics.

Organisations collectively, individually and on peer level demonstrated their learning capabilities as they were exposed to external experts who provided knowledge and experience in effective PEC. Participants also had opportunities of parallel capacity building sessions on specific topics led by mentors and TTIPEC team. Think Tanks shared milestones, priorities, and expectations before the end of TTIPEC in July 2014. At the end of the workshop, think tanks showered encomiums on TTI and TTIPEC team for window of learning opportunities as provided by the programme.



Nigeria's GDP Rebasing: AfriHeritage Makes Case for Sustenance

African Heritage Institution (AfriHeritage) has called on the federal government to put policies in place to sustain the recently released debased Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in order to meet the aspirations of Nigerians. The Institution described the debasing as a welcome development. The Executive Director of AfriHeritage, Dr. Ifediora Amobi said on Wednesday April 9, 2014 on a radio station in Enugu that the rebasing which has put Nigerian economy as the largest in Africa and 26th in the world is a move towards realising the nation's Vision 20:2020.

The size of the economy was reportedly expanded by more than three-quarters to an estimated 80 trillion naira (\$488 billion) for 2013. That compares with the World Bank's 2012 GDP figures of \$262.6 billion for Nigeria and \$384.3 billion for South Africa. The National Bureau of Statistics recalculated the

Trainings, workshops and conferences attended by staff

- The Executive Director, Dr. Ifediora Amobi attended a Policy Dialogue on "The Role of Public Sector in Job Creation" in Abuja on May 15, 2014. The programme was organised by the Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA) in collaboration with Nextier Policy Advisor.

- Dr. Amobi participated in the World Economic Forum on Africa which was held in Abuja from May 7 to 9, 2014. He participated in debating against the motion "Health Should be prioritized over other developmental pillars".

- Dr. Amobi was a facilitator at the roundtable on "Strengthening the quality of research for policy engagement in the Africa". The objectives of the roundtable are to share perspectives on the current state of research capacity in Africa, and the role of evidence in policy making and identify indicators/metrics currently used to assess improvements in research quality for policy engagement and discuss potential new indicators/metrics to better inform progress, among others. He also presented at a conference paper on; "Think Tank and University Relationships: Finding the Synergies" at the conference The objectives of the conference include sharing research findings from three regional studies exploring the relationships between think tanks and universities and to discuss with a wider audience and examine, through the lens of both the research organisations and the donor, current, positive enabling structures and mechanisms (both internal and external) and how to take full advantage of them. Both events held between May 19 and 20, 2014 and on May 21 and 22, 2014 at Nairobi, Kenya respectively, were organised by the Think Tank Initiative and supported by Economic Policy Research Centre, Uganda and The African Capacity Building Foundation.

- Miss Chizoba Obidigbo, a Research Assistant attended a Gender Analysis Training Workshop For Social Science Researchers organized by the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana, between April 7- 11, 2014. This workshop was essential in highlighting the blind spot amongst researchers when dealing with gender related issues. The general objective of the course is to deepen understanding of the gender analysis, creating gender analysis frameworks, incorporating statistical methods into gender analysis.

- Mrs. Beatrice Ndibe, Deputy Administrative Manager attended training on "Practical Training Management Skills for Administrative Professionals" at African Capacity Development and Research Institute (ACADRI), Kampala, Uganda from May 19 - 30, 2014. She will use the knowledge acquired to manage and track projects using project software as well as give status report of a project and selection of project team criteria, among others.

value of GDP based on production patterns in 2010, increasing the number of industries it measures to 46 from 33 and giving greater weighting to sectors such as telecommunications and financial services. While the revised figure makes Nigeria the 26th-biggest economy in the world, the country lags in income per capita, ranking 121 with \$2,688 for each citizen.

Dr. Amobi stated that incorporation of sectors such as entertainment, music, telecoms and

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Dr. Amobi said the GDP in the continent has been hovering between 5-7% and that places responsibility on African leaders to turn this growth into poverty reducing and job producing growth. He added that the high level of international participation and commitment made at the Forum made it a huge success.

Speaking in the same vein, an Associate Fellow of AfriHeritage, Mr. Onyukwu Onyukwu called on African countries to see the huge global endorsement of the Forum as opportunity to advance their economies. Mr. Onyukwu, who also aired his view at Dream FM disclosed that foreign investment would always generate opportunity for the growth of SME which is capable of producing jobs. He then called on Nigeria to use its position to ensure that all the resolutions at the Forum are implemented to letter, adding that Nigeria would be held to account when necessary and should be praised as a role model for African countries.

Dr. Amobi was also a member of the panel that examined the Africa health innovation meeting at WEFA. As a global player, the full participation of the Institution in WEFA is an endorsement of its commitment to realise this vision.

BECANS III Begins

The third circle of the Institution's flagship- Business Environment and Competitiveness Across Nigeria States (BECANS) formally kicked off on the April 22, 2014 with the inaugural meeting of the interim Technical Working Group (TWG). The ultimate goal of BECANS is to promote evidence-based reforms of the business environment in Nigeria, with focus on the subnational jurisdictions (state and local governments). The initiative is designed to supply independent research-based evidence on the business environment across Nigerian states, in an ongoing manner such as the evidence is essential to inform and influence advocacy by non-state actors (particularly private sector organizations) and improve the quality of dialogue between government, private sector and civil society.

The meeting to commence the project brought members of the TWG together to prepare ground for the framework as it affects the benchmarks, indicators, methodology and work-plan for the study and dissemination activities. This would be carried out bearing in mind the current business and economic realities in Nigeria.

Welcoming the TWG, the Executive Director, Dr. Ifediora Amobi appreciated the researchers and explained the reasons behind the delay experienced for more than one year in commencing the project. Dr. Amobi said the Institution

could now start the project since the parallel study which led to the delay had been completed. He disclosed that Professor Eric Eboh would lead the team based on his rich experience of doing same in BECANS I and II which would serve as intellectual assets for the study.

Professor Eboh appreciated the Executive Director, and promised to put in his best to ensure that the study fulfil its objectives. He said emphasis would be placed on buying-in of the primary users- the state government, the private sector and other critical stakeholders. BECANS III is scheduled to be disseminated nationally by November 2014 while other advocacy and dissemination activities will take place across the six geo-political zones of the country subsequently.



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information technology into the GDP is a step in the right direction and global practice. He noted that the rating shows that the service sector, industrial sector in general which were not part of the calculation 14 years ago are all part of the economic growth.

Dr. Amobi stressed that with the rebasing; Nigeria has become a safer haven for investment with strong base just as the country went through bank reconsolidation few years ago. He allayed the fears of the people who have cited insecurity as threats to foreign direct investment, saying "in economics high risks culminate in high returns". The economist advised investors to take advantage of the consumption gap being created by the insecurity and respond to consumer demand.

Also speaking, an Associate Fellow of AfriHeritage, Mr. Onyukwu O. Onyukwu said Nigeria is not poor but the

wealth has not been optimally redistributed. According to him, a country with large population would definitely have high number of poor people. Mr. Onyukwu also of the development economist of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, noted that the size of the economy as released creates a pool of foreign investment which economic agents have responded to which does not have any political undertone.

He said competition by the foreign investors creates healthy competitive environment, calling on Nigerians to upgrade their ways of doing business and enhance service efficiency. Both economists averred that the new GDP rebasing would create new opportunities, new job creation and more investment environment. They called on the government to create enabling environment for business to thrive so that unemployment can reduce to certain extent.