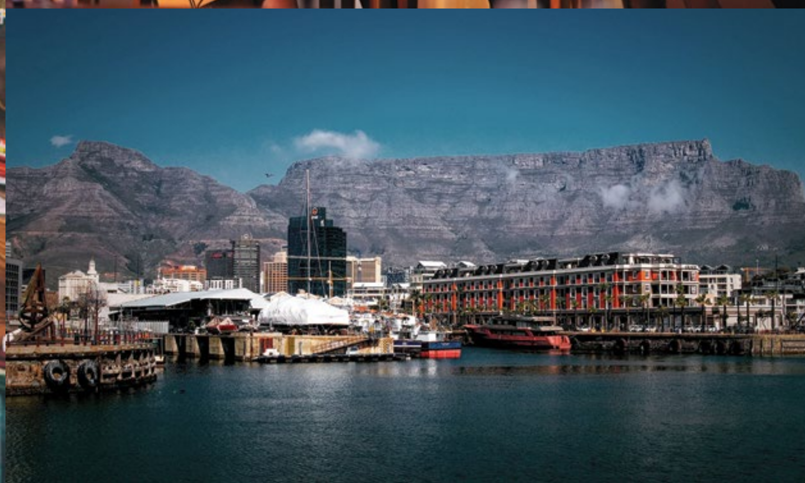
AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT

2020 REPORT

INTERROGATING AFRICA'S BRAND POTENTIAL




A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

This hybrid 2020 Africa Brand Summit would not have been the success it was without the generosity of all of our programme participants – speakers, panellists, moderators, programme directors, and award judges – as well as partners, various service providers, and sponsors, all of whom gave precious time, funds, provided media coverage, network and other forms of support to make this event happen.

For more information about the Africa Brand Summit, please contact ***info@africabrandsummit.co*** or visit the website on ***www.africabrandsummit.co.***

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FOREWORD

When we first conceptualised and established this project in late 2016, and finally launched it in May 2018, the vision was always clear the Brand Summit would progressively expand its thematic and analytic focus from South Africa – where it would be incubated for the first three years – to cover the whole of the African continent. The 2020 hybrid Africa Brand Summit is the fulfilment of that promise and our response to the many calls for the summit to focus more on reputational issues that affect the whole of Africa, instead of ones relevant to only one country on the continent.

The summit was initially planned to launch in November 2017 but had to be postponed to May 2018 to give room to South Africa's governing African National Congress (ANC), which was preparing to host its much-anticipated Elective Conference during a rather tense socio-political period in South Africa's post-apartheid history. The ANC's November 2017 Elective Conference is also where current President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa took over the leadership of the ANC from his predecessor, Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, who was subsequently ousted from the country's highest office.

Before the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 Africa Brand Summit had been planned to take place at the beginning of June as a traditional, full on face-to-face, event in Cape Town, South Africa. However, the declaration of the National State of Disaster in March 2020 by the President, which saw the country go into various levels of lockdowns, forced the working committee to choose between cancelling "until further notice" and postponing the summit to 2021. Instead, we chose to pull back and monitor the evolving situation while we remained in regular contact with major players in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events) sector in order to inform our final decision on the matter.

It wasn't long before we announced that the 2020 Africa Brand Summit would be hosted as a hybrid event, with a small number of delegates gathering at the Vineyard Hotel & Spa, Cape Town, South Africa, while everyone else would livestream from other parts of South Africa, the continent and from across the world. A first for us. We chose the latter option so that the idea would remain alive and keep us going, and as a source of hope that there would be life after the Coronavirus. We also wanted to challenge ourselves as a team and create a positive, lasting, memory for 2020; a year that will be spoken about for many decades to come. It was a decision that was seen by some as brave and admirable, and by others as almost reckless.

It was certainly a brave decision when considering the costs and difficult funding environment in which many businesses had been forced to halt their trading and go for months without being able to generate revenue. Many, especially in the broader hospitality and informal sectors, were crippled forever and forced to shut down and let go of many employees, which led to the loss of millions of livelihoods and rising unemployment.

SOLLY MOENG

In the end and, overall, we managed to host a successful hybrid event with livestreaming and technical teams coordinating speaker and delegate engagement from South Africa and India, albeit with some technical glitches on Day One of the summit, the sources of which were quickly identified and corrected not to be repeated on Day Two.

As in the past, distinguished speakers and panellists came from Africa, Eastern and Western Europe, Asia and North-America; all moderated by subject experts who also participated virtually and from the face-to-face venue. None of them disappointed!!

This 2020 Africa Brand Summit Report contains summaries of our key discussions and outcomes, views from our delegate engagement, key recommendations and a section on some exciting African Projects to keep an eye on".

Enjoy it.

Solly MOENG
Founder & Convenor
Africa Brand Summit

A VIEW FROM THE VINEYARD HOTEL & SPA, THE 2020 AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT

AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT THE CONCEPT

Having successfully hosted the Brand Summit South Africa in Cape Town in May 2018, then in Sandton, South Africa, in June 2019, calls have continued to grow for the event's thematic and strategic focus to move faster and address Africa's broader image issues. Destination perception issues at country-level also reappear at continental level, at home and abroad, and inform attitudes about individual countries in Africa, regions, and the entire African continent.

Ultimately, perceptions inform investor sentiments and attitudes. They can make or break any destination's success in generating goodwill, which is the basis for positive engagements with the outside world.
Individual countries in Africa and the continent at a broad level continue to fail using all of their resources and potential to benefit African economic development and to position the continent as net exporter of food crops, a magnet for key and rare global skills, a magnet for foreign tertiary students seeking quality higher education whose credentials are respected around the world, as well as a magnet for lucrative foreign exchange earning business in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events.

African leaders must also work harder at creating an enabling environment for cross-country and regional trade; growth of the agrarian economy, seamless movement of goods and skills, as well as business friendly customs regimes where companies, especially established brands that work across various borders, do not get subjected to unnecessary red tape and, in some cases, bribe.

PROJECT CONTEXT

In the minds of millions of people around the world, especially those who have never been to Africa, perceptions about Africa tend to be negative, on the whole. Immediate associations with Africa or being African, often stereotypically reference poverty, corruption, laziness, maladies, backwardness, archaic traditional systems and mores that stand in the way of modernity, etc. Such perceptions impede Africa's full integration into the world economy on an equal footing, as a place of new knowledge creation and innovation beyond it being a mere source of natural resources.
To date, the summit has managed to attract the participation of highly respected, ethical, and inspirational

> **"AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT WAS CONCEPTUALISED/ESTABLISHED TO INITIATE, FACILITATE AND HOST FRANK, PAN-AFRICAN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT BRAND IMAGE OF AFRICA AND HOW IT IMPACTS PERCEPTIONS, GOODWILL AND, EVENTUALLY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT."**

leaders in the public service, private business, civil society, media, etc. to speak. They have come from South Africa, Namibia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Jordan, Egypt, Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, USA, Burkina Faso, Finland, Russia, Hungary, India, the UK, Switzerland, Portugal, Bulgaria, etc. Their impact, individually and collectively, has raised the bar for us. We intend to keep raising the bar that we have set.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROJECT

Individual countries in Africa, and the continent as a whole, continue to suffer from negative perceptions, at home and around the world. As a result, Africans tend to be negatively profiled and treated with suspicion when they:

1. Go through customs/passport controls around the world;
2. Enter restaurants, high-end stores, business meetings, etc.;
3. Apply for or arrive at new professional appointments, as they get assumed to be incompetent/potential criminals even when they possess requisite academic qualifications and expertise.

The Africa Brand Summit was conceptualised to initiate, facilitate and host frank, pan-African conversations about the evolving image of Africa (the continent's brand image) and how it impacts perceptions, goodwill and, eventually, socio-economic development.

Ultimately, the goal is to eventually establish an Africa-based global destination image 'research and advisory service' to provide globally applicable best practice in destination branding, positioning, and destination reputation management. The service's approach will aim to be 80% proactive and 20% curative, helping countries understand possible reputational ramifications of new policy proposals before they are adopted (80%). There will also be crisis recovery advisory services on how best to manage 'in crisis' and 'post-crisis' communication (20%).


FOUNDER & CONVENOR SOLLY MOENG

THE APPROACH: SUMMARY

The Africa Brand Summit initiative is a lot more than an annual event where people come and exchange ideas, network, and then go back home. Deliberations at each annual event will be underpinned by research on the current and evolving image/reputational status of Africa, globally, with regular deep dives on selective countries and regions.

The discussions, therefore ask:

- What is the current reputation/image of Africa as a whole, each of its five regions, and of select influencer countries?
- How does such an image /reputation influence attitudes in Africa and across the world?
- What are the key drivers/ influencers of such an image/reputation?
- What must be done to augment/enhance the positive aspects and to progressively eliminate the negative ones?
- What recommendations will be made for policy makers and other leaders in politics, business, civil society, academia, media, etc. to get them to understand their respective roles and, eventually, generate a progressively positive image of Africa on the whole?

CONCLUSION

This annual event would not have come as far as it has without the support of partners in business, government, civil society, academia, local and international sector and professional bodies, media, and other sectors of society.

The Africa Brand Summit is more than just an annual talk shop. It has already been cited on several occasions as a body urging government in South Africa to begin speaking in one voice and come up with clear political and economic policies. It will continue to reach out to African policy influencers and legislators in order to positively engage them with a view to influencing their policy decisions for the benefit of Africa.

The bias of the summit's programmatic content will always start at local level, with its successive host countries, followed by their regions, then the whole continent. For global benchmarking, speakers and panelists will always come from across the world. Reliable, tested scientific research will always be at the core of our deliberations.

Our sponsoring partners will always benefit from opportunities for brand exposure, networking with key decision makers, as well as opportunities to influence policy decision-making through the platforms created by the summit.

SENEGAL © FEED THE FUTURE

LE AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT

Pour mieux comprendre le Sommet sur la Marque de l'Afrique.

Après le succès des deux éditions du Brand Summit South Africa - la première au Cap en mai 2018, la deuxième en 2019 à Sandton (Johannesburg) - de nombreuses voix se sont élevées pour demander que la thématique du Sommet soit étendue à l'ensemble de l'Afrique.

Tant il est vrai que les problèmes de réputation d'un pays rejaillissent sur tout le continent, en Afrique comme à l'étranger, il est clair que les perceptions de l'Afrique conditionnent les dispositions et les comportements des investisseurs. Elles peuvent faire ou défaire le succès de n'importe quelle destination, et génèrent de la bonne volonté; qui constitue sans nul doute la base d'un engagement positif avec le monde extérieur.

Les pays africains et l'ensemble du continent africain ne parviennent toujours pas à mobiliser leurs ressources et leurs potentiels au profit du développement économique. Il est clair qu'ils échouent à présenter le continent comme un exportateur net de produits agricoles, ou comme un aimant pour les étudiants en quête d'une formation universitaire d'excellence reconnue universellement.

Ou enfin comme un pôle d'attraction pour des Conférences, des Rencontres, des Evénements internationaux capables de générer de fructueux échanges commerciaux et des rentrées de devises.

Les leaders africains doivent donc s'efforcer de créer des conditions favorables aux échanges commerciaux entre les pays au sein du continent, à la croissance des économies rurales, et à la fluidité des mouvements de biens et de personnes. Pour les sociétés privées, et surtout pour les plus reconnues pratiquants du commerce transnational, les gouvernements africains devraient veiller à établir des régimes douaniers simplifiés évitant d'inutiles tracas bureaucratiques.

LE CONTEXTE

Dans l'esprit de millions de personnes dans le monde et, particulièrement, chez celles qui ne sont jamais allées en Afrique, la perception du monde africain est souvent négative.

L'Afrique et l'africanité sont trop souvent associées à la pauvreté, la corruption, l'indolence, aux maladies, aux modèles économiques archaïques et aux traditions qui freinent la modernité. Autant d'obstacles à une perception positive du continent comme lieu propice au business et aux études universitaires.

De telles appréhensions ruinent en fait les efforts faits pour promouvoir l'Afrique et empêchent l'intégration complète du continent à l'économie globale. Surtout, elles perpétuent l'image d'une Afrique riche uniquement de ses matières premières en occultant son potentiel d'innovation et de création.

Dans la mesure où le Africa Brand Summit se propose d'être une plate-forme pour des échanges francs, libres et indépendants, un lieu où les Africains eux-mêmes sont invités à se regarder dans un miroir et à considérer leur part de responsabilité, certains peuvent se sentir mal à l'aise et être tentés de ne pas participer à ce Sommet.

Pourtant, à ce jour, nous sommes parvenus à convaincre et à attirer des experts et des conférenciers du monde entier venus de l'Afrique du Sud, du Nigeria, de la Namibie, de France, de la Russie, des Etats-Unis, du Cameroun, du Canada, de la Finlande, du Portugal, de la Finlande, du Kenya, de la Jordanie, de l'Egypte, du Benin, de l'Ethiopie, d'Inde, de la Suisse, de la Bulgarie, de la Grande Bretagne, de la Hongrie, etc.

Conjointement, des dirigeants hautement respectés, des figures pleines d'inspiration et de valeur morale venant des secteurs public et privé, de la société civile, aux médias, etc., ont pris la parole lors du Sommet.

Leur impact individuel et collectif a évidemment placé la barre très haut pour nous. Nous avons l'intention de continuer dans ce sens.

JUSTIFICATION DU PROJET

- Les différents pays africains et le continent dans son ensemble continuent de souffrir, chez eux comme dans le monde, de préjugés qui entament leur amour-propre, leur bonne réputation et leur besoin de respect.
- En raison de ces préjugés vis-à-vis de l'Afrique et de l'africanité (le fait d'être africain), les Africains eux-mêmes ont tendance à être identifiés négativement et à être traités avec suspicion lorsqu'ils 1) passent le contrôle des douanes/passeports dans le monde entier; 2) entrent dans des restaurants, magasins de haute gamme, réunions d'affaires, etc. 3) sont considérés incompétents jusqu'à ce qu'ils prouvent le contraire, même s'ils possèdent des qualifications universitaires respectées et sont expérimentés dans leur métier.
- Le propos est donc d'initier, d'animer et d'organiser des discussions panafricaines franches sur l'image évoluant de l'Afrique (image de marque du continent) et son incidence sur les perceptions/préjugés, la bonne volonté et, éventuellement, le développement socio-économique.
- Cela pour permettre, à terme, d'établir un «service de recherche et de conseil» basé en Afrique et destiné à fournir les meilleurs outils et le meilleur positionnement pour améliorer l'image et la réputation de villes, de régions ou de pays africains.
- L'approche du service visera à être préventive à 80% et à 20% curative, en aidant les villes, les régions, et les pays demandeurs à comprendre les ramifications possibles entre la réputation et de nouvelles politiques en amont de leur adoption (80%). Des services consultatifs seront également proposés pour gérer les situations de crise et pour soigner la réputation en situation de «post-crise.»

SYNTHÈSE

Le Sommet Africa Brand Summit est bien plus qu'un événement annuel au cours duquel les gens viennent échanger des idées puis rentrent chez eux. Les délibérations de chaque Sommet annuel s'appuieront sur des enquêtes menées à propos de l'image et de la réputation de l'Afrique, de leur évolution ainsi que sur un certain nombre de moteurs économiques et politiques régionaux clés.

LES DISCUSSIONS VONT DONC S'INTERROGER SUR LES POINTS SUIVANTS:

- Quelle est l'image/la réputation actuelle de l'Afrique/de ses cinq régions/des principaux pays africains?
- Dans quelle mesure une telle image/ réputation influence-t-elle les comportements en Afrique et dans le monde?
- Quels sont les principaux moteurs/influenceurs d'une telle image/réputation?
- Que faut-il faire pour augmenter/améliorer les aspects positifs et éliminer progressivement les aspects négatifs?
- Quelles recommandations peut-on formuler à l'intention des décideurs et d'autres dirigeants politiques, ceux des entreprises, de la société civile, des médias, etc., afin de les amener à comprendre leurs rôles respectifs dans l'édification d'une image positive de l'Afrique,
- A comprendre comment on peut rendre cette image plus attrayante et plus accueillante pour les compétences: celles de la diaspora africaine expatriée dans le monde, des touristes, des investisseurs, des grandes entreprises et des organisations multilatérales, etc.

CONCLUSION

Cet événement annuel n'aurait jamais connu un tel retentissement sans le soutien de nombreux partenaires venus du monde des affaires, des pouvoirs publics, de la société civile, du monde universitaire, des médias, et d'associations locales comme internationales.

Comme indiqué ci-dessus, le Africa Brand Summit est bien plus qu'un forum annuel de discussion. A plusieurs reprises, il a déjà été cité en tant qu'organisme exhortant le gouvernement sud-africain à parler d'une seule voix et à développer une politique politique et économique claire. Plus largement, le Sommet continuera à tendre la main aux décideurs africains pour les inciter à s'engager positivement en faveur de l'Afrique.

Son programme thématique continuera d'inviter des intervenants et des panélistes du monde entier capables d'exposer leurs points de vue sur les problèmes de l'Afrique vu de l'intérieur et de l'extérieur, de les mesurer et les comparer à ceux des autres pays africains et du reste du monde. Des recherches scientifiques fiables et éprouvées seront toujours privilégiées pour étayer nos délibérations.

Le Africa Brand Summit permet aussi à nos partenaires d'exposer leur projet d'entreprise et de développer un network avec de grands décideurs-clé internationaux et africains dans leur domaine d'expertise et bien au-delà.

Il sera également l'occasion pour eux de jouer un rôle prépondérant dans les processus de décision à travers des différentes plates-formes du Sommet.

Pour nos partenaires, ce sera toujours l'occasion d'exposer leur marque et leur vision d'entreprise, de développer un réseautage avec les décideurs clés de leur secteur et d'autres secteurs connexes, ainsi que d'influencer la prise de décision politique par le biais des plates-formes créées par le sommet.

Par:
Solly MOENG
Responsable et Fondateur du Africa Brand Summit


DR TALIB RIFAI


SAURABH UBOWEJA


PROFESSOR PATRICK LOCH OTIENO LUMUMBA

HOPE RISING DESPITE AFRICA'S IMMENSE CHALLENGES

Whether attending physically or virtually, the energy in the room was palpable as the 2020 edition of the Africa Brand Summit convened on 7 October. With around 50 people in attendance, in adherence to the strict COVID-19 protocols, and hundreds others attending virtually through Zoom, the conference began with Founder and Convenor, Solly Moeng, providing his opening remarks and overall rationale for the event, as well as the Vision it seeks to realise.

"We do not fool ourselves into believing that we can solve Africa's image problems overnight, but we had to begin this journey somewhere," Moeng said. "Leadership is not a popularity contest. It's necessarily lonely, because you sometimes need to say no to the people who love you, and yes to the people you are expected to hate."

The former Secretary General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and current patron of the African Tourism Board, Dr Talib Rifai, shared his thoughts on Africa as a continent and its potential. "The world has not given Africa a chance. I come from a generation where Africa was really not respected. I was born in Egypt, so I, too, am African. Every person is this world came out of Africa and we need to come back to our birthplace." He urged attendees to tell positive stories of Africa – but to look inward first. "We must explore our tourism offerings first and take pride in ourselves before inviting anyone else, and COVID-19 presents us with this opportunity. I am sending a message to all African countries to take domestic and regional tourism seriously."

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Opening Address: **Dr Talib Rifai**, Patron: African Tourism Board | Amman, Jordan

Keynote Address: **Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba**, Director of The Kenya School of Laws | Nairobi; Kenya

Presentation: **Saurabh Uboweja**, Managing Partner: BOD Consulting | New Delhi, India

Moderator: **Phumlani Majozi**, Senior Fellow at African Liberty

A most passionate address was delivered by the vibrant Professor PLO Lumumba, who stirred hope and rallied even the most discouraged of delegates. His excitement for the real and tangible potential of Africa's success was like wildfire. "I see an Africa that is trading within itself; an Africa where men and women will move between countries without the need of a passport. An Africa where young people will see not the differences amongst themselves but will only see the bond that ties them together... We are looking to an Africa that is great – that is why we have come here to rebrand. To tell ourselves that we have capacity, to remind ourselves that we have the resolve, that we have the world, even if the world doesn't believe in us. We will tell our own story, a story worthy of a great civilisation. The world had better be prepared for us."

Providing insight into perceptions from a country with similar branding issues was Saurabh Uboweja, Managing Partner: BOD Consulting in New Delhi. India's perception of itself is that of a startup, he said, but the world's perception is that the people of India are interesting but screwed! "They try to find themselves and are enthralled by the spiritual identity it carries but they don't respect its people." He cited leadership as being key in informing perceptions about any country and representing it in a positive light, with three aspects to consider: tourism, business investment and expatriate perception.

Interrogating Africa's Brand Potential was the theme of the 2020 summit, and truly it was unpacked in a detailed and thoughtful way from the opening address to its closing remarks. Experts from across the world explored and debated exactly how impactful (or not) "Brand Africa" is – from education and social justice, to the agrarian economy, business and politics – and how we can practically make a difference, elevate our continent, and ultimately, change how it is viewed globally.

OBSTACLES, CHANGES AND INNOVATIONS IN THE FOOD VALUE CHAIN

"Man, despite his artistic pretensions, his sophistication and his many accomplishments – owes his existence to the six-inch layer of topsoil and the fact that it rains." – Paul Harvey

THE COVID EFFECT

The question on everyone's mind is the extent of the effect of COVID-19 on the food value chain. Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist at Agbiz, posited that although the effect was significant, South Africa's agriculture was not as hard hit by the pandemic as many other countries.

South Africa's agriculture gross value-added expanded by 15.1% q/q on a seasonally adjusted and annualised basis in Q2, 2020 following an expansion of 27.8% q/q in Q1. Several agricultural products were not classified as essential services, including wool, cotton, mohair, floriculture, tobacco and wine, the latter two of which were further strained by the ban of sales that was only lifted in August.

Export of all agricultural products remains largely uninterrupted, at least from a regulatory perspective, but there are delays in some ports because of the COVID-19 related constraints. Wandile estimates a +10% y/y recovery in South Africa's agricultural GDP for 2020 (Others like BFAP see +13% y/y). All South Africa's major trading partners are expected to take a severe knock from the pandemic this year.

The following policy interventions have been implemented to support South African agriculture:

- The South African Reserve Bank has swiftly cut interest rates by a cumulative 300 basis points year to date.
- For a sector that has a record debt of R168 billion, the relief that lower interest rates could bring is substantial.
- If all the debt is on flexible interest rates, we estimate that the lower interest rates could bring savings in debt-service costs of roughly R5 billion for farmers over 12 months.
- The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has ring-fenced R1.2 billion
- This prioritises the poultry sector, livestock and vegetables, amongst other agricultural commodities which will be selected on a case-by-case basis.
- The farmers within the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy programme are also included in this package.

BENNIE VAN ROOY

MBALI NWOKO

THE AGBIZ VIEW

Overall, the recent policy interventions, specifically on interest rates, are a welcome relief on easing the financial conditions of the indebted farmers. The financial support to small-scale farmers could have perhaps been designed differently to specifically target farmers that made losses as a result of the pandemic. The focus of the criteria seemed to focus more on development matters.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Bennie Van Rooy, CEO: Grobank | Johannesburg, RSA

Dr Ivan Meyer, Provincial Minister of Agriculture | Western Cape Provincial Government, RSA

Neeraj Vij, Regional Sector Manager: Industry, Agriculture, and Human Development at African Development Bank | Pretoria, RSA

Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist: Agbiz | Johannesburg, RSA

Mbali Nwoko, Commercial Farmer: Green Terrace | Johannesburg, RSA

Moderator: **Ryland Fisher**, CEO: Ikusasa Lethu Media

(L-R) RYLAND FISHER, DR MARLENE LE ROUX, DR IVAN MEYER, SOLLY MOENG

MINISTERIAL PRIORITIES

Dr Ivan Meyer, Provincial Minister of Agriculture in the Western Cape, has a singular vision. He wants to put agriculture front and centre for South Africans as a core driver of South Africa's GDP, and as a tool for nation building. The core priorities include Rural Safety, Market Access, Structured Education Training and Research, Climate Change and Farmer Support. "I want more people involved in the innovation of the agricultural sector. We need more agricultural schools in South Africa and on the continent," said Dr Meyer. "A child that is educated in an agricultural school is taught to build, not to break down. These schools build citizenship."

Provincial Agriculture aims to increase its exports by at least 5% over the next five years from R68.2 billion to R71.6 billion in 2024. They also hope to enhance the agri-processing value-add in the province from R48 billion in 2018 to R50.4 billion in 2024.

CHALLENGES FACING COMMERCIAL FARMERS

The core challenges faced by emerging famers are access to markets, blended finance, information, logistics, cold chain, storage and training. "A number of farmers struggle to raise finance for their farms, and the reason for this is because a number of financial institutions have rigid financing models and requirements that do not meet the farmers' needs or profiles. In general, raising finance as an entrepreneur in South Africa is still very difficult because credit policies don't speak to entrepreneur profiles. Land alone will not guarantee a successful finance application," says Mbali Nwoko, Chief Executive Farmer at Green Terrace.

Nwoko feels that there is a need for a type of 'Silicon Valley' of agriculture where farmers and agribusinesses can be supported from startup to commercial stage. Farming is very complex and can take some years to release ROI, especially if farmers don't have the right support and expertise.

The challenges facing farmers are not unique to South Africa. "In fact, I spoke to a Zambian farmer in my recent podcast where she expressed how lack of storage and cold chain facilities are a hindrance to her and other local farm business growth. The reason why she cannot have access to these resources is because she is not producing at scale. These facilities are not cheap for a farmer like herself," Nwoko explained. "A number of other countries in West Africa also have bad infrastructure, resulting in major crop losses post-harvest whilst getting produce to market. South Africa is not too far behind with the uncertainty of our main power supply."

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT POLICY

It is critical for emerging commercial farmers across Africa to have their voices heard and taken seriously by policy makers. "On a personal level I sometimes feel discouraged because of the media reports we see and hear about the level of corruption that exists amongst those in power. We must, however, commend agricultural associations for doing their best to hold government accountable, for trying to grow the industry and for looking after farmers' interests," said Nwoko.

Farmers are encouraged to continue to push boundaries in their own corners of the world, collaborate with other farmers, work very closely with businesses operating along the agricultural value chain in order to grow and develop the sector cross the African continent. "I believe in action and therefore, I know that if farmers are more active in putting their needs and interests first, working together to try solve the problems that they face, institutions like government will follow."

Bennie Van Rooy, CEO of Grobank, addressed some of the challenges and opportunities that present themselves in the agricultural space specific to Africa. A combination of predicting where marketing trends will develop to increasing the use of technology, making cross-border trade more accessible, and the role of technology will ensure that we can become more self-sufficient and ultimately have a net export of food as a continent. Technology is becoming cheaper and more widely available to farmers, too – drones are a good example of this.

"What is important for emerging farmers to be successful is to be supported by value chains. These include the availability of land, infrastructure, and to have access to water. Farmers need the appropriate and affordable funding structures. Farmers need access to technology and support with access to mentoring and skills programmes, as well as, importantly, access to a markets where off-taker agreements can be entered into to sell commodities that are produced", said Van Rooy. "We have to be able to produce food commodities that are on par with global standards, as quality is essential."

A BANKING FIRST

Access Bank announced recently that it has entered into an arrangement with existing returning shareholders at Grobank, to inject up to R400 million equity into Grobank over the next few years. Grobank will become part of the Access Bank group, the bank will be rebranded to Access Bank South Africa. From a Brand Africa perspective, this pan African banking brand can play a meaningful role in promoting cross-border transactions, making cross-border financing and cross-border banking opportunities more accessible to businesses operating across the region, with many benefits.

RETHINKING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Healthy social justice is important for socio-economic and political stability and, ultimately, country image. But what exactly is it? Social justice is both a process and a product. It is an enabling social change process with people. Decision making at all levels would be truly democratic, non-hierarchical and decentralised. As products, fairness, equity and equality are central. Healthy Social justice provides an enabling environment for society to live the life it values, where institutions are held in public trust and administered for the good of all in society.

TOWARDS PROGRESS

Dr Nardos Bekele-Thomas, UN Resident Coordinator for South Africa, said that social justice is inexorably linked to the rights within the constitution – yet inequalities remain. The public sector is over-stretched and under-funded, and the private sector caters only to a small number of South Africans. She cited three key factors that hinder South Africa's progress to true social justice.

The first is inequalities in the distribution of assets and income. It is vital to move towards a taxation system that is fairer and ensures the richest are taxed appropriately and the poorest are supported. The second refers to inequalities in access to knowledge. Children must be given access universities and schools, as well as technologies and connectivity. The third is inequalities in the distribution of health services and safe environments. She posited that changes be made to social grants for housing education, and health. Basic Income Grant could be raised from R350 to R500, which should be manageable from a fiscal perspective. Moreover, the South African government should be comprised of Call Servant Leaders who are accountable to the people and are people-centred.

Bongiwe Mlangeni of the Social Justice Institute of SA, expressed that there are three threats to SA's stability: a high rate of unemployment, inequality, and poverty – where 49.2% of the adult population live on R1 227 per month (Source: Stats SA; World Bank). To address these important issues, we should strive for fair distribution and access to resources, rights and power, recognition and respect of human dignity, and systems change.

"To leverage Brand Africa for the well-being of the citizens of this continent, it is important that we take a direct approach – which is why we are where we are," Professor Thuli Madonsela said in her address. "Primarily, people are not rejecting democracy; they are rejecting what we have masquerading as democracy."

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND COALITIONS

Coalition thinking is born out of observing resilience as fuelled by four key elements: diversity of activities; politics of influence and agency; mutually interdependent financial actors; and hyperlocal economic and development activity. The point is to recombine knowledge across these contexts to develop new responses, fostering opportunities for collaboration and development.

THE OPPORTUNITY

While the general narrative on community development and social investment by donors has shifted towards the development of partnership-based interventions and tracked impact, such interventions are often designed in the absence of data and indexes tracking risk and opportunity within the sector. The disconnect between social investment strategies and economic livelihood has resulted in civil society being pushed to an unsustainable resource burn rate during COVID-19. The opportunity lies within the embers of all we have tried and failed to achieve – throughout Africa. By activating key support services to communities which are under resourced and have little access to formal economic opportunities, we can begin to effect change at a grassroots level.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Dr Nardos Bekele Thomas, UN Resident Coordinator SA

Professor Thuli Madonsela, Stellenbosch University Law Faculty Trust Chair In Social Justice

Professor Catherina Schenk, University of the Western Cape, RSA

Bongiwe Mlangeni, Social Justice Institute of SA

Mandisa Kalako Williams, Community Development Consultant

Craig Kensley, Director: Community Chest Coalition of the Committed

Moderator: **Dr Marlene Le Roux**, CEO: Artscape

CRISES COMMS: THE CASE OF COVID-19


(L-R) CLAUDIA SHILUMANI, REGINE LE ROUX AND VICTOR SIBEKO

Dissecting how to communicate effectively during a world pandemic is no easy task, but this is exactly what Africa Brand Summit did on Wednesday, 7 October. In a panel titled Country and Continental Communication of Global Crises: The Case of COVID-19, Professor Dalien Rene Benecke, Yomi Badejo-Okusanya, Victor Sibeko and Regine Le Roux explored what role PR and communication play at different levels, as well as how to separate spin from authentic brand communications.

REAL POWER LIES IN HONESTY

Claudia Shilumani, representing the SA National Department of Health, explored three key themes in effective communication during crises like COVID-19: the power of the collective, of honesty and inclusivity. "It's critical to communicate to the public what is known about COVID-19, what is unknown, and actions being taken," Shilumani explained, citing Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) guidelines as presented by WHO in 2020. "Preparedness and response activities should be conducted in a participatory, community-based way that are continually optimised according to feedback. Responsive, empathetic, transparent and consistent messaging in local languages - through trusted channels of communication, using community-based networks and key influencers and building capacity of local entities - is essential to establish authority and trust."

BREAKING DOWN COVID COMMS

Shilumani dissected in detail exactly what the SA government has and continues to do to keep citizens informed as the pandemic progresses. Prior to and on 5 March 2020, they provided insight and updates on the Wuhan group repatriation, as well as being honest and open with the media when reporting on this hitherto unknown global emergency. The team continues to host an average of two weekly media briefings addressed by the Minister of Health, and also provides daily updates.

Maxim Behar, President of the World Communication Forum Association, explored how international country communications teams can effectively work their way through the crisis. "We need to work with international institutions to coordinate communications efforts," he explained, "We have to use these new [virtual] platforms in the best possible way so that messages are properly heard. We need to be very professional because now, more than ever, people count on our professionalism. Social media changed the world completely and COVID-19 changed the world in a way we did not expect and we must be concentrating on the public use of social media."

Leveraging the overall structure is integral to communications, too. This means that teams work closely with around 25 partners such as WHO, USAID, NCID. They also engage regional and local government structures to disseminate COVID-19 messaging. Rumours, fake news, misinformation, perceptions and concerns were dealt with through the above channels and monitored closely.

THE ROLE PR CAN PLAY DURING A CRISIS

According to Prof Benecke, the focus during a crisis is placed on developing critical consumers of news, and to enable media and PR literacy at a greater level. It's particularly important to move beyond fake news to authentic facts – especially during a crisis.

Yomi Badejo-Okusanya gave a broad global perspective on countries that got their crisis communications right over the last year such as New Zealand and Vietnam, whereas the United States is one with many examples of what not to do in a country crisis. He added that the pandemic has "literally redirected the public to using digital channels, not only for information, but also for entertainment and business – especially during the lockdown."

Behar's recently published book, *The Morning After*, tells us that we are already dealing with the world of the future. "Don't wait for the future," he said emphatically, "Deal pragmatically and professionally today, because tomorrow is already here with us."

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Claudia Shilumani, CEO: Centre for Communication Impact | Johannesburg, RSA

Maxim Behar, President: World Communication Forum Association | Sofia, Bulgaria

Clare Dewhirst, City Nation Place | London, UK

Prof Dalien Rene Benecke, Immediate Past President: PRISA | Johannesburg, RSA

Yomi Badejo Okusanya, President of the African Public Relations Association (APRA) | Lagos, Nigeria

Moderators: **Regine Le Roux** (Reputation Matters) and **Victor Sibeko** (CEO: PRISA)

THE MEDIA'S ROLE IN SHAPING PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICA

Tola Babalola, CEO of Wild Dreams Co in Lagos, Nigeria, believes that it's high time we begin to look at the micro-moments in telling our collective story as a continent. Amplifying these micro-moments will create a waves of opportunity for Africans on the global stage, as we've seen happen in the entertainment industry. What are the micro-moments in sports, food and dining, local tourism, and how can we tell the amazing stories of young Africans on the move in all key areas of influence?

"Mainstream media tends to focus on only macro moments and we don't have much in Africa, they are mostly negative and centred around; politics, poverty, war, child labour, etc., a few positives are in sports and entertainment," said Babalola, "Africa doesn't have too many macro moments (sent a man to space, built the biggest eCommerce network in the world, invented electric cars, etc.) so the stories we tell are…mostly full of negativity." The music industry, however, has leveraged micro-moments through social media to tell a new and unique story about Africa.

RADIO CAN EFFECT CHANGE

TransAfrica Radio is a pioneering African-owned media company which is trusted to celebrate and promote quality African content in sports, music, news and entertainment. The brand pioneered positive change by playing 100% African music, finding new talent, being willing to teach radio craft, kept abreast of good news in Africa, collaborating through syndication and partnering, and embracing technology.

Africa is a continent of young people, who are driving change across multiple layers in society. It is essential to know and understand what they want, think about them and their needs and feed those needs, and be authentic. "Africa still has an abundance of cultural and artistic talent finally being recognised by the rest of the world – African arts have landed on the main stage (BET, MTV, TRACE, Oscars, etc). African radio should take lead in discovering and showcasing its talent. It can start with supporting our talent, be completely and authentically African, and strive for cross-continental collaborations," said Busi Adebule, CEO of TransAfrica Radio.

It is vital that more voices are pushing for environmental and corporate citizenship. This can be achieved through promoting and protecting the wellbeing of artists and continuing to be the torchbearers. It can also be through seeking out and nurturing raw radio talent, seeking to guard and protect our continent and its people by educating listeners, standing up for unpopular causes and making them popular, such as Xenophobia. It is imperative to also be mindful of your power in the media and beyond.


TOLA BABALOLA


BUSI ADEBULE


MAURICE MATE


GUGU NTULI

BUILDING AFRICA'S GLOBAL PRESENCE

During the Q&A session, panellists and attendees agreed on the need for investment in a pan African research facility. There was a clear call for resources to be allocated to create an enabling environment for ambitious Africans to build Brand Africa through creative endeavours. The film blockbuster *Black Panther* was often cited as a brilliant example of what Africa can be, and how we can portray ourselves to the world. As Africans, we possess the natural resources, skills, talent and drive to turn dreams into reality.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Busi Adebule, CEO: TransAfrica Radio | Johannesburg, RSA

Tola Babalola, CEO: Wild Dreams Co | Lagos, Nigeria

Gugu Ntuli, Group Executive: Corporate Affairs and Marketing, SABC | Johannesburg, RSA

Maurice Mate, Acting Station Manager Channel Africa – SABC Radio (RSA)

Moderator: **Ashraf Garda**

(L-R) PHUMLANI MAJOZI, SITHOLE MBANGA, EMILIA SAIZ CARRANCEDO (ON SCREEN)

THE STATE OF
SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES

A global perspective and debate on the role and significance of local governments in bettering their citizenry's experience.

The consensus among the panellists was that local governments need to regain the trust of the communities they aim to serve and follow through on national plans by communicating how those plans will be translated on a local level.

Emilia Saiz, Secretary General: United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), believes that we need to devise a new concept of citizenship and consider human mobility and migration. "Inter-urban systems should be based on solidarity," said Saiz. "Informality is a major part of our economy and our systems need to be structured that way."

It was generally agreed by the panellists that cities don't have new problems and that the Covid-19 pandemic has simply compounded existing problems. All cities need to rethink how societies can be reorganised to meet the needs of the people and work towards aligning policies at a local and national level. " Local and regional governments can be a powerful tool that answers to the expectations of citizens. Three axes of transformation that need to be considered by cities are in relation with the planet, a rethink on how we relate to each other and regain trust of citizens," concluded Saiz.

Sithole Mbanga, UCLG Africa Deputy Secretary General and CEO of SA Cities Network, agreed with Saiz's points, elaborating on the national/local divide. "There are 54 countries in Africa, but in addition there are 17 000 local municipalities, therefore it is essential that there are healthy, productive working relationships. Not just at the highest level, but at administrative and technical levels too. This is just one step towards effective governance. The entire design of the communication between local and national needs to change, and should be based on accountability and respect."

The panellists also touched on Africa's diverse natural environments. "What makes Africa unique is its relationship with the planet, the environment, and its ecological systems. Africa's nature is inexorably linked to its many cultures."

THE ESPOO STORY

Espoo, a city in Finland, is a sterling example of a smart city that is in tune with the needs of its citizens – the city itself is managed for the best interests of all of its residents.
The Espoo Story portrays the history, presence and future of Espoo. It also identifies the city's values and greatest challenges. These are addressed in all city activities, but in particular, by cross-administrational development programmes that are implemented in collaboration. South Africa, too, is working towards the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and could benefit from focusing its attention on the most applicable to the nation. In Espoo, the core goals are Quality Education, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, and Climate Action.

> “IF GOVERNMENTS AND CITIZENS’ ATTITUDE IS TO ENCOURAGE MIGRATION, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO HARVEST THE ADVANTAGES OF PEOPLE LIVING TOGETHER AND THE EFFICIENCIES THAT COME FROM URBANISATION.”


EMILIA SAIZ CARRANCEDO


SITHOLE MBANGA

HARNESSING THE BENEFITS OF MIGRATION

“Human beings are born to move, from time immemorial. Humans are always looking for opportunities. People will jump the highest wall if the opportunity is on the other side. It’s an anthropological characteristic. If governments and citizens’ attitude is to encourage migration, you will be able to harvest the advantages of people living together and the efficiencies that come from urbanisation. This is the most appropriate attitude for people to adopt. We must have a positive attitude to migration,” Mbanga explained. “It is clear that all of society must be invested in the approach to the resolution of problems, they cannot just be the government’s problem. If government is accepting the role of civil society, this should be applauded. We are on the right track in addressing this problem.”

Local governments are all facing the impact of climate change, and must never undermine this threat. If local government is accountable for a region that is experiencing drought, leadership must respond effectively as those citizens are extremely vulnerable.

“That is impacting how cities are being run, the sources of revenue will change. The citizenry is no longer willing to pay for energy that is derived from fossil fuels – they are demanding renewable energy,” posited Mbanga. Furthermore, the COVID pandemic is just one example. South African cities face social pandemics on our streets everyday – gender-based violence is one such pandemic, and while some initiatives are gaining traction, the scourge of GBV is still rife in our communities.

ACCOUNTABLE LEADERS

The most effective way to hold leaders accountable is to have a safe, organised space in which citizens can monitor the efforts of local government. This kind of active citizenship is still a challenge in most South African cities but is critical is defining and acting on the vision of the city.

AWAY FROM SILO THINKING

Governments cannot work alone or in silos, and the elationships between national and local governments must be such that the “Big Brother” effect is mitigated. Sithole Mbanga believes that superior attitudes and hierarchical structures remain rife the public sector. “The Constitution says work together and in a coordinated fashion. Ubuntu should govern us.”

SPEAKERS AND PANELLISTS

Emilia Saiz Carrancedo, Secretary General: UCLG | Barcelona,Spain

Octavi de la Varga Mas, Secretary General: Metropolis | Barcelona, Spain

Sithole Mbanga, UCLG Africa Deputy Secretary General; CEO: SA Cities Network | Johannesburg, RSA

Sampo Suihko, GM: Omnia; Former Deputy Mayor | Espoo, Finland

Moderator: **Phumlani Majozi**, Senior Fellow at African Liberty

AFRICAN BUSINESS
NOT RISING TO ITS FULL POTENTIAL

The call from African business SMEs was clear; it is poor leadership that has hindered Africa's progress and stopped it from becoming the economic powerhouse that it has the obvious potential to be. If the current policy restraints were swiftly dealt with, the existing accelerating initiatives would unlock an estimated R3.4 trillion of new revenue.

There is an abundance of capital held by investors worldwide, and capital flows into countries or continents are based on three factors:
- A market
- The potential to make a profit
- Clear, reliable, and predictable economic and political policies

With 1.3 billion inhabitants in Africa, the evidence could not be clearer.

"The environment is not conducive for this yet because of the lack of structural economic reforms," says Busisiwe Mavuso. "We are at the precipice, and our leadership is not showing a roadmap. South Africa should be in a much better position economically, but we are hindered as a result of 'own goals' scored. Our position as the most advanced economy in Africa is being overtaken by our neighbors and nascent, attractive, economies like that of Rwanda. We are failing because we do not have our own house in order. This is unattractive to investors and we are letting the 1.3 billion people on this continent down."

Terry Booysen said that Corporate Africa should take Corporate Governance more seriously.
"Governance also means discipline – the discipline of self and the collective" Citing the International Transparency Report, he said that the political integrity across our respective African governments is sorely lacking. "We are getting this horribly wrong – in terms of employment, disparity, crime, corruption, and general mistrust in our leadership."

Saul Molobi lamented the "deliberate stealing and appropriation of African wealth and the destruction of our identity" through decades of colonialism. "History isn't happening perchance. It is a deliberate, and characterized by famine, disease and terror."

THE POST-COVID PATH

The economic outlook was .3% growth before the pandemic – an already bleak prospect. In the midst of the pandemic 2.2 million jobs were lost in the third quarter, following a 51% negative growth in the second quarter. "COVID has unraveled

A PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL MEETING OF MINDS

the progress we have made in 26 years," says Mavuso. "Two things are certain: life as we know it will never be the same, and that the opportunity for growth is in front of us."

The pandemic stalled the global supply chain, which has forced industries to localize. However, Africa needs to be even more inwardly focused. The New African Continental Free Trade Corridor was presented in 2012, but eight years later it remains a theory.
Opening trade corridors between countries could increase our GDP by 50% and establishing a single market for goods and services would streamline trade and attract international investment. In West Africa, the sea corridor is begging to be utilized, and in East Africa, the rail and road opportunities are immense. Building more links between African countries is the key to sustainable economic empowerment that is not tethered to a foreign power.

UNPACKING THE STATS

"COVID-19 has reversed Africa's strong growth trajectory. Under the baseline scenario, real GDP in Africa is projected to contract by 1.7 % in 2020. In the worst-case scenario, the GDP could fall by -3.4% in 2020. Partial recovery of about 3% is expected in 2021," said Dr Hanan Morsy, Director: African Economic Outlook – The African Development Bank.

Extreme poverty is projected to increase by 2.14 – 2.84 pp in 2020 and by 2.51 pp in 2021. COVID could push 49 million into extreme poverty. An estimated 25 to 30 million jobs could be lost as a result of the economic fallout.

The impact of COVID-19 and prospects for recovery vary across regions and economies.
Tourism-dependent countries and oil exporters would suffer more losses than non-resource intensive economies. Fiscal deficits are rising and external positions are expected to worsen significantly.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Fiscal policy responses

- Support vulnerable households with targeted cash transfers and social safety net programmes.
- Help businesses stay afloat by providing targeted subsidies and tax relief.

Monetary policy responses

- Ease financial conditions by injecting liquidity.
- Use unconventional policy tools to support affected sectors.

Labour market and informal sector responses

- Assist vulnerable groups, especially women and youth in informality
- Use active labour market policies to protect workers and their jobs.

* Source: Dr Hanan Morsy, African Development Bank

OUR REALITY

We can achieve continental economic integration. Africa is poor by choice – we are not poor in resources or skills or positioning," said Mavuso. "We are where we are because our leaders are not who they ought to be. And that is the honest conversation that must be had."

The reality may be unfortunate, but we should take heed of the entrepreneurial spirit that resides within the citizens of all 54 African countries (or 55 African countries if we include the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, as per the AU prescripts after the AfCFTA was ratified by more than two thirds majority of the AU member states).

CONSCIOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Conscious Entrepreneurship is more than a corporate buzzword. It is a term that will grow to reflect the leaders of the here and now. To make Brand Africa shine, we must collaborate with teams around the globe to push ideas forward a forge a path towards long-term prosperity for the continent. The world is becoming increasingly efficient, and the search for profit is no longer driven by labour. $15 trillion worth of labour-intensive jobs will become automated in 10 years – that is 15% of the GDP moving from labour to automation. Hence, it is vital that Africa's population understands and trains in the new technologies. The demand for skills such as data science, machine learning and data engineering is so vast that people with these skills can write their own paychecks.

"Unfortunately, the asymmetry of opportunity still exists, and it comes from a few concentrated hubs," said Shiv Vikram Khemka, "but with the world becoming increasingly connected, the time and space divide can be bridged." In this new world, the ivory tower can be demolished, and a global ecosystem can emerge where mutual support and lessons are shared in a sportified environment. There is a long way to go – 8% of the population controls 83% of the wealth – and it is only through a common understanding that there is plenty for everyone can we make progress and harness our collective power.


VUSI THEMBEKWAYO

ENTERING THE AGE OF SUSTAINABILITY

This is the beginning of the Age of Sustainability, therefore today's companies should watch and serve not only shareholder interests, as they did mostly in the past, but all stakeholder interests, including employees, customers and the larger community. "This is the only way to build a better world and help to achieve Sustainable Development Goals," explained Dr Hegyi. "Companies with a purpose are already doing that. Companies should reinvent their brands and be able to create new, sustainable brands. This is where our new service, Impact Branding, already offered in Africa, can help companies to bring sustainability into brand value creation."

The private sector must play an important role in achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, therefore it is important for companies to integrate sustainability into their core strategies. If more and more African companies integrate sustainability into their core strategies and communicate their achievements - not only will they improve their own image, but also positively contribute to the overall brand of Africa.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Dr Hanan Morsy, Director: African Economic Outlook, African Development Bank | Cairo, Egypt

Shiv Vikram "Khemka", Vice President: SUN Group | Zurich, Switzerland

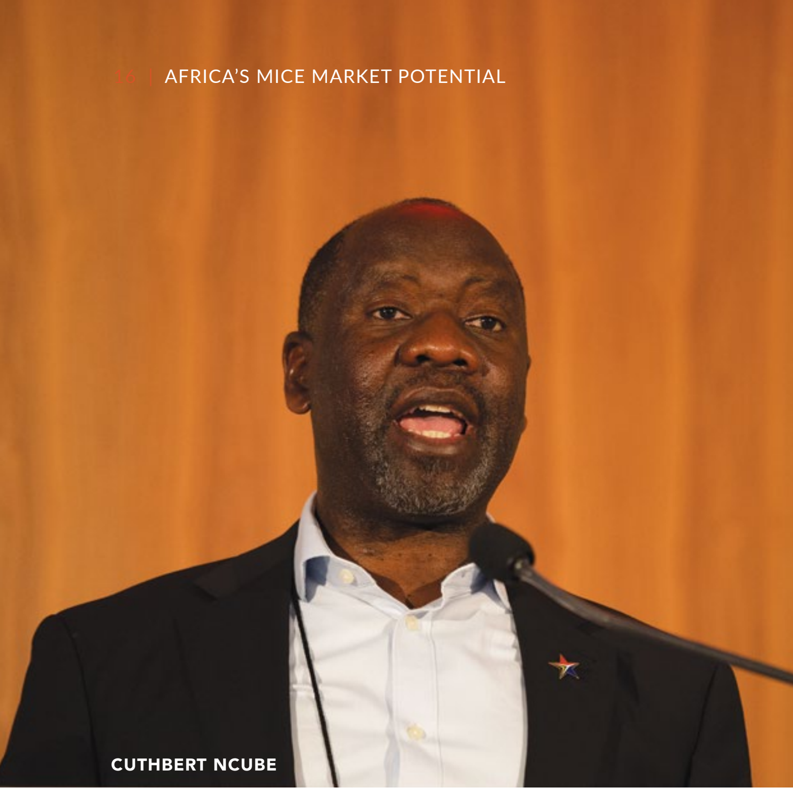
Busisiwe Mavuso, CEO: Business Leadership South Africa | Johannesburg, RSA

Terry Booysen, CEO: CGF Research Institute | Johannesburg, RSA

Dr Gábor Hegyi, Capital Communications | Budapest, Hungary

Saul Kgomotso Molobi | CEO: Brandhill Africa | Johannesburg, RSA

Moderator: **Vusi Thembekwayo**, Global Speaker and Venture Investor



CUTHBERT NCUBE

CUTHBERT NCUBE AND RASHID TOEFY IN CONVERSATION

GROWING AFRICA'S STAKE IN BUSINESS EVENTS

Africa has consistently proven its worth and capabilities in the last 3-5 years when it comes to hosting conferences, summits, indabas, exhibitions and association congresses. Examples of these include the UFI Congress at Sandton Convention Centre in 2017, the slew of international specialist scientific, agricultural, tech and medical conferences held in Cape Town, Durban or Kigali, or SA Tourism's annual Meetings Africa and Africa's Travel Indaba – the latter of which was cancelled this year due to COVID-19.

A BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

The business events sector worldwide contributes billions to the global economy per annum and although an industry that contributed greatly to both a country's economic and brand perceptions was brought to its knees this year, it may just be the perfect time to place Africa on the map internationally.

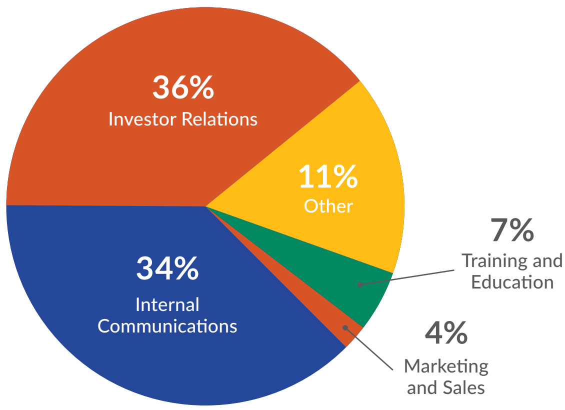
The region has already been growing its profile within the annual ICCA Rankings with some of the aforementioned cities taking the top spots in Africa. However where the gap lies is in comparing the number association meetings held in an African city versus one in the top 10, most likely to be a destination in Europe or the Americas.

VIRTUAL EVENTS ALONE CANNOT BE THE FUTURE

In a fiery and passionate panel discussion on Thursday, 8 October, some of the business events industry's brightest minds came together to exchange insights and explore new ways of presenting Africa to a post-pandemic world through business events.

Linda Pereira was emphatic in her statements, saying that the trend towards virtual events alone cannot last forever. "We do not want to stay in virtual events. We're human, we like face to face meetings, serendipity, connection." She did concede,

BUSINESS EVENTS AS A CATALYST FOR GROWTH



TOP COUNTRIES
1. South Africa | 103 meetings
2. Morocco | 45 meetings
3. Rwanda | 32 meetings
4. Egypt | 31 meetings
5. Kenya | 27 meetings

TOP CITIES
1. Cape Town | 48 meetings
2. Kigali | 32 meetings
3. Cairo | 26 meetings
4. Marrakech | 23 meetings
5. Nairobi | 19 meetings

TOP MEETINGS SUBJECT MATTER
1. Medical Sciences
2. Science
3. Technology
4. Economics
5. Education

Source: ICCA Rankings 2019

however, that the virtual element would naturally become a permanent component to face-to-face events. "Virtual can facilitate better hybrid and multiple city events," Pereira added.

A SEGUE BETWEEN VIRTUAL AND REALITY

With technology becoming a fixture in the events firmament, it stands to logic that an attendees expectations are raised. "What we no longer forgive is simply streaming an event," she said, "It must be produced, and as interactive as live." It's time to look at events not only as streamed online, but as having both live and online hubs. "It's not going to be about bling but content," she added, "If content is king, design is queen."

COVID WAS MOTHER NATURE'S WAKE-UP CALL

There has been a silver lining to the pandemic, however, said Cuthbert Ncube, Executive Chairman, African Tourism Board. The pandemic's inadvertent shutting down of the tourism industry has forced it to innovate and find new ways to survive. Over-tourism was halted, and gave some beautiful destinations some much-needed rest. It's also made us look inward and toward our neighbours for support and collaboration opportunities. The overall consensus was that domestic tourism will grow – as already demonstrated in Kenya.

MICE ON THE FOREFRONT OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Sisa Ntshona, CEO of South African Tourism, presented a detailed outline of business events' contribution to the worldwide economy and GDP, as well as Africa's place in it. He also provided a 10-point recovery plan post-COVID and stressed the importance of collaborating with active associations and organisations in the industry to move this along quickly. One of the key outtakes is that Africa as a continent has a very long way to go in order to compete with the lion share of business events direct spend that take place in North America and Western Europe. That said, the 2019 ICCA Rankings show that there is great potential for growth in leveraging the top destinations in Africa and the congress subjects we excel at.

According to Glenton De Kock, CEO of Southern African Association for the Conference Industry, there are many opportunities now for event planners in the corporate private sector, as well as in hosting and organising religious events. The future is bright – but for now, it's still a case of hunkering down and finding new ways to use our skillset until we are allowed to trade again fully and safely.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Sisa Ntshona, CEO: SA Tourism | Johannesburg, RSA

Glenton De Kock, CEO: Southern African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI) | Johannesburg, RSA

Cuthbert Ncube, Executive Chairman: African Tourism Board | Johannesburg, RSA

Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa, CEO: Tourism Business Council of South Africa | Johannesburg, RSA

Linda Pereira, CEO: L&I Communications Group | Lisbon, Portugal

Alexander Porodnov, CEO: Investment Promotion Agency of the Sverdlovsk region & Ural Congress Bureau (Ekaterinburg, Russia)

Moderator: **Rashid Toefy**, DG: Western Cape Department of Economic Opportunities | RSA

TRUSTWORTHY LEADERSHIP IS VITAL


RYLAND FISHER

In a heated and controversial debate moderated by Ryland Fisher, CEO of Ikusasa Lethu Media, panellists discussed the nuances of African politics and how it shapes perceptions and views about the continent. Towards the end of the session, the discussion explored some examples of African leaders we can learn the most from about good governance and how to ensure others follow in their footsteps.

COALITION GOVERNMENTS DON'T ALWAYS WORK

When considering the last few elections and the subsequent coalition governments in South Africa, we find that they consistently fail at service delivery, said Terry Tselane, Executive Chair of the Institute of Election Management Services in Africa (IEMSA). "Coalition governments don't work unless with the same goal of stabilising and unifying – but not in the long term." For a coalition government to run efficiently, it needs all parties to have the same core set of beliefs and a clear direction. All panellists agreed that coalitions should never be struck on the basis of personal and private investments, but rather for the good of civil society with common goals to unite around. An additional challenge is that African coalitions are unregulated, further discouraging transparency and accountability.

POLITICS HAS FAILED US

"There is a collective feeling that politics has let us down," said Crispian Olver, Author Researcher on the toxic confluence of political party funding, municipal administration, and business interests. "The main problem that we [South Africa] face is between politics and administration." He suggested that the country administration take a broad view on politics in order to continue to serve citizens properly.

CROSSING THE LINE

More often than not, the real money comes out where business and politics meet. Corrupt politicians are not the only ones to blame, however. It is businesses, too, that need to be held accountable for looking only to their own interests and not their contribution to society, the environment, etc. The bottom line? Business colludes with power and needs regulating in the political arena.

"When it comes to business, it is one of the more unaccountable sets of social institutions," Ebrahim Fakir, Director of Programmes at ASRI, explained. "Too quickly business caves in because their immediate interest is on the short term, hyper-accumulation, and hyper-profitability in the shortest possible time to satisfy shareholders. So to solve this, you actually need moderation of shareholder expectation. Secondly, you have to have the moderation of executive pay, and you have to moderate the types of share options, bonuses, etc. We don't want to go the way of prescriptive policy. But if business goes the way it does without investing in the expansion of markets, new product development, innovation, research and design and, fundamentally, job creation, then you can moderate shareholder pay and remuneration, including executive remuneration, and cross-subsidise entry level jobs in the short term, even though they don't bring you a return."

He added that if we want better oversight in politics, business has got to stand its ground for the public interest when government is doing something wrong. "Even though it's not in your immediate short term interests, it may be in your long term sustainable interests to do so."

THE IMPACT ON BRAND AFRICA

When it comes to how the world perceives Africa, Tselane offered up some sage advice in dealing with the root of the problem first. "We must strengthen democratic institutions across the continent. It is only these structures that can hold those in power accountable." He added that legal framework needs to be provided so that those in power understand the protocols they need to adhere to while in office."

"We need to get away from investing entirely in political leaders. Our institutions matter more than our parties and their personalities," Fakir concluded.

SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Crispian Olver, Author and Researcher

Terry Tselane, Executive Chairperson: Institute of Election Management Services in Africa (IEMSA)

Ralph Mathekga, Political Analyst

Ebrahim Fakir, Director of Programmes at ASRI

Moderator: **Ryland Fisher**, CEO of Ikusasa Lethu Media

EDUCATION'S ROLE
IN EMPOWERING AFRICA

Concluding the summit on Thursday afternoon, 8 October, was a panel discussion on education and its role in the development of the African continent. Some of the topics included what skills and technologies are needed to improve the status quo, what needs to change in the current curricula, what role governments and continental bodies play, and how private sector can be of service in the advancement of Africa's next generation.


TOMI MOYAN


DR JON-HANS COETZER


BENNIE VAN ROOY

GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM

Education is a sector with huge challenges ahead if Africa is going to advance as a continent. "Without learning, education will fail in eliminating poverty," Education Specialist Dr Jon-Hans Coetzer said in his address. And, in the fast-paced world we now live in, Africa will not only need to close the education gap between itself and the rest of the planet, but it will also need to deliver on smart objectives."

Ultimately, the consensus was that more spending needs to be implemented strategically across many areas, certain parts of the system and curricula need a change – while others can be updated as and when necessary. Bennie van Rooy of Grobank gave the example of his own children's technological prowess to illustrate the importance of incorporating digital literacy in schools curricula. He suggested that schools incorporate more digital literacy, as well as basic business skills and rights issues in the workplace as important knowledge that will prepare students for future jobs.

CORPORATES NEED TO PLAY THEIR PART, TOO

Tertiary education is not always possible for the majority of Africa's population, but for employers, it's a marker of someone's skillset. The problem with this mindset is that there are many youth who, given the opportunity, would thrive – but because they are caught in a cycle of poverty and their CV doesn't have much more than basic education listed, they are not even considered. Both Coetzer and van Rooy challenged corporates to set up apprenticeships or to join mentorship programmes that provide opportunities to learn first-hand in a working environment from experts.

NO CLEAR ROADMAP AHEAD

With challenges like high mobile data costs, a lack of respect for teachers, a lack of scolarships or very few countries which have implemented free primary education, and more – Africa still has a long way to go in reaching its 2030 SDG goals.

For education on this continent to be effective, it needs specific, objective and measurable goals, Coetzer said. "Consider international standards, but also look at what works for us. Education should be free from politics and available to all," he concluded.

DISCUSSANTS

Dr Jon-Hans Coetzer, International Consultant in Education, Training and Development | Portugal

Bennie Van Rooy, CEO: Grobank | Johannesburg, RSA

Moderator: **Tomi Moyan**

PRISA: REDEFINING THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

VICTOR SIBEKO

The purpose of the PRISA Masterclasses was to understand the complexities and interconnectivity associated with the Southern African brand, as well as to highlight the importance of finding synergy internally and externally. It was also critical to unpack the way in which public relations professionals harness the opportunities created by network touch points.

"We all understand the negative stories about South Africa in the world. They do not paint the entire story. There are many wonderful things that people are doing, and these are the stories we should be enhancing and using to work as a collective to build a different image, externally and internally," said Prof Dalien Rene Benecke, Immediate Past President of PRISA. We must discover ways to measure that image, she added, with the inclusion of nation building constructs and with a variety of stakeholders – as well as what these constructs would be and how exactly they would contribute to building trust or even economic value.

"Favourable country image is more important than anything. As people we must promote, how we will integrate multi-disciplinary knowledge to utilised new narratives for the rest of the world," she added.

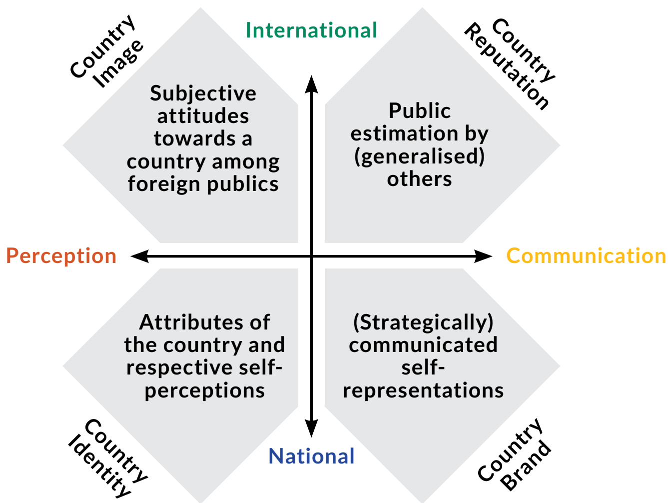
AT THE CORE OF NATIONBUILDING

Collaboration throughout networks, especially at grassroots level, is an opportunity to consolidate data and devise a new way of thinking - not to react and solve problems in the face of reputation management for organisations, but a problem-solving approach for bigger issues, and not one-unit issue. COVID-19 has shown us how interconnected we are – and listening to the experiences of our local communities is just one way we can develop and expand on a new model.

"We face a dilemma," said Prof Benecke, "we know there are challenges and realities about Southern Africa that are misrepresented. We also cannot spin a different reality. How do we present the reality with a sense of congruence? Nation building is a key aspect of this model – do we feel national pride, and how to we present that pride to the world?" Smith (1987) defines a country as a human collective of six attributes: a homeland, a common history and traditions, a domestic economy, public culture, common norms and values, and a sovereign state. However, does any country have a common history? "With migration and globalisation, how do we build new identities for immigrants, tourists, or migrants? Is there room for visitors to leave a part of themselves behind? In doing so, we develop a different set of norms and history and, perhaps, a better understanding of other people," she adds. What is essential is that civil society organises itself. Sometimes a leader is needed, but often it is an organic development because citizens see that there are other realities.

DEFINING COUNTRY REPUTATION AND BRAND

Reputation is commonly defined as the overall estimation of an organisation by all its stakeholders as well as in the case of a unit, such as a country. It is the emergent synthesis of multiple individual attitudes about a country as the result of complex



communications processes in modern media societies, focused on a strategic communication process with international stakeholders.

Country brand is seen as a contrast of representation. It is a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these intends to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers to differentiate them from those of competitors (Kotler & Armstrong, 2013).Certain aspects of South Africa's brand are indelibly linked to our heritage.

PRISA'S NETWORK APPROACH

PRISA is tasked with making country communication work for Africa, and enhance, over time, the continent's appeal. In order for this to occur, PRISA is working from a network perspective, utilising the power of storytelling. "As PR professionals, we must adopt a cooperative approach to develop relationships. This lies outside merely achieving an organisation's objectives," said Victor Sibeko, CEO of PRISA. "We propose a resource mobilisation that builds on dense social networks and has innovative ways of dealing with new realities - giving people the opportunities to shine in their own context and world. This will spill over to develop a new way of storytelling." PR professionals must claim space in the boardroom, however daunting. "We take stakeholders to another level, to the grassroots networks."

"As we know, first impressions last – and a negative experience will become a negative perception. Outsiders cannot be the only ones telling our stories, it is our responsibility to tell our own stories," he added.

THE WAY FORWARD

We live in a diversified world, and to relay messages to others we have to face the reality of cultural diplomacy: speaking to others without being rejected or rejecting. Cultural diplomacy is a success if communication is linked to other cultures and countries. Ultimately, sometimes being perceived as strong and positive does not fit the reality of the country. This may mean we have to constantly redefine ourselves and adapt to the world and the mistakes we have made.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT 101

Regine le Roux, Founder and MD at Reputation Matters, explored the subject of reputation management in her session of the Reputation Management Masterclasses on Tuesday, 6 October.

"When a company has a good reputation, people want to spend their hard-earned money on its products or services because they resonate with the values of the company and want to be associated with a particular brand. The same goes for a country and continent," she said.

Taking delegates on a practical journey through the five key building blocks that impact a reputation, Le Roux explained that these principles can then either be translated to a personal reputation, or that of a country or continent. The Repudometer® model was used as a base to outline the five reputation building blocks that impact one's business reputation. Attendees also had the opportunity of scoring themselves for each of the principles to get an idea of the percentage of their reputation.

"Unfortunately, I think that many people make reputation management a priority only when there is a crisis. People also tend to confuse reputation management with social media. Effective reputation management will help you to minimise crisis situations and avoid social media blunders."

le Roux stressed that every person and every company contribute to the reputation of their country and continent – intentionally or

REGINE LE ROUX

inadvertently. "The reputation of the continent needs to become the responsibility and priority for all of us. Economically it's non-negotiable. A better economy and investment into the country and continent will have a positive impact on social development."

One of the key takeaways from the session was delegates realising the importance of getting their internal building blocks in place first – and the importance of internal communication. Employees are very often neglected when it comes to a company's communication, and they should be the priority because they are a company's brand ambassadors. "People are much more likely to listen to an employee's experience than noticing a billboard," Le Roux concluded.


THE AWARD WINNERS GATHERING CAREFULLY FOR A SHOT TOGETHER

AWARDING THE TRULY DESERVING

The Africa Brand Summit 2020 Gala Dinner and Awards took place on Wednesday, 7 October, with some very deserving award-winners announced.

Celebrating the best of the best making a difference in all spheres of society, the Africa Brand Summit Awards saw 50 of the brightest stars come together on the evening of 7 October at the Vineyard Hotel & Spa in Cape Town, South Africa. The 2020 award winners were announced throughout the evening to much pomp and praise, with a warm spirit of excitement for the future felt by all in attendance.

“It is important to see ourselves as an entry point to Africa,” said Alderman Johan Vos of the City of Cape Town, one of Africa Brand Summit’s partners. “Powerful brands that should always focus on more than making a profit.”

Making a special appearance on the night were Siya and Rachel Kolisi of the Kolisi Foundation, who are supported in their efforts by Total South Africa. “We want to create opportunities for people to build, ways for people to look after themselves,” Kolisi explained. “We as men are proud, and as a foundation we don’t want to just hand over food packages, but to help build gardens, open restaurants, create business opportunities for people. Partnering and working together is the only way to move forward.”

Eric Leong Son, Head Sustainability at Distell Group, was also in attendance. “We’re celebrating the ubuntu of Africa, the spirit of what we are here for,” he said, “we all have separate goals in our private lives, but we believe in growing Africa together. And if we work together, what can’t we achieve?”

A huge congratulations to all those involved in making this evening a success, including Africa Brand Summit’s valued sponsors for the night.


ERIC LEONG SON

A SPECIAL HONOUR ANNOUNCING AWARD WINNERS


ALDERMAN JAMES VOS


SIYA KOLISI AND SOLLY MOENG

2020 AWARD WINNERS

Influencer of Influencer Award Winners:

- **Jon-Hans Coetzer**, Independent Consultant in Education, Training, Development and Coaching
- **Busisiwe Mavuso**, CEO of Business Leadership South Africa
- **Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba**, Director of the Kenya School of Laws
- **Dr Louise van Rhyn**, CEO and Founder of Symphonia for South Africa

To see the full list of award winners for 2020, visit ***africabrandsummit.co***

DENZEL SWARTS

DR LOUISE VAN RHYN


BIZCOMMUNITY BAGGED THE 'MEDIA INFLUENCER BRAND AWARD'

2020 JURY

- **Tshepo Matseba** - Chair
- **Silvana Dantu** - Co-Chair
- **Brightness Mangolothi** - Judge
- **Eric Leong Son** - Judge
- **Lucky Mlilo** - Judge

LESEDI

POWER GENERATION | MINING | OIL & GAS

EMPOWERING AFRICA

BY LEADING THE POWER GENERATION, MINING, OIL AND GAS INDUSTRIES SINCE 1984

Lesedi is an EPC and EPCM contractor with a diversified service offering. Lesedi offers engineering and project management services including coordination, design, procurement, and construction management and execution ensuring compliance with the client's brief and requirements. As well as a newly established 100% held subsidiary called Lesedi Renewables Africa.

As a responsible employer, we are dedicated to the advancement of the skills growth of our employees through developing and maintaining a skilled and productive workforce. We pride ourselves in successful and sustainable learnership, apprenticeship, and engineer-in-training programmes which we have been running since 2014.

BRAND PROMISE

We build relationships, reputations and confidence by combining a can-do attitude with engineering expertise in pursuit of empowering Africa.

- Nuclear
- Biomass, Waste to Energy, Solar & Storage
- HVAC
- Bespoke Engineering Solutions
- Operations & Maintenance
- Fire Detection and Protection
- Emission Control
- Oil & Gas
- **Lesedi Renewables Africa**

Building, connecting and empowering Africa together.

LESEDI:
ONE OF AFRICA'S LEADING EPC FIRMS

Established in 2001, with our roots firmly entrenched since 1984, Lesedi is a leading African Engineering Procurement and Construction(EPC) company. While the company's roots are in nuclear, it has diversified into numerous industrial fields. Lesedi continues to innovate and boasts an extensive range of EPC and Management Projects and new ventures into renewables and water security.

LESEDI RENEWABLES AFRICA

During first half of 2020, Lesedi Nuclear Services established a 100% held subsidiary called Lesedi Renewables Africa (LRA) to offer tailormade renewable solutions to clients. LRA represents Exosun as a Single Axis tracker supplier in the SADC region and takes on development and engineering role for projects in captive markets and for municipalities. Lesedi offers hybrid solutions incorporating a range of solar technology options coupled with storage that meet clients' individual requirements.

EPC&M

Lesedi's project management delivery model leverages highly tailored processes and tools. The company has six registered project management professionals - an internationally recognised accreditation. Lesedi's bespoke EPC and EPCM contracts include multiple scopes including balance of plant at State owned power utility Eskom's Medupi and Kusile power stations.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Lesedi Skills Academy was established by Lesedi in 2015 to provide safety and focused training programmes and provide scarce skills training to local youth. Prior to the lockdown, the Academy and non-profit organisation GreenCape partnered to provide short artisanal courses in boilermaking, basic welding and mechanical fitting. The programme recruited 160 unemployed Atlantis youth, of whom 89 have completed the course. This initiative forms part of the Atlantis Special Economic Zone for Green Technologies, where the community can benefit by being skilled for future employment opportunities. To date, 129 learners have received training through this initiative. Lesedi is an official Trade Test Centre. ***www.lesedisa.com***

MOZAMBIQUE MINING EXPERTISE

Early in 2020, Lesedi completed the upgrade of the compressed air installation plant at diversified mining and minerals company South32's Mozal aluminium plant, as part of its expansion project. The Mozal Aluminium operation is one of the largest industrial employers in Mozambique and comprises an aluminium smelter and logistics infrastructure, near the capital of Maputo.

GLOBAL INDUSTRY LEADERS

Lesedi has a solid industrial reputation and partakes in High Level Industry initiatives. Recently, Business Development Executive Shane Pereira was invited to provide an update about the country's localisation abilities to the IPP Office and Lesedi took part in the peer review of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) in South Africa. During the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, Lesedi continued with maintenance at Koeberg, with a scheduled outage for Unit 2 completed in October 2020, the 24th outage since the start of Koeberg's operations in 1984. Lesedi has been involved with Koeberg since its inception and through this knowledge, South Africa has exported its nuclear expertise. Teams from Lesedi have worked on some 96 outages on international Nuclear Power stations in the UK, the USA, Spain and Brazil, and the UAE.

TORONTO CHARCOAL FACILITY

Lesedi was formally appointed as the EPCM representative for the Toronto Group to design, project manage, commission and to fully integrate a charcoal production facility in the Western Cape. The project was launched in August 2020 and when completed, Toronto will be the largest charcoal production facility in the Southern Hemisphere to produce 10,000 tonnes of export grade charcoal, utilising biomass from invasive alien vegetation. ***www.torontogroup.biz***

Contact
Lesedi is a level 3 Black Owned Broad Based Black Empowerment Enterprise (BBBEE), employing 330 people; qualified engineers, experienced project management professionals and technicians all with extensive nuclear and industrial expertise and project support services.

Shane Pereira
(Business Development Executive)
Tel: + 27 21 525 1300
Email: shane.pereira@lesedins.co.za
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ENABLING SMALL-SCALE EMBEDDED GENERATION. A GREEN ECONOMY IS POWERED BY CLEAN ENERGY.

SUPPORTING A GREEN ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Lowering carbon emissions is at the heart of the global climate change narrative, but a green economy will mean so much more for the people of South Africa. A green economy is an economy with decent jobs underpinned by sustainable (efficient, clean and profitable) infrastructure solutions that will create and sustain jobs and well-being for this generation and the generations to come.

GreenCape is a non-profit organisation that drives the widespread adoption of economically viable green economy solutions from South Africa. The team works with businesses, investors, academia and government to unlock the investment and employment potential of green technologies and services, and to support a transition to a resilient green economy.

The global economy is severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. While immediate health concerns prevail, economic recovery packages are being prepared at global, regional and national levels. Internationally, there is a strong call to #buildbackbetter: To use the global COVID-19 crisis moment as a window-of-opportunity to collectively pivot towards economic growth paths that are sustainable and socially responsible.

To support a green economic recovery, GreenCape has been working with various partners during lockdown on:

- **Green SMME recovery** (safeguarding jobs and supporting business recovery through mobilising direct international relief funding and collaborating nationally and internationally on policy levers for Green SMME recovery)
- **International trade competitiveness** (supporting investment promotion and highlighting South Africa as the green economy hub of Africa)
- **Sustainable infrastructure opportunity development** (supporting public and private infrastructure resilience across energy, water and the circular economy)
- **Alternative service delivery** (supporting service delivery resilience and promoting citizen empowerment)
- **Green finance** (mapping and facilitating access to financing for some green projects and green business in South Africa)
- **Green skills development** (targeted capacity building in the public and private sector).

DEVELOPING SKILLS TO ACCESS GREEN ECONOMY OPPORTUNITIES

There are well-paying and exciting jobs in the green economy. Developing the skills needed to access the opportunities in the green economy is a key building block towards a green future.

The Atlantis skills development programme aims to empower residents and young people of Atlantis with valuable skills, so that they are able to access potential employment opportunities created by the growth of the Atlantis Special Economic Zone. The programme was developed in consultation with various stakeholders in Atlantis, including current investors in the ASEZ. An audit of local skills has helped GreenCape map current and projected skills demand, which has closely guided the work in Atlantis.

Over the past few months, through its partnerships with the City of Cape Town and others, GreenCape has continued to implement lockdown-adjusted green economy skills development initiatives through collaborations with various partners based in Atlantis, including a highschool programme with IkamvaYouth. In the last year more than 115 leaners were supported through their after school initiatives.

Once lockdown restrictions were eased, Lesedi Skills Academy continued with COVID-19-adjusted technical skills training courses in boiler making, basic welding and mechanical fitting. These courses aim to empower unemployed youth in Atlantis with new skill sets that can assist them to access employment opportunities. A total of 129 people have received training through this initiative to date. In order to reach a wider audience under the restrictions of COVID-19, this project has also provided online awareness-raising and green economy/business skills training opportunities to Atlantis and neighbouring Cape Town residents. 45 candidates have completed short courses, with 21 of these candidates going on to register for longer training courses. Through the GreenCape partnership with The Learning Trust, Western Cape Government and the Foundation for Community Work, 10 000 copies of the Treasure Box, a COVID-19 information activity book has been made available to the youth in Atlantis. Early Childhood Development (ECD) supplementary training materials have been developed in partnership with the Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU), to assist teachers in introducing sustainability topics to young children. These ECD training kits will be distributed through the Atlantis ECD forums and the Foundation for Community Work.

Through an extended partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, building on a partnership with the City of Cape Town, a *Green Economy for Decision-maker*s course is available as online training material to access for free.

GREEN SMME GROWTH

SMMEs are the engines for national job creation and economic growth, and their agile nature allows them to pivot quickly, also during times of acute shock. South Africa's reliance on a legacy energy utility, the increasing price of electricity, the water-stressed nature of the region, and global shifts in technologies and business models have provided an opportunity for green SMMEs in the form of significant demand for cleantech solutions.

GreenCape, in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), launched an open source Green Business Support Services Directory. This interactive directory is a public resource with information on services, programmes and opportunities available to entrepreneurs and SMMEs in the green economy. This collaboration seeks to support the growth of the green economy by linking

THE LESEDI SKILLS ACADEMY IN ACTION

innovators and entrepreneurs to the kind of support these require to promote their green and market-driven products and solutions.

The Green Outcomes Fund (GOF) was launched in 2020. It is a first of its kind structure, which incentivises local South African fund managers to increase investment in green Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMMEs). The Green Outcomes Fund aims to achieve clearly defined green outcomes, encourage greater capital allocation to green businesses by local fund managers, and catalyse increased and higher quality, consistent, reporting of green impacts.

During lockdown, the EU Delegation in South Africa partnered with the Green Outcomes Fund for a project that is a policy experiment for COVID recovery, with a particular focus on supporting green SMME recovery. The project includes two stakeholder engagement dialogue events, direct financial support to a cohort of green SMMEs through the Green Outcomes Fund, as well as a policy input document analysing the effectiveness and efficiency of this mechanism for a Green Recovery.

These are a few examples of how, in the midst of challenging circumstances, we are choosing to also see the greenshoots at grassroots: The hopeful impact of a focused effort to keep pursuing the vision of a thriving prosperous Africa mobilised by the green economy. Solutions implementation, guided by strong values, is the key to ensure economic recovery - to move with agility from survive to adapt to thrive.

This article is published in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF).

FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION For Freedom.

Contact: Cilnette Pienaar, Head: Communications and Publishing

Email: cilnette@green-cape.co.za

Web: www.green-cape.co.za

BRAND SUMMIT

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Bev Hancock explores the engagement – from questions to overall sentiment on topics discussed at the hybrid 2020 Africa Brand Summit.

Audience engagement is redefining the conference environment and the delegate journey. Audiences want to be more than spectators. Through the use of interactive technology, the goal was to give equal access to the physical and virtual delegates. The contribution of the moderators before the conference has made a significant contribution to the success of this feedback.

Using the MentiMeter platform, delegates – both virtual and physical – were able to log in and express their thoughts, opinions and respond to questions posed throughout the session. The answers are anonymous, encouraging honesty and transparency, and have the added value of allowing the quiet voices in the room to join the conversation. Ultimately, the audience became co-creators of the narrative of the summit by sharing their insights, and are thus more committed to its outcomes.

"NOTES TO SELF" FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

Creating a hybrid conference was a ground-breaking reimagining of the conference environment. As one of the pioneers of this format, innovation is by its very nature a steep learning curve. The key to a successful event is the quality of the experience. A hybrid event is a partnership between the convener, the events company, sponsors, other contributors (programme directors, moderators, speakers and panelists, etc.), the technical support (AV) and the platform support. To further enhance the work of this important summit.

- Appoint a single producer to co-ordinate the hybrid event and ensure that there are no disconnects between the different elements.
- Create a cohesive audience briefing pack with clear guidelines to help create a consistent experience.
- Choose a virtual platform that has all the functions required for allowing speakers, moderators and audience to interact seamlessly, or a virtual platform that integrates well with other systems in order to achieve the desired connection.

POINTS COVERED AND QUESTIONS POSED

The Impact of Perceptions on Destinations

The overall consensus was that the world does not see Africa in a favourable light, with some saying it is inferior, corrupt, third world, not a leader, and has young uneducated labour force. The audience believed largely that Africans are not doing enough to improve global perceptions about their continent, whilst good governance and ethical leadership are cited as having a large bearing on how the world perceives us.

Questions posed in this session point towards the majority of the audience not seeing a clear way forward from the negative way Africa is perceived, with many asking how we can shift focus, how we can control the tourism narrative, how do we attract investment, etc.

The Food Value Chain Space

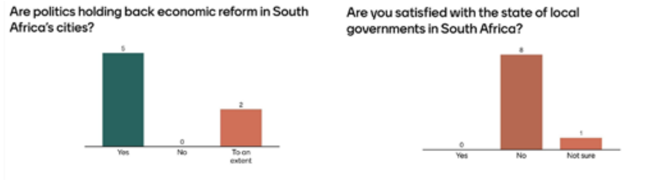
When asked what African governments can do beyond providing finances to the farmers who sorely need it, the audience suggested self-sustaining projects, community dialogues and engagement, encouraging collaboration, empowering and training young entrepreneurs in agribusiness and teaching farmers business principles.

Civil society, too, can contribute to the development of the agricultural sector. This can be done through supporting more small-scale farmers, making informed buying choices, e.g. local and seasonal produce; land reforms, and having a veggie patch in every house.

The Role of the Media

In this session the audience was very vocal about the media's inability to portray Africa in a positive or even more balanced light. It is not only government and bad leadership who should take responsibility for perceptions of Africa, but also the media industry.

THE STATE OF SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES



DELEGATE NUMBERS

969 Registered delegates
403 Virtual attendees
50 Face-to-face attendees

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We gratefully acknowledge the continued support of our sponsors and partners

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AFRICA BRAND SUMMIT

2020 REPORT