

THE AFRICAN CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

The Development Finance Forum August 2021 #DFE2021 #acdf

Theme: Making DFIs Relevant to the Youths, and Investing with Impact

Overview

Africa boasts of a youthful population whereby 60% of Africa's population is between 15 and 24 years as of 2019. It is projected that by 2040, African youth will constitute the main share of the global workforce. But the majority of these youths are not engaged in gainful income generating activities, a missing necessary condition if Africa's youth dividend is to reap benefits. In 2019, an estimated 1 in 5 African youth were not in employment, education or training (NEET). Youths enterprises constitute a meagre percentage of businesses in Africa. If current trends continue, only about a fifth of Africa's working age youth population may have decent employment in the next two decades. Yet youth are among Africa's best assets with potential to increase productivity, inclusive economic growth and development. Challenges facing youth entrepreneurs include lack of access to finance, lack of business skills, lack of access to markets and helpful support networks. At a meso -level, challenges related to ineffective governance, lack of infrastructure (both soft and hard), weak education and training systems and lack of suitable funding instruments for entrepreneurship, make youth start-ups and enterprises remote, and their role in Africa's advancement undervalued. Therefore, Africa cannot talk about inclusive growth when the largest proportion of her population is excluded from the production process. COVID19 has spotlighted critical gaps where heightened support of Africa's youth entrepreneurs, businesses and start-up initiatives is required. The pandemic has also given us a preview of the ingenuity harboured on the continent with nascent potential to be unlocked.

The ACDF is bringing together finance experts in academia, policy makers and, development finance experts on finance-for-youth matters from the private and public sector space to creatively consider how to close the youth financing gap in Africa and to reimagine the role of development finance institutions. This Forum aims to reinvigorate a dialogue that has been initiated by leading financiers and academics. By focussing on the financing challenges facing African youth entrepreneurs, businesses and start-ups , the Forum aims to explore limitations as well as opportunities that have been unveiled by the pandemic. To this end, we evaluate the appropriateness of the current financing modalities employed by financial institutions, and the potential complementarity between the public and private sector in addressing the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs.

The Forum is an initiative of the African Centre for Development Finance in its efforts to conduct topical investigations and generate policy-oriented responses to current challenges in financial development and economic policy. In this regard, the Forum intends to highlight policy research ideas and initiatives that Development Finance students and practitioners can develop to address the financing gap experienced by Africa's youths. Other expected outcomes include possible research topics in inclusive finance, and themes for follow-up debates on finance for development in Africa. Ultimately, the Forum is intended to provide the development finance

ecosystem with insights into the entry points to providing finance to the young entrepreneurs. To break the narrative that Africa often lags behind, The ACDF is partnering with the Institute for Future's Research, to provide foresight that can further assist financiers on how to invest effectively.

How it will work

The Forum will comprise of two sessions. The first session will provide an overview of the current landscape and possible future needs of African youth entrepreneurs. We have partnered with Institute for Futures Research to provide a futurist lens. This is crucial given the pace of change in global outlooks and increasing levels of uncertainty. Experts will also highlight the challenges and opportunities that DFIs ought to act upon in their attempts to service youth entrepreneurs as a vital group of economic agents. Practitioners will then share innovative financial vehicles that may be used to serve the youths, who are also technologically savvy. The second session will feature innovative approaches of mobilising development finance and investing efficiently especially in developing and emerging economies. Experts will highlight issues related to the structure of Africa's financial sector which call for novelty in mobilising resources domestically, and undertaking investments which have real impact to society.

Who will attend?

- Dev Finance Institutions (WB, AfDB, IFC, AfriExim, DBSA, etc)
- Youths entrepreneurs
- Financial sector practitioners and policy makers
- Think tanks/Academia
- USB Students (Dev Finance, MBA Fin4Dev)
- Dev Finance Alumni
- The ACDF Board

About the African Centre for Development Finance (ACDF)

The ACDF is a research, educational and service institution, of the University of Stellenbosch Business School. It was constituted in 2017 with a focus on three topical areas namely: Development Finance, Inclusive Finance and Financial Markets Development in Africa. The Centre conducts theoretical and empirical research, as well as policy-oriented investigations responding to current challenges in financial development and economic policy. It also undertakes projects and consultancy services commissioned by clients in the private and public sectors; provides non-degree programmes in development finance areas for public and private financial institutions as part of capacity building in Africa and; liaises with international financial institutions, development banks, microfinance institutions and consulting companies operating in the development finance milieu.

About the Institute for Futures Research (IFR)

The IFR was established in 1974 at Stellenbosch University, and is the first and only Futures Institute of its kind on the African continent offering academically supported research in Futures Studies and Foresight.. The IFR equips and assists individuals, organisations and governments with the tools of good judgement and strategic foresight, based on awareness and sense-making of current and emerging trends and contexts, including an appreciation of early warning signs and systems. Through environmental scanning and intelligence gathering, and through applying various futures thinking methods and toolkits, the IFR assists to scope, understand and respond to current and emerging trends and issues, in order to evade or conquer challenges, and maximise opportunities. Applying strategic foresight the IFR facilitates in defining and creating possible, preferred and alternative futures.

Proposed programme starts at 15h00, Friday 27 August 2021

Time	Topic	Speaker
	Opening Remarks and overview of the Centre	USB Director
	<i>Session 1</i>	
1	The landscape of Africa's youths and investments through the futurist's lens	IFR – USB Dr Njeri
2	Dev Fin with the Youths in Mind	AfDB representative Neeraj Vij
3	How can DeFi Innovations unlock the growth opportunities for youth entrepreneurs	Mr Fritz Milošević Managing Executive Vodacom Ventures and Partnerships
	Break (10 minutes)	
	<i>Session 2</i>	
4	Impact Investments	Mr Elias Masilela Chairman – DNA Economics, Impact Investment Task Force (South Africa)
5	What type of businesses are Africa's youths engaged in?	McKevin Ayaba: Champion Set up a Start-up, South Africa
6	What now? How can Development Finance Institutions Engage Sustainably	DBSA/Sustainability Institute Prof Mark Swilling
	Closing Remarks	Dev Fin Programme Head