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POVERTY, DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR ISSUES

Colloquium on Law and Poverty
Local and international legal heavyweights are set to congregate at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies (STIAS) from 29 to 31 May 2011 for a Colloquium on Law and Poverty being hosted by the Law Faculty of Stellenbosch University. Former Chief Justice Pius Langa deliver a keynote address on the role of law in combating poverty in South Africa. The Colloquium forms part of Stellenbosch University’s HOPE Project, a campus-wide programme through which the institution is tackling seemingly intractable developmental challenges in society. The programme will feature a good mix of theoretical and applied issues,” said Mr Gustav Muller, joint organiser of the Colloquium and Project Manager of the Faculty’s HOPE Project initiative on Combating Poverty, Homelessness and Socio-Economic Vulnerability under the Constitution.

Topics to be covered include the legal construction of poverty, land reform and tenure security, litigation as a vehicle for social transformation, the implications of service delivery protests for public interest law, property rights and eviction disputes, the gender dimensions of poverty, the development of the common law and customary law, and the impact of privatisation on the realisation of such socio-economic rights as water.

According to Muller a total of 126 participants are expected at the Colloquium. They represent a cross-section of academics, members of the judiciary, advocates and attorneys, as well as representatives of NGOs, the government and the Human Rights Commission. Papers delivered will be published in a special edition of Stellenbosch Law Review later this year and in book form by Juta early next year.


Implications of complexity theory for development: Extracts from a blog post
By Duncan Green, Head of Research for Oxfam and author of ‘From Poverty to Power’. Spent yesterday [12 May] discussing the implications of complexity theory for development at a seminar organized by the UKCDS. (UK Collaborative on Development Sciences) a body that promotes interdisciplinary research on development. The purpose of the day was to delve into the ‘so what’, or as Eric Beinhocker put it, the journey of complexity theory from a ‘Sunday morning’ idea that shapes the way you see the world, to something that makes you do things differently when you get to work on Monday morning. Here are some of the suggestions that surfaced in the discussion:

First, the purpose of development interventions, whether by states, companies, civil society organizations or aid donors, must move from deluded attempts at ‘creation’ of development from blueprints, first principles etc to *acceleration* of the evolutionary process that drives development in the real world. One way to think about that shift is to look separately at the three processes that constitute evolution – variation, selection and amplification.

- **Variation**: facilitate, encourage and if necessary, fund emergence of new ideas, institutions and approaches e.g. from private sector, CSOs. The legal system and other institutions can help or hinder.
- **Selection**: Academics, media or NGOs can identify new variations, study them and spread the knowledge, acting as a lubricant in the selection process. Deliberately looking for outliers, both of success and failure – known as positive *deviance* – is one way to promote this within development institutions.
- **Amplification**: Too big for most development actors, but they can do advocacy to larger bodies (states, companies) to replicate success.

Second, we need to ‘wallow in failure’ – Beinhocker’s description of the US military’s determination to learn from past defeats. Failure is the essential engine of evolution, as much as success. We need to admit it, study it, learn from it (but then stop funding it…). Lots of *kudos for Engineers Without Borders* for introducing a website where NGOs can discuss their failures.

Third, we really need to improve the sales pitch, starting with the word ‘complexity’. Geeks revel in using the word, but it’s toxic for politicians and normal people (not the same thing), who usually want simple messages and ‘what do I do’ checklists. Beinhocker talks to them about real world economics, evolution, adaptiveness, resilience – anything but call it complexity.

We also need to boil down some simple rules of engagement in working in a world of complexity, equivalent to the US marines combat instructions of ‘take the high ground, stay in contact, keep moving and improvise the rest’. Robert Chambers reckons that participatory, bottom up approaches are a perfect response to a complex world He also suggested the *System of Rice Intensification* as a model – a few
b) Africa failing to change harmful trade patterns

Africa has little room to change the one-dimensional nature of its trade ties and use its new-found growth to create jobs and alleviate poverty, according to the 2011 Africa Progress Report released at the WEF gathering. The emergence of non-European trade partners, notably China, has not changed the fact that the continent mainly exports raw materials and imports manufactured goods, it states. “Africa’s current economic growth is not all positive. It is generally not accompanied by much-needed structural transformation and diversification,” reads the report.

“The problem is caused, driven and compounded by the poor quality of Africa’s economic relationships, with both Africa and other countries. Despite the increasing prominence of non-European partners, and China in particular, the disadvantageous pattern of Africa exporting unprocessed commodities and importing manufactured goods persists. In fact it is becoming ever more entrenched as the resource thirst of emerging partners continues to grow.”

Moreover, intra-African trade continues to account for only 10% of exports on the continent and is too weak to be an incentive for changing trade patterns. The lack of diversification in products and partners made African trade volatile and explained why the continent’s GDP growth did not translate into tangible improvement in people’s lives. The authors concluded that to develop the continent’s potential and counter forecast risks ranging from climate change to debt defaults in developed nations, African leaders must speed up economic diversification. They say most African nations would gain strongly by targeting the informal sector, easing labour rigidities, improving infrastructure and promoting regional integration.


The Economist’s Africa correspondent who also attended the event reckons “…the main meetings were best suited to ballooning enthusiasts, such was the hot air expelled from the stage. The president of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, for instance, was applauded for pointing out that ‘there should be more economic opportunity in Africa than there has been.’ But it was not the toadyism or the solemnity with which African grandees issued their progress reports that made WEF so depressing. It was the inchoate feeling that the chief executive officers and others

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**ECONOMIC ISSUES**

**World Economic Forum on Africa**

The World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa 2011 took place in Cape Town, South Africa, from 4-6 May 2011. For all the news releases, summaries of the sessions, as well as the excellent PwC Knowledge Concierge (facts and figures) and Africa Competitiveness Report 2011 see here: [http://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-africa-2011](http://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-africa-2011)

Interesting perspectives on the WEF included:

**a) Leaders disagree on solutions for the unemployed in Africa**

There was general agreement at the WEF on Africa last week that jobs needed to be created in large numbers, in South Africa and the rest of Africa, to mop up the unemployed and the underemployed, particularly among the youth. But there was fundamental disagreement on how to achieve this. South Africa’s Economic Development Minister Ebrahim Patel came under fire for sticking to his “decent jobs” guns rather than simply supporting an environment which allowed for flexibility of employment conditions. He noted that about 6 million South Africans were unemployed while 13 million workers supported 15 million people on social welfare grants.

Tsogo Sun chief executive Jabu Mabuza said “a lot of steam” built up in some circles when one raised the matter of labour market inflexibility. He said the notion of decent jobs was “a luxury” the country could not afford. “We continue to skirt around these issues.” This echoed Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete’s concerns that African economies were too small and isolated to mop up new school leavers, or to tackle existing unemployment.


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basic rules, but the rest depends on responding to local conditions.

Finally, we need case studies – of success and failure, both of responses to complexity and what happens when you ignore it. Hopefully Ben Ramalingam’s forthcoming book, with the same title as his blog, *Aid on the Edge of Chaos*, will include a lot of these.

Poverty fight should inspire the move to Free Trade Agreement

Zambian commerce minister Felix Mutati says the fight against poverty should motivate the journey towards the tripartite free trade area involving Comesa, SADC and the East African community. Giving a keynote address at the Comesa-EAC-SADC tripartite senior officials meeting in Lusaka on 9 May 2011, Mutati said the journey towards the tripartite Grand Free Trade Area would face risks, frustrations and setbacks. “Unfortunately, we have no other option but to do it (the FTA). With the grand FTA in place, we shall increase our economic strength which will lead to growth and more jobs. It is time we realise that nobody owes us a living and the FTA is one way we can solve some of our economic problems.” He advised the technocrats meeting in Lusaka this week ahead of Friday’s ministerial meeting, to divorce themselves from posturing conferences and “deliver” for the people of the three regional groups. “Don’t put regional agendas as stumbling blocks for the grand FTA. In any process, losses will be there but in the long run, we will all gain,” Mutati said. “What the grand FTA needs is outputs not processes. We need mechanisms to defeat poverty and for that we require a document that is forward looking not an articulation of problems.”

Source: http://www.postzambia.com/post-read_article.php?articleId=20457

Mozambique: Economic growth and subsidised food for the urban poor

Mozambique has raised its 2011 economic growth forecast due to a strong performance in farming, mining and banking, and approved a revised budget that increases spending on food subsidies. Growth is projected to 7.4%, up from 7.2%. In its revised budget, the government increased spending for food subsidies to avoid a repeat of riots that rocked the country last year.

Speaking to the government’s partners in the Development Observatories, at a meeting in Maputo on Friday, Ernesto Mafumo, of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said that those eligible for a subsidy will be identified through a census, and the government’s estimate is that 1.8 million people in the 11 provincial capitals have a monthly income below the threshold of 2 500 meticais (about US$ 82). They would thus be eligible to buy the basket of subsidised food at a monthly price of 840 meticais. Shops supplying this food will be selected by public tender. The goods concerned include maize flour, rice, fish, beans, groundnuts, vegetable oil and bread. Exactly how much of each will be included in the monthly basket is not yet clear. The owners of the shops that win the tender must present a balance sheet to the Ministry of Industry and Trade at the end of each month, on the basis of which the government will then pay them the subsidy - the difference between 840 meticais and the real cost of the food. “This is a short term measure that should last during the period when the prices of the goods continue to increase”, said Mafumo. “As from the moment when the prices drop, the subsidy will end”.

At the same meeting, Victorino Xavier, of the Ministry of Agriculture, said that the government has drawn up a Strategic Plan for the Agricultural Sector (PDESA), intended to overcome food shortages. Among the areas prioritized in the plan are agro-processing, marketing of farmers’ surplus crops, the availability of agricultural inputs, and increased production. “We have to remove all the bottlenecks that exist before and after production”, said Xavier, stressing that the challenge is to find ways of facilitating access by producers to resources, so that the targets established by the government can be made. Among these targets is a doubling of food production over the next ten years.


The financing of city services in Southern Africa - A cause for concern

On 25 May 2011, South African Cities Network released a publication (pdf) of this title and held a regional workshop in Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality, attended by city finance managers and senior officials from 10 SADC cities that had been involved in the study. Key issues regarding city government finances and departments that emerged from the study and knowledge exchanges so far are:

- City finance departments are under-empowered and under-resourced;
there is limited evidence of decentralisation
- Limited decision-making authority,
- Limited infrastructure financing; where there is any at scale, there is high reliance on grant / donor funding
- Under-performing revenue administration
- Significant human resource capacity constraints

Significant differentiation was also evident between the cities in terms of their scope of social services delivery (education, health, etc.) versus the extent of their built environment services (utilities, etc.). Tanzania (Dar es Salaam and Arusha) emerged at one end of the spectrum – providing a full range of social services but barely any built environment services, while Namibia (Windhoek) appears at the opposite end, inverting their role in social-vs.-built environment services. Neither extreme is deemed desirable or sustainable.

Source: http://www.sacities.net/component/content/article/72/627-region#finrep

The study concludes by emphasizing that cities require effective urban services to fulfil their role as critical sites/drivers of social and economic development. Given the projected growth of African cities through natural growth and urbanization over the coming decades, system constraints are evident. City governments will require clear and substantial built environment mandates, and urgent efforts are required in establishing
- city financing models,
- city social contracts,
- reform in local-national government relations, and
- capacity building at a senior official level.

**South Africa unlikely to enforce local procurement for Wal-Mart**

Wal-Mart’s entry into the African market was first mentioned in the January 2011 edition of the Southern Africa Scan. Now it seems South Africa is unlikely to impose local supply targets in its upcoming ruling on Wal-Mart’s $2.4-billion bid for retailer Massmart because such demands could violate international trade rules. South Africa’s Competition Tribunal is likely to decide by the end of the month on whether to allow the world’s largest retailer to buy a 51% stake in Massmart, a deal both government and unions have said would squeeze local suppliers and lead to job cuts.

Wal-Mart, which relies on its global network to source goods at lower prices than competitors, has said it would agree to conditions on job cuts, but not local procurement. The deal is seen as a test case for major foreign investment in South Africa. Home to the continent’s deepest capital markets, South Africa is also a country where unions hold enormous political influence. That influence, however, may not trump global trade agreements. As a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and signatory of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), South Africa is not allowed to demand that a company would buy certain products from domestic sources as a condition for approval of an investment.


The competition hearing in South Africa is the final hurdle for Wal-Mart’s entrance into Africa, as the necessary approval has already been obtained in the other African states with competition regulators. Massmart operates in 14 African countries, but only six of these countries require competition approval for the acquisition. The competition authorities in Tanzania, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia gave their unconditional approval for the deal. Namibia and South Africa are the two outstanding jurisdictions.

For a comprehensive analysis, and the debate around this issue, see this Tralac (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa).article

**POLITICAL ISSUES**

**Local elections good for the deepening of democracy**

After the 18 May local elections in South Africa the ANC emerged slightly weakened in South Africa’s eight metropolitan councils. The improved performance of the opposition has been interpreted as good for accountability, improved service delivery and the deepening of democracy. According to Iraj Abedian, Pan African Capital Holdings’ chief executive, although it looks like the DA has only won – for the second time – Cape Town, it significantly reduced ANC majorities in Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg and slashed its majorities in Nelson Mandela Bay and Tshwane, turning them into marginal councils. Abedian said the smaller majorities for the ANC and better performance of the opposition was “very good for the deepening of democracy”. It helped to align political governance with demands of a modern economy. “If cities don’t function, economies don’t function.”
Angolan police put down anti-poverty protests - change on the way for Angola?

On May 27 about 100 anti-poverty protesters in Luanda called on President Jose Eduardo dos Santos to improve living conditions in Angola, where it is estimated that 87% of the urban population lives in shantytowns, often without water supplies. “We were arrested a few hours after the start of the protest and taken to different police stations,” said Carbone Casimiro, spokesman for the ‘Revolutionary Intervention Movement’, which describes itself as a gathering of rights activists. Another protest was staged the previous week in the impoverished Roque Santeiro district, where a sprawling open market was closed by the government in September. Former vendors had gathered to demand the market re-open.

In early March, a Facebook page called “The Angolan People’s Revolution” called for an anti-government protest but it fell flat after about 15 people were arrested, including journalists. The protest call was seen as an effort to launch a North African-style movement against Dos Santos, who has been in power of oil and mineral-rich Angola since 1979.

Change may, however, finally be on its way to oil-rich Angola, where anti-government protests have ruffled the feathers of the ruling elite. The protests may have been small in size and number. But the fact that they are happening at all in a country where critical voices are vigorously suppressed is being interpreted as a significant pointer. An Arab Spring-style uprising is highly unlikely, as most Angolans are still scarred by the 27-year civil war that ended in 2002. But there is a growing discontent among ordinary people, who feel they have not shared in the country’s peace dividend.

Clearly sensitive to how social networking sites are being used to spread antigovernment ideas and organise protest events, the government, which already controls the traditional media, has proposed new statutory restrictions on the internet. The legislation would outlaw “the dissemination of information with the goal of damaging national integrity or independence, to destroy, alter or subvert state institutions through the use of information systems”. It would also allow the authorities to “intercept or block communications, retain data and make it illegal to use recording, video and photography without authorisation, even if the material was produced legally”. Sources: http://mg.co.za/article/2011-05-20-change-on-the-way-for-angola/ and http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/article1088523.ece/Angolan-police-put-down-anti-poverty-protests

Meanwhile tension mounts over escalating Botswana protests

As indicated in earlier editions of the Southern Africa Scan, Botswana’s reputation as a shining example of unbroken democracy, stability and economic growth in Africa hangs in the balance as the country grapples with a month-long nationwide strike and rioting in some areas. Since April 18 public-sector workers have been locked in a bitter tussle with the government over the demand for a 16% salary increase. The strike threatens the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) government’s grip on power, which it has held since independence in 1965. Trade unions estimate that almost 90 000 state employees have joined the industrial action, although this figure is disputed by the government. The strike, according to some commentators in Botswana, is beginning to look like an uprising.

In a new twist, the Botswana police, usually unarmed, used teargas and rubber bullets to control rioting secondary school pupils, who joined the strikers last week. The pupils were demanding that the government
move to resolve the deadlock. Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi, the education minister, ordered the immediate closure of all schools.

And in a further escalation the government announced that it had fired more than 3 000 essential workers, including doctors and nurses, who were on strike. Botswana's increasingly authoritarian leader, President Ian Khama, has said that the government will not bend to strikers' demands, even if they remain off work for five years. His argument is that a 16% pay increase cannot be accommodated, given Botswana's budget, its deficit and its fragile economic recovery. His office quoted him as saying: "I will not abuse public funds to buy elections."

Schools, hospitals and other government operations are said to be running on a skeleton staff. The situation is so serious that last week the unions approached former presidents Festus Mogae and Ketsumeile Masire to intervene. The ruling party is divided over the strike, with some BDP MPs openly backing the workers and criticising the government for refusing to listen to their grievances. Among them are prominent politicians Tshelang Masisi, Ryner Makosha and Tawane Moremi, who have all expressed support for the strikers. For the first time in Botswana's history, labour and opposition parties are openly embracing each other without fear. Although it appears far-fetched, some commentators have suggested that the Khama government could fall.


### Civil servants, whose last raise was in 2008, initially demanded a 16% increase, but have dropped that to 12%. The government, with income from crucial diamond exports slowed by the global recession, initially offered 5%, but now is offering 3%.

Regardless of the tensions between unions and government, Botswana is faced with some underlying trends and drivers that will make governance into the future very difficult indeed. As with other Southern Africa countries there is a youth bulge and high levels of youth unemployment (despite the youth being comparatively well-educated). Botswana needs to diversify its economy which is so reliant on diamond mining, and therefore vulnerable to the vagaries of luxury goods markets, but will find it very difficult to do so. It is a member of SACU and SADC and cannot impose tariffs to protect fledgling industries. Job creation in the informal side of the economy is affect by the influx of Chinese traders who are taking over informal trading and Zimbabwean immigrants taking up low-paying jobs in places like Francistown.

### Social Issues

**Lack of work experience leave graduates unemployed**

Every year, South Africa's higher education and training sector produces 3 000 graduates that cannot find jobs, a third of who are trained in the engineering and science fields, a skills expert revealed recently. South Africa’s National Skills Development Handbook editor Mike Stuart said that this was mainly owing to a gap between the supply of skills and the demand of the occupational dispensation in the country. "Graduates in the fields of engineering and science, mainly from South Africa’s Further Education and Training colleges, are given the knowledge and some practical training by institutions, but then left without any work experience and, ultimately, unemployed."

Stuart noted that the government had been working hard to bridge this gap over the past 11 years and while the State had almost come full circle (see here), it had new perspectives and a better understanding of how to link education and training to the world of business. "... South Africa must get it right, not just for the country’s own economy, but to also provide solutions for the rest of the African continent,” said Stuart.


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**The ANC has began using its majority muscle in the South African national assembly to push the controversial secrecy bill through parliament – abandoning a consensus-seeking approach and looking to outvote the opposition if necessary. The bill contains harsh prison sentences for people found guilty of divulging classified information, and has been widely criticised as a restriction on freedom of information. Critics also charge that it will be used to keep scandals involving state officials out of the public eye. The ANC gave notice of its intentions on 24 May during a meeting of the ad hoc committee on the Protection of Information Bill, confirming fears that it would force the bill into law despite objections from opposition parties and civil society. For details around this unfolding issue see here [http://www.thedailymaverick.co.za/article/2011-05-25-the-ancs-fast-and-furious-parliamentary-deliberation-over-the-info-bill-going-through-the-motions](http://www.thedailymaverick.co.za/article/2011-05-25-the-ancs-fast-and-furious-parliamentary-deliberation-over-the-info-bill-going-through-the-motions)**

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South Africa’s economy is in dire need of highly skilled workers

Research done by human capital management group Adcorp cites as many as 829 800 unfilled positions for highly skilled workers across a wide range of occupations. Adcorp’s labour economist, Loane Sharp, said: As a result, Adcorp found that South African citizens’ wages in highly skilled occupations had been unduly escalated, in inflation-adjusted terms, by as much as 286.4% since 2000.

“It seems extraordinary that such an increase could largely have escaped attention, except that the increase would have been in the interests of skilled South African workers at the expense of the economy as a whole,” the group said. Adcorp’s research revealed that the highly skilled categories suffering the greatest skilled shortages were: senior management; the professions - medicine, engineering, accounting and the law; technical occupations - specialised technicians and artisans; and agriculture.

April had also seen an extension of the long-term employment trend, whereby the informal sector had grown faster than the formal sector, largely driven by small-scale employers opting out of income taxes and labour regulations, Adcorp said.

Source: http://www.businesslive.co.za/incoming/2011/05/10/829000-vacant-highly-skilled-posts-in-sa

These bizarre, seemingly contradictory issues (in a country with a 25% unemployment rate) illustrate some of the complexities around labour supply, demand and flexibility. If the state and governing bodies cannot address these sorts of issues, which is doubtful, young people will need to become much more resilient and self-reliant.

17 million children in Southern Africa are orphans

According to surveys, 17 million children in the Southern Africa region do not have parents. They are also susceptible to violence, hunger and other abuses. “All member states (of the Southern Africa Development Community) have more than 50% of the population below the age of 18 years, of which over 17million are orphans,” said Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund spokesperson Oupa Ngwenya. “Many of these children need protection, care and support, and unfortunately for many, vulnerability does not end when they leave childhood. Many young people still require support as they progress toward adulthood.” SADC, in conjunction with the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative, the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund are holding a conference at Kopanong conference centre in Benoni, Ekurhuleni, to discuss ways to strengthen the wellbeing of children.

The aim of the conference is to share, learn and collaborate for all those who are involved in psychosocial support for vulnerable children and youth in East and Southern Africa and also to learn about the regional Minimum Package of Services for Orphans, Vulnerable Children and Youth and Psychosocial Support Framework being developed by SADC. SADC is developing a Minimum Package of Services for the organisation and a PSS (Psychosocial Support) Conceptual Framework, which draws on good practices in programming and lessons learned from the region. The process is informed by a comprehensive desk review and fieldwork in 13 of the 15 SADC member states, Ngwenya said. He said the package will present services to meet the needs of the organisation in the region. The minimum package will also identify gaps in service delivery and areas for further study.


Despite the fact that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has reached a ‘mature’ phase in South Africa, meaning that new infections have peaked (see the work of Rob Dorrington published by the Medical Research Council and a report in the December 2010 issue of Southern Africa Scan) the number of orphans that is emerging is a massive challenge. (The epidemic has also not reached this mature phase in all Southern African countries yet.) Although, HIV/AIDS prevention programmes may not achieve a short-term reduction in the number of orphans, a significant reduction in the number, and trend in number, of orphaned children can be achieved through antiretroviral treatment programmes to all HIV-positive individuals who need treatment. Such programmes may succeed in extending the lives of a large number of parents to the stage where their children are self-supporting.

Ultimately it is about promoting community based systems of orphan support and care by providing support and funding for non-governmental and community-based organisations undertaking this work. As Adern Nkandela of the Nelson Mandela’s Children Fund said in his closing address at the conference: “We re-emphasize the recognition of indigenous way of supporting care, safety and protection of children. By indigenous knowledge we should be understood to mean application of models
that most suited to local realities pertaining to communities." The proceedings have not been published yet.

Poorer countries better at looking after children
The oil-rich governments of Sudan and Angola are among the worst in Africa for looking after children, while poorer Tanzania, Mozambique and Niger are the best, a study showed a recent study. The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) research looked at health, education and other social spending as a proportion of the overall budget in order to gauge governments' commitment to nurturing children - key to improving long-term national economic prospects.

Poorer countries scored highest, dedicating a bigger share of their spending to social programmes, the report said, while wealthier nations, such as Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Sudan, fared worst. The report did not speculate on the reasons behind the difference. ACPF director David Mugwe urged African governments to live up to commitments made over the last decade to boost spending on education and health, which receives only 4% to 6% of the budget in most countries.

Source: http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJE74N0JZ20110524

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

'If we work together as a region, the balance of our endowments looks a little different.'

Trevor Manuel, Minister in the South African Presidency and chairman of the National Planning Commission, notes that South Africa uses 30% of its total available water resources, and at 40% the country will reach the limits of what feasibly and sustainably can be used, because the supply is so variable and unpredictable that the country cannot economically use more.

Addressing a workshop on regional food and water security at the Development Bank of Southern Africa recently, Manuel said that as we imagine different futures for our different countries, we should also have the courage to imagine ourselves working together as a single region.

"If we do that, we find that the balance of our endowments look a little different. If we combine our access to capital as a region, with the diversity of human resources that we have, the independence dividend that is now maturing in the region,

with our extensive natural resources (including water, whose utilisation rate would fall down to 5% or less if we include the Democratic Republic of the Congo), a completely different set of opportunities would arise." A short extract of his speech follows:

"But let's not underestimate the challenges. Within a single country, it is often difficult to get different sectors to work together cooperatively. And the challenges of working across boundaries are even greater. The co-operation we recognise as important, and in the interest of which we have all signed a myriad of treaties and protocols, remains elusive. The preamble to so many texts is premised on the need to increase intra-regional trade and develop cross-border infrastructure to that end; we explain in some detail the objectives of trade facilitation towards a freer movement of people and goods – but our delivery on these noble objectives remains sub-optimal.

My hunch is that we see the retention of all of the accoutrements of sovereignty, often bestowed by a departing colonial power, as more important than finding the means to raise the living standards of our people. [emphasis added]


A strong argument and call for regional integration from an influential policy-maker. Two issues stand out:

(1) Regional integration is not only about economic issues, trade and potential markets, it is also about optimally utilising natural endowments such as water, arable land and climate; and

(2) Trevor Manuel concedes that the persistent constraint to real progress in the area of regional integration is political will. Previous Scans have highlighted this issue stating that when it comes to regional integration and trade agreements Southern Africa is all form and no substance. This has to change for there to be any potential positive impact on poor people when it comes to unlocking markets and creating infrastructure in the region.
Africa must start identifying Climate Fund projects

Trevor Manuel also recently urged African nations to start identifying Climate Change projects. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s (UNFCCC’s) Green Climate Fund would likely present African countries with opportunities for funding, and the challenge for Africa was how to put forward bankable prospects to tap into the fund as it emerged. Manuel has been appointed co-chair of the 40-member transitional committee, which was established to get the Green Fund up and running by the 17th conference of the parties (COP) in Durban in December. The fund was a mechanism agreed to at the UNFCCC’s Cancun conference in 2010, which would seek to mobilise funds from industrialised countries to be dispersed among poorer developing nations for climate mitigation and adaptation projects.

The fund was expected to generate $100 billion a year for climate financing by 2020, as well as “fast-start finance” of $30 billion for use between 2010 and 2012. What would happen from 2013 to 2020 still needed to be clarified. “Sometimes we Africans don’t push hard enough,” said Manuel, referring to times when funds had been created but money was not delivered because no plans were put forth. He cited the example of a decision by the Group of Eight countries to double official development assistance, but said that this promise was not delivered as “Africans didn’t go and fetch the money”. Manuel also said that cross-border projects, which stimulated regional development, would also likely be favoured by the Green Climate Fund.


TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

Participatory mapping project in Congo nominated for Buckminster Fuller prize

A project that uses participatory mapping as a means of protecting forests in the Congo Basin has been nominated as a semi-finalist in this year’s Buckminster Fuller Challenge1 (an annual international design Challenge awarding $100 000 to support the development and implementation of a strategy that has significant potential to solve humanity’s most pressing problems).

This project empowers local forest communities to use cutting edge technologies to map their lands and resources and use this evidence as advocacy and negotiation tools for more secure land tenure. Through this, it also serves as an effective tool to contribute to environmental protection and poverty reduction efforts. Forest communities are often wrongly identified as main drivers of deforestation. On the contrary, it can be clearly demonstrated that their traditional resource management practices can effectively contribute to forest protection. This participatory mapping project addresses fundamental insecurity of land tenure that leaves forest communities vulnerable to exploitation.

See [here](http://challenge.bfi.org/2011Semi_Finalist_ParticipatoryMapping) for more detail

Participatory mapping is a powerful tool that can empower community members to better their lives, advance community agendas, and improve democracy. It is believed that communities know their problems better than any outside expert, and participatory mapping is a potent tool that can collect and display that community knowledge for the world to see. Not only can participatory mapping provide community input on relevant policy issues (social service provision, land use, environmental justice, and crime among others), but these data and maps can provide a platform for community advocacy.

New pharmaceutical research centre at University of Cape Town to take Africa forward

South Africa has a strong reputation in the basic science and clinical studies of various diseases – but it has battled to translate this reputation into new medicines. So it makes sense, in terms of economic and social development, capacity building and knowledge transfer, and medical need, to build a holistic centre to support and accelerate pharmaceutical research in South Africa. For these reasons, in April the University of Cape Town (UCT) launched the H3-D Drug Discovery and Development Centre. H3-D (the H stands for holistic) aims to offer research infrastructure comparable in quality to that of overseas centres.

The drug discovery centre bridges the gap between the basic and clinical studies, integrating a number of scientific disciplines: biology, pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, synthetic chemistry,
computational chemistry, as well as drug metabolism and pharmaco-kinetic studies. African traditional medicines will be one of the research areas at H3-D from a safety point of view. There are few studies of chronic safety data for most traditional medicines on the continent, and this lack raises concerns in the medical community. Source: http://www.iol.co.za/business/business-news/new-centre-at-uct-to-take-africa-forward-1.1067869

Space science in South Africa to contribute to urban and rural planning, and economic development
As first reported in the December 2010 issue of Scan, the South African Space Agency (Sansa), which officially started operations at the beginning of April 2011, has the aim of promoting the peaceful use of outer space, as well as furthering South Africa’s national space strategy. Sansa’s CEO Sandile Malinga, speaking at a recent the briefing, said that the agency is to focus on building international partnerships; stimulating the economy; developing relevant skills and technology; and using space for the benefit of citizens. “Developing countries also need a space agency,” said Malinga, “because space science and technology has a broad impact on our activities. In South Africa we’ll use data for environment and natural resource monitoring and management, which will help with urban and rural planning, and economic development.” South Africa is collaborating with Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt and Algeria, in an initiative known as the African Resource Management Constellation, to launch a fleet of satellites that will help African nations to more effectively manage their natural resources, and better monitor disasters. The latter three nations also have space agencies.

In Africa, the potential for Apps go far beyond games, entertainment and publishing
With a total population of just over one billion, infrastructure is lacking throughout the continent especially in the areas of health, agriculture, banking, education and more. Apps are being touted as one of the solutions. The potential of apps to change the landscape of Africa is boundless. Increased literacy, widespread access to healthcare, farming and agricultural aids and more is being facilitated by mobile apps. Hurdles do exist in development of the nascent industry – particularly challenges within billing infrastructure needed to monetise this market. However, the implementation of mobile money is providing a solution that is becoming an integral to the business of mobile apps in Africa.

Apps World Africa 2011 (an exhibition and conference to be held on 1 and 2 June 2011 at the Cape Town Convention Centre) will explore the potential of applications to assist in the development of the globe’s second largest continent. Bringing together the telcos, handset manufacturers, government ministries and organisations, marketing houses and more, this event will thoroughly explore whether APPs are the answer for Africa, and allow all the stakeholders to build pertinent partnerships in the industry. Topics covered at the show include:
- Operator case studies – models and business models of app related own labels, and app store partnerships and liaisons
- Handsets – which has the most compelling offering in this market
- Developers in the region – challenges and success stories
- Mobile money - rise of mobile money apps and how these interact with the banking sector
- Apps for public services and health – is this really the answer for Africa?
- m-commerce for agriculture – mobilising the farming community through apps
- m-Education – increasing literacy through apps-

The Scanning team will monitor this conference for any interesting outcomes and pointers as mobile technology is already a prime example of ‘leap-frogging’ on the continent.