

Press release: Ambitious new Innovation Partnerships with African countries

A series of ambitious new Innovation Partnerships between the UK and Africa are expected to stimulate significant economic growth and support the creation of thousands of new jobs.

The partnerships, announced by the Prime Minister as the UK strengthens ties with the region, will be established in African countries with growing tech sectors where there are young, expanding populations with ideas and innovations developing at a rapid pace.

Building on the UK's already-strong investment in science and research in Africa, the partnerships will enable UK and African entrepreneurs to share skills and ideas, and encourage future trade.

The increased engagement comes after the Department for International Trade announced the appointment of a dedicated HM Trade Commissioner to Africa. Emma Wade-Smith will now lead a team which will provide expert in-country investment and export advice for UK and African companies.

The Innovation Partnerships are a unique opportunity for UK entrepreneurs to work alongside and collaborate with African entrepreneurs at the cutting-edge of technology. The UK has a lot to gain from this untapped market, and a lot to share with its own expertise.

The tech sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in Africa. The continent's startups raised 50 per cent more venture capital in 2017 than in 2016, and the majority of this is being invested in South Africa (£130 million), Kenya (£114 million) and Nigeria (£89 million).

Nigeria and Kenya's technology sectors are also growing rapidly and generate more than ten per cent and 11 per cent of their respective economic output.

Technology can help transform societies by increasing economic participation and creating sustainable jobs and growth. It also increases the potential for countries to 'leapfrog' to the latest developments. This happened in Kenya where a small UK aid investment in a startup ten years ago led to the explosion of mobile-phone based money transfer service MPesa.

Today more than half Kenya's daily GDP goes through mobile money.

The new plans will bring together the best of British science, research and technology to offer tailored support to businesses and entrepreneurs in sectors from health to farming. And in partnership with DIT and DfID, will also open up new trading opportunities for exporters by helping promote stability and creating strong new markets.

The partnerships with South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria include:

- Dedicated UK science, technology and innovation teams who will build on the strong existing science relationships with South Africa and Kenya, including through the shared investments in the Newton Fund and high-end research programmes like the Square Kilometer Array. The aim is to leverage all of UK's investments in science and research and broaden this into the regions across Africa to achieve real impacts and support mutual interests
- New regional tech experts in Kenya and Nigeria to build links between the UK and Africa's cutting-edge digital sectors; support a wide range of startups to grow and create jobs; and help those in need of digital skills get access to training
- A significant new DFID programme to accelerate the growth of promising technologies and support startups to grow sustainably, including through early-stage investment, connecting them with private financing, and building connections with UK peers
- The rollout of digital skills and entrepreneurship programmes including TeXchange, Global EdTech Awards, Go Global and Founders and Coders programmes in Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa, so the UK becomes the partner of choice for startups to expand internationally

Digital Secretary Jeremy Wright said:

These new Innovation Partnerships will not only help countries turbocharge their development, but they will also promote the UK as the place to start and grow a digital business.

Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya's technology sectors are growing rapidly and generating a significant part of their economic output. This means huge opportunities for UK businesses and for future partnerships.

New ideas, game-changing research and cutting-edge science are good news for our African partners and good news for the UK's world-leading scientists, technologists and researchers who are representing the country on a global stage.

Emma Wade-Smith, Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Africa, said:

I'm delighted to see these ambitious partnerships being driven forward in one of Africa's most rapidly-growing sectors.

We're already seeing fantastic work being done to transform the UK and Africa's shared entrepreneurial spirit into jobs and growth. In my role, I see first-hand the huge potential that Africa holds for British businesses looking to create modern trading partnerships.

Julian David, CEO of techUK, said:

Africa's economy is projected to grow by 3.2 per cent in 2018 and to a further 3.5 per cent in 2019, according to the latest 2018 World Bank report. Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa represent a significant part of that growth with technology increasingly underpinning these numbers.

The decision to set up Innovation Partnerships and extend the tech hub network to these African nations shows the Government clearly recognises this opportunity.

The decision will allow the UK tech community to engage with high-growth markets internationally, and in turn provide an important corridor for international communities to engage with our burgeoning UK tech sector.

techUK looks forward to working with the UK Government to grow these Innovation Partnerships for the benefit of the UK tech sector, the host countries and beyond

FURTHER INFO AND NOTES TO EDITORS

Innovation Partnership team

The Innovation Partnerships will bring together UK teams and expertise across Government– providing a 'one stop shop' of UK excellence and tailored support.

These teams link UK government departments leading on UK research and technology for development (including DFID, BEIS, DHSC), digital technologies through DCMS and link to future UK-Africa trade and partnership opportunities through the Science and Innovation Network and DIT.

The team will explore a different area of research and technology, and work with different sectors in African countries to help the poorest to work and improve the trading environment.

This is drawing on expertise from across Government to provide a comprehensive package of support and a place for idea exchange and partnerships.

Digital tech experts

The Kenyan and Nigerian teams will form part a wider network of 'international tech hubs', which already includes Brazil, India, Israel and South Africa.

They will boost the UK and African digital sectors, help those in need of digital skills get access to training, fuel inclusive economic growth by supporting startups to grow, and facilitate new partnerships between UK and

African tech firms.

The teams will also address digital inequality by supporting the provision of digital skills programmes to poor and marginalised people, and making sure these are accessible to all, improving job prospects and allowing them to participate in the growth of their economies.

This programme is about identifying and pairing businesses, venture capital, universities and providing access routes for British businesses and entrepreneurs to new markets. These business-to-business connections will encourage broader innovation, productivity and growth.

The new programmes in Nigeria and Kenya – alongside the UK-South Africa hub announced in June – follow the success of the UK-Israel Tech Hub, which has generated £85 million worth of deals over the past five years, facilitated 175 linkups between the countries' firms, and had a potential impact of over £800 million for the UK economy.

Recent figures show UK tech and digital firms have seen their international trade grow by more than 20 per cent, with more than £39 billion in services exported in 2016, up from £32 billion in 2015.

DFID tech acceleration programme

The £32m accelerator scheme will:

- Offer access to early stage commercial investment for entrepreneurs by facilitating connections between investors and companies, de-risking private investors and using competitions to encourage investment;
- Build links between the UK and Africa's cutting-edge tech sectors, develop networks, linking academics, innovators, entrepreneurs and investors between the UK and Africa;
- Provide technical support for new technologies and business models to help early stage businesses scale their ideas;
- Provide a focus on innovations which help the most marginalised, such as people with disabilities – and ensure female innovators also receive support;
- Provide a channel for innovators to outline policy and regulatory barriers which are preventing growth so that local governments can address these challenges.

Examples of new technologies which may be taken to scale from UK's current research:

- Frontier technologies (for example secure cash transfer).
- New health technologies including diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines or satellite technologies to assist rural areas gain access to healthcare and veterinary innovations to protect livestock and combat antimicrobial resistance

- Mobile technologies to provide farming tips, weather updates and market prices, improving agriculture productivity and nutrition outcomes and scale up of low cost weather stations and observational data coverage through public private partnerships
- Scaling solar, clean energy and water technologies with innovative business models and linking UK expertise with African entrepreneurs, including electric cooking.

Skills and entrepreneurship programmes

To help African entrepreneurs promote their ideas on the world stage, from 2019 we are inviting African innovators to apply for and participate in:

- TeXchange, the flagship international exchange programme increases the flow of digital companies, ideas and technology between the UK and overseas markets;
- Go Global, the international programme which aims to provide early stage startups with the tools needed to expand globally via the UK;
- Founders and Coders, a tuition-free, peer-led learning programme that makes highest quality digital skills training accessible to everyone.

The UK Government is also supporting the annual startup Edtech competition brings the most innovative 15 edtech startups from across the globe to compete for a \$50,000 investment prize.

Together this work will help the countries to develop and provide the next generation of ambitious Africans with the digital skills to succeed, while helping to support entrepreneurs in the UK and Africa to solve global issues.

Notes to editors

1. The tech hub initiative is funded by the UK Prosperity Fund, aimed at removing barriers to sustainable and inclusive growth in middle income developing countries, where 70 percent of the world's poor live.
 2. The technology accelerators are funded by DFID.
 3. The UK Prosperity Fund will also help to harness the potential of developing markets, boosting prosperity internationally, including for the UK through increased trade and investment.
 4. For more information call DCMS press office on 020 7211 6356.
 5. DIT launched their Export Strategy last week, with the ambition of increasing U.K. exports to 35% of GDP. The strategy will provide an offer for all businesses, including the 400,000 which the government estimate could be selling their products overseas but currently have no overseas operation.
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Speech: Security Council is uniquely placed to support mediation efforts.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr Secretary-General, in January 2017, you gave this Council a challenge. You asked the question: How can we use our powers under Chapter 6 of the UN charter more effectively to prevent conflict? Although Chapter 6 is about more than mediation, it is an important part of the answer. The But the Council is far from the only actor. The complex nature of modern conflict, which the Secretary-General and others have already referred to, means that averting or ending violence requires a concerted approach from a range of actors, both within the family of the United Nations and outside of it. That includes regional and subregional organizations, civil society, Religious leaders and as we've just heard, women's mediation networks. I'm therefore delighted and pleased that we've heard from representatives of these groups today. I would particularly like to thank the Most Reverend Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms Mossarat Qadeem for your very insightful, expert, thoughtful briefings to the Council today. As Mossarat said, in peace making, in conflict resolution, we must speak to the core humanity of people. And to coin a phrase, as the Most Reverend and Right Honourable Archbishop of Canterbury has put it, it is only then we will achieve the people's peace.

In the United Kingdom, we have seen the importance of mediation first-hand. The division and violence in Northern Ireland took years of sustained negotiations to resolve and finally ended with the signing of the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement in 1998. It shows the value of patience and persistent mediation and the 20 years of peace that have followed illustrate clearly why we must give mediation efforts our utmost and full support.

Today, as we look around the world, in Yemen and Libya, Martin Griffiths and Ghassan Salamé are leading efforts to facilitate peaceful resolutions to some of the most complex and long-running conflicts with great human cost. But we should not make the mistake of thinking that mediation only works at a national level. In countries like the Central African Republic and indeed Mali, we have seen the importance of community-level mediation, conducted or facilitated by peacekeeping missions.

In the Central African Republic, MONUSCO has successfully facilitated mediation between armed groups in several areas of the country. For example, the agreement signed in the town of Bouar in December 2017. MONUSCO is also involved in strengthening local capacity to resolve conflicts, building trust between communities and advocating the participation of women and young people.

In Mali, MINUSMA's mandate recognises the importance of community engagement and indeed of local mediation. It is essential in protecting civilians and

stabilizing communities and the country. It has facilitated the training of 703 mediators, including 225 women who have served on community-based mediation panels.

More broadly, the United Nations has made good progress in the last decade to professionalize and strengthen its mediation role with the established establishment of the Mediation Support Unit in 2006, a standby team of senior mediation advisors in 2008, and a high level advisory board in 2017.

The UN Special Political Missions play a quite unique role in fostering and supporting dialogue and indeed in preventing conflict. If we cast our minds back to last December, Olusegun Obasanjo, the former president of Nigeria, as we heard from the Secretary-General, and a member of the High Level advisory Board travelled to Liberia on the Secretary-General's behalf to support the first peaceful transfer of power in Liberia's history. So there is much we can already be proud of in terms of what has been achieved. But equally, on reflecting on what has been achieved, it is equally important to recognize there is so much more to do.

We now need to look forward and towards the next decade and address the changing nature of conflict, the complexity of conflict and the increasing number of mediation actors. The United Kingdom believes the Security Council has a pivotal and important role to play in this respect. We must include mediation in the toolkit that the Council uses to prevent or resolve conflicts. That includes working effectively with mediators from regional and sub-regional organisations and we therefore welcome the United Nations work to strengthen capacity in this particular area. It also means considering conflict resolution and mediation when we mandate peacekeeping and special political missions. We should learn and build on the examples of Mali and the Central African Republic and ensure that mediation support is properly resourced.

Finally but most importantly as we've heard already and as set out in the UN Security Council resolution 1325, we must ensure without question the full equal, meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution as leaders, as decision makers and at both national and local level. Women's participation should not be an option. It is a central and pivotal part of conflict resolution. It is key to ensuring conflict resolution and lasting peace. It is a matter of ensuring respect for human rights, for ensuring gender equality, and as we all know, and we should reflect on this, the evidence points to that.

When you look at the research it also confirms that where women are involved in peacekeeping, it increases the probability of that peace lasting much longer.

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to promote gender parity in the United Nations, but also recognize it is upon all of us – the UN system, Member States, civil society, religious leaders – for us all to do more to promote women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution at all levels, including the appointment of women mediators.

Let me assure you, the United Kingdom is taking its responsibility very seriously and we are therefore committing £1.6 million to the development of the Network of Women Mediators across the Commonwealth that Mossarrat alluded to. And of course, the youth voice must also be included.

What is clear, is the nature of conflict evolves, and as the nature of conflict evolves, mediation will be needed more than ever. The United Nations must stand ready to ensure that it is equal to the task. And let me assure all colleagues, all Member States across the United Nations and beyond that the United Kingdom will remain committed to supporting you, Secretary-General in your efforts, on your focus to both professionalize and enhance the United Nations approach to mediation, with women rightfully playing a full, pivotal and equal part.

Thank you.

[News story: Programme: EU-UK Article 50 negotiations Brussels, w/c 27 August 2018](#)

Friday, 31 August 2018

- Principals' meeting: Michel Barnier, the European Commission's Chief Negotiator, and Dominic Raab, UK Secretary of State for Exiting the EU.

This meeting will be preceded by meetings at technical level on Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th on the remaining issues of the Withdrawal Agreement and the future relationship.

[News story: Programme: EU-UK Article 50 negotiations Brussels, w/c 27 August 2018](#)

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Press release: UK boosts innovative business in Nigeria's poorest states to improve incomes for 3 million people

- Poorer Nigerian region to share in rapid growth of rest of the country
- UK aid will support Nigerian entrepreneurs to grow their businesses

UK aid is supporting innovative companies in Nigeria's northern states to grow their business and attract investment, while also creating 100,000 new jobs for people in one of the country's poorest regions, the Prime Minister announced in Lagos today (Wednesday 29th August).

Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa, but many areas have high levels of poverty with rapidly increasing numbers of young people who have the ambition and potential to change the face of their country but are at risk of becoming frustrated through lack of opportunities.

The new 'LINKS' programme announced by the Prime Minister, will improve the incomes of three million people in Nigeria's poorest states, in turn reducing the drivers of conflict, instability and migration.

Nigeria has a flourishing community of entrepreneurs and innovators, designing disruptive technology to create profitable solutions that work for Africa – which this programme will support.

Examples of new technologies include businesses which use innovative new platforms to coordinate tractors and delivery trucks to be in the right place at the right time; to unlock crowd-funding into growing businesses in need of investment, and to connect farmers with markets, suppliers, information and sources of finance.

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said:

Nigeria is a powerhouse of innovation and economic growth, but many Nigerians are still living in extreme poverty, with increasing

numbers of ambitious young people facing a lack of jobs and opportunities.

By sharing expertise with innovative businesses the UK is making sure the vibrant growth seen in wealthier areas of Nigeria can also be experienced in the poorer regions, helping the hopeful young population harness the power of technology, innovation and investment to get good jobs and find solutions to their own problems.

This is helping Nigeria to leave poverty behind, enabling vital business sectors to flourish, and opening up opportunities for British business partnerships.

The UK will help companies like these to develop innovative new technologies, business models and services, which have the potential to spur catalytic growth, creating jobs and boosting local economies.

Working in sectors with the most potential for growth, such as leather, agriculture and renewable energy, the programme will share UK expertise to stimulate a 25% increase in the incomes of many people across these states.

By formalising jobs and businesses, LINKS will also increase potentially taxable revenues, which will support the Government to better invest in their own services and reduce dependence on aid.

Notes to editors:

- The LINKS programme (£70 million) will:
 - Raise the incomes of 3 million people, of which 70% will be poor, and 40% will be women.
 - Support the creation of 100,000 jobs, of which 40% will be for women, and 6% will be for people with disabilities.
 - Increase the number of formalised workers and firms, contributing to the raising of potentially taxable private sector revenue by 15%
 - In Kaduna 64% of the population live in poverty, rising to 70% in Kano and 88% in Jigawa. Nigeria's population as a whole is expected to rise to 400 million from the current 200 million by 2050.
 - Nigeria needs to create 2 million jobs per year to keep pace with the growth of its population.