

# BUSINESS AFRICA

EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION



# AFRIQUE DES AFFAIRES

CONFÉDÉRATION DES EMPLOYEURS



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

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Dear Esteemed Members, Stakeholders, and Partners,

It is with great pride that I present to you the BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation's (BUSINESSAfrica) Annual Report for 2023. It is clear from our reflections on the successes, setbacks, and turning points of the last year that we have made progress toward realizing our goal of promoting sustainable growth, prosperity, and development throughout the African continent.

BUSINESSAfrica has remained consistent in its commitment to advocating African employer interests, fostering a favorable business environment, and promoting inclusive economic growth despite the changing global trends and dynamic economic landscape. We endured various uncertainties by working together, being creative, and being resilient, and we have come out stronger.

In 2023, BUSINESSAfrica continued to play a pivotal role in shaping policies, influencing decision-making processes, and championing initiatives that advance the interests of businesses across Africa. From advocating for regulatory reforms to facilitating dialogue between stakeholders and having our Secretary General Appointed in the Social Justice Global Committee, our

efforts have been geared towards unlocking the full potential of African enterprises and driving sustainable development.

Additionally, we remained committed to promoting responsible business practices, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility. Through our advocacy and engagement efforts, we have encouraged businesses to adopt ethical standards, embrace environmental stewardship, and contribute to the well-being of local communities. By aligning economic growth with social and environmental considerations, we are building a more resilient and sustainable business ecosystem.

As we look ahead to the future, BUSINESSAfrica remains committed to its mission. By harnessing the power of collaboration, innovation, and collective action, we can overcome the challenges that lie ahead and unlock the full potential of the African continent.

I would like to express my gratitude to our members, partners, and stakeholders for their unwavering support and commitment to our shared vision. Together, we have achieved significant milestones and made meaningful progress towards building a brighter future for Africa.

In conclusion, I am confident that with continued collaboration and determination, we will overcome any challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

Let us continue to work together towards a future where businesses thrive, communities prosper, and Africa's potential is fully realized.

Thank you.

**Ms Saida Neghiza**  
**President, BUSINESSAfrica Employers'**  
**Confederation**



Dear Esteemed Member,

2023 presented a complex tapestry of challenges. Geopolitical tensions impacted global markets, the pandemic's shadow continued to loom, and economic uncertainties tested our adaptability. Yet, African businesses proved their mettle. We saw a surge in intra-African trade, a testament to our collective belief in regional collaboration. Digitalization became more than a buzzword, transforming operations and fostering connections across borders.

BUSINESSAfrica remains unwavering in its commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles. We recognize that sustainable practices are not just ethical imperatives, but also catalysts for long-term economic prosperity. From promoting responsible resource management to advocating for inclusive workplaces, we strive to ensure that African businesses contribute positively to the well-being of our communities and global market.

For our businesses to flourish, a fertile ground must be nurtured. Throughout the year, we

actively advocated for policy reforms that remove unnecessary hurdles and unlock growth potential. From trade liberalization to streamlining regulations and attracting investments in infrastructure and human capital, our voice resonated loud and clear.

No single entity can achieve true progress alone. We value and actively strengthen partnerships with governments, regional economic communities (RECs), and other stakeholders. Together, we advocate for policies that support a conducive business environment and collaborate on initiatives that propel our collective journey towards a more prosperous and sustainable Africa.

While we celebrate the strides made in 2023, we acknowledge there is still more to be done. Geopolitical instability continues to cast a shadow on continental business outlook, climate change demands urgent action, and the skills gap requires innovative solutions. But amidst these concerns we still look into the future with optimism. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) holds immense potential for economic integration and growth. Digitalization promises to leapfrog development across industries. And Africa's young, vibrant population represents a dynamic consumer market brimming with possibilities and promise.

I am deeply inspired by the unwavering spirit of African businesses. We have weathered storms, embraced innovation, and championed a sustainable future. Together, let us continue to build on this momentum, collaborate, and advocate for a conducive environment where African businesses can thrive. The future of Africa is bright, and the BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation remains committed to being a catalyst for its progress.

**Ms Jacqueline Mugo, EBS**  
**Secretary General,**  
**BUSINESSAfrica Employers Confederation**

**BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation (BUSINESSAfrica)** is the leading advocate for wealth and employment creation in Africa, standing up for companies across the continent and actively campaigning on the issues that most influence Africa enterprise growth and competitiveness. BUSINESSAfrica speaks for all-sized enterprises in African countries whose national business federations are direct members.

It was founded in 1986 as Pan African Employers' Confederation (PeC) and rebranded BUSINESSAfrica in 2012. BUSINESSAfrica is the recognized continental voice of businesses in Africa. It mainly works within the context of international and regional organizations including: the International Organization of Employers (IOE), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) among others. The membership of BUSINESSAfrica is drawn from Employers' Organizations spread across all the regions of the continent.



## Vision

To be the Voice of African Business



## Mission

To advocate for Growth and Competitiveness of Africa businesses through representation in continental and international policymaking, standing up for employers across the continent and campaigning on issues that most influence Africa business performance



## Core Values

- ✓ Respect for diversity and freedom
- ✓ Balance between solidarity and responsibility
- ✓ Commitment to collaborative engagement



1

## Policy Advocacy

BUSINESSAfrica seeks to influence policy by enhancing the African business voice in continental and international bodies such as the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the ILO, the African Development Bank, the European Union, the Regional Economic Communities in Africa, and other continental bodies.



2

## Business Representation

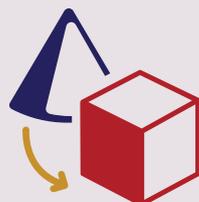
BUSINESSAfrica also promotes business voice in the United Nations system, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and others.



3

## Partnership Engagement

In addition to pursuing its relations with European and American business groups, BUSINESSAfrica aims to build partnerships with business organizations from emerging economies such as China, India, Brazil and Russia. It is important that African businesses are presented in a much more coordinated way during economic events that bring together Africa and the emerging markets.



4

## Regional Integration

BUSINESSAfrica also seeks to strengthen regional integration to boost economic opportunities, jobs, wealth creation and intra-African trade. The development of rail, road and energy projects through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to facilitate trade and business links is a key objective.

- ✓ To work for the promotion of industrial peace in all enterprises in Africa by the development of sound industrial relations, and personnel management practices.
- ✓ To provide for consultation between employers' organizations, to ascertain their views on matters of common concern and to represent those views to any intergovernmental body.
- ✓ To co-operate with all international employers' organizations whose objects are consistent with those of BUSINESSAfrica and to maintain contact with international and regional organizations such as the International Labour Organization, the Africa Union and the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission, the Arab Labour Ministers' Conference and the International Organization of Employers, dealing with economic development and social progress and to assist in the formation of national employers' organizations in Africa.
- ✓ To assemble and make available to members when required existing and proposed legislation relevant to the activities of BUSINESSAfrica.
- ✓ To collect and collate from members or other sources economic and social data that are of benefit to members.
- ✓ To respect the principles underlying the economic and social order of every African country.
- ✓ To promote vocational and professional training by encouraging national, sub regional and continental symposia and seminars in fields of interest to African employers.
- ✓ To associate African employers' organizations in a joint effort to increase the understanding and importance of the role they play in the continued improvement of society and the State.
- ✓ To do all such other lawful things as are incidental and conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them, provided always that nothing shall be done by BUSINESSAfrica in pursuance of its objects.
- ✓ To promote, advocate, protect and defend the interest of African employers at all levels.
- ✓ To work for the creation and development of strong and independent national and sub-regional employers' organizations.
- ✓ To promote the principle of tripartism in the solution of social and economic problems in collaboration with the Governments and Workers
- ✓ To set up appropriate mechanisms with a view to strengthening partnerships with the Business community and the private sector in Africa.



**Ms. Saida Neghza**  
President  
Algeria



**Mr. Andrew Le Roux**  
1st Vice-President  
Eswatini



**Mr. Hamidou Diop**  
2nd Vice-President  
Senegal



**Ms. Jacqueline Mugo**  
Secretary General  
Kenya



**Mr. Modibo Tolo**  
Deputy Secretary General  
Mali



**Mr. Ousseine Diallo**  
Treasurer  
Côte d'Ivoire



**Ms. Lindiwe Sephomolo**  
Deputy Treasurer  
Lesotho



**Mr. Bernard Hounnoui**  
Member  
Benin



**Ms. Yameogo Philomene**  
Member  
Burkina Faso



**Mr. Thierry-Marie  
H. Rajaona**  
Member  
Madagascar



**Ms. Suzanne Ndomba-  
Doran**  
Member  
Tanzania



**Mr. Adewale Oyerinde**  
Member  
Nigeria



**Ms. Jacqueline Mugo**  
Secretary General



**Mr. Stephen Obiro**  
Research, Advocacy & Partnerships



**Mr. Samson Mugwe**  
Finance



**Mr. Arbogasti Odera**  
ICT



**Mr. Lionel Omondi**  
Coordinator

## 2023 Economic Landscape Overview

The African continent has weathered numerous challenges, both global and local, throughout 2023. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and climate change impacts have tested the resilience of regional economies. Despite these challenges, African nations have showcased remarkable resilience and adaptability.

This does not negate the fact that many African countries have experienced steady economic growth, driven by robust domestic demand, increased investments in infrastructure, and a growing middle class. The continent has made strides in economic diversification, with sectors such as technology, renewable energy, and agriculture emerging as key contributors to Gross Domestic Product.

The year 2023 has marked a significant acceleration in digital transformation across various industries. African nations have embraced technology, leading to the rise of innovative startups and the integration of digital solutions in traditional sectors. This shift has not only enhanced efficiency but also opened new avenues for job creation.

The African business sector has increasingly prioritized sustainable development initiatives. Investments in renewable energy, conservation efforts, and environmentally conscious practices are gaining momentum. The private sector, in collaboration with governments, has played a pivotal role in advancing sustainable development goals, aligning economic growth with environmental stewardship.

Recognizing the importance of a skilled workforce, governments and businesses have invested heavily in education and training programs. The emphasis on human capital

development has also been identified as a crucial component for sustainable economic growth, job creation, and global competitiveness.

While progress has been made, infrastructure deficits persist in many African countries. Inadequate transportation networks, energy shortages, and digital divides hinder economic development. Addressing these challenges requires continued investment, both public and private, to create an enabling environment for businesses to thrive.

Additionally Harmonizing regulatory frameworks across borders remains a challenge. Inconsistencies in regulations can impede cross-border trade and investment. Advocating for regulatory reforms that promote ease of doing business and foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurs will be crucial for sustained economic growth.

“

*The year 2023 has marked a significant acceleration in digital transformation across various industries. African nations have embraced technology, leading to the rise of innovative startups and the integration of digital solutions in traditional sectors. This shift has not only enhanced efficiency but also opened new avenues for job creation.*

”

The 2023 economic outlook for Africa presents a mixed but generally optimistic picture, with the continent expected to outpace global economic growth rates. The African Development Bank (AfDB) projects an average GDP growth of around 4% for 2023 and 2024, which is higher than the global averages of 2.7% and 3.2% respectively.

Despite this positive outlook, Africa faces significant challenges due to various global and regional risks. These include the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions such as the war in Ukraine, rising food and energy prices, high borrowing costs, and climate change impacts. These factors have led to a slight downward revision in growth projections compared to earlier estimates, with growth now anticipated at 3.4% in 2023 and 3.8% in 2024.

To mitigate these challenges and sustain growth, the AfDB emphasizes the need for bold policy actions, including robust fiscal and monetary measures, structural reforms, and enhanced investment in infrastructure and human capital. These steps are crucial to addressing the compounding risks and ensuring sustainable development across the continent.

Africa's economic outlook is shared into five regions as follows:

# EA

## East Africa:

Projected to be the fastest-growing region in Africa, driven by robust public investment, strong household consumption, and a burgeoning services sector. Strong agricultural sector, with a focus on coffee, tea, and horticulture.

The region benefits from a young and growing population, increasing regional integration, and rising digitalization. The tourism sector holds significant potential, as does the development of natural resources like oil and gas in some countries. The East African Region faces climate challenges, political instability in some countries, and high debt levels which pose potential risks.

# WA

## West Africa:

Moderate growth is expected, with recovery in oil production and a rebound in agricultural output.

The region has Security concerns, particularly in the Sahel region, along with vulnerability to climate change and fluctuating commodity prices, pose significant challenges.

West Africa has vast agricultural potential and a growing consumer market. Efforts towards regional integration and infrastructure development could unlock further growth.

# SA

## Southern Africa:

It remains subdued due to structural challenges, high unemployment (South Africa leading with more than 25 percent of the country's labour force being unemployed), inequality, and the impact of climate change, particularly droughts, hinder growth.

However, the region boasts rich mineral resources and a relatively developed industrial base. Investments in renewable energy and regional infrastructure projects offer promising avenues for growth.

# NA

## North Africa:

Projected to be moderate, with tourism recovery and increased gas exports playing a key role.

Major concerns are Political instability and human trafficking in some countries, high unemployment rates, and water scarcity.

The region's proximity to Europe and its potential for renewable energy development present significant opportunities. Diversification efforts beyond oil and gas are crucial for sustained growth.

# CA

## Central Africa:

The Central Africa region is expected to be uncertain, driven by a recovery in oil production, vast raw materials, and rising commodity prices. Just like East Africa and North Africa, it faces Political instability, weak governance, and infrastructure gaps hinder economic progress.

The region has vast natural resources, including minerals and timber. Sustainable management of these resources and investments in human capital are crucial for long-term growth.

In general, while challenges remain, Africa's economic outlook shows promise. BUSINESSAfrica promises to work closely with all the RECs to address structural issues, investing in key sectors, and fostering regional integration, the continent can unlock its full potential and achieve sustainable growth.

## Southern African Development Community (SADC)



The economic growth in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been subdued. In 2022, the region's GDP growth was 2.7%, lower than the African and global averages of 3.8% and 3.4%, respectively. For 2023, growth is projected to decline to 1.6% but is expected to rebound to 2.7% in 2024. Challenges include high external debt, which stood at 48% in 2022, and issues in South Africa, the largest economy in the region. Political instability and energy crises have significantly impacted growth. Despite these challenges, there are significant opportunities for investment in climate action and green growth initiatives.

## Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)



The ECOWAS region has faced varied economic conditions. The African Economic Outlook for 2024 indicates that the region's economies have shown resilience but are still dealing with significant structural challenges. The overall real GDP growth in Africa declined to 3.1% in 2023, from 4.1% in 2022, primarily due to geopolitical tensions, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and climate issues. Economic growth is expected to improve to 3.7% in 2024. Key areas of focus include addressing food and energy price pressures and enhancing political stability.

## Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)



The UMA region, encompassing North African countries, has also been influenced by the broader African economic trends. The region continues to grapple with political instability and economic reforms needed to enhance growth. Specific data on UMA's performance wasn't detailed, but it aligns with the continent-wide challenges of structural transformation and financing for development.

## Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)



COMESA experienced moderate economic growth, primarily driven by the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and improvements in commodity prices. The region's GDP growth is projected to be around 4.5% for 2023-2024. Intra-COMESA trade continues to expand, contributing significantly to the region's economic performance. Key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services have shown resilience, bolstered by regional integration initiatives and trade facilitation measures.

### East African Community (EAC)



The East African Community (EAC) demonstrated robust economic growth, with an average GDP growth rate of approximately 5.2% for 2023-2024. This growth is underpinned by strong performances in the agriculture, services, and construction sectors. Efforts to enhance regional integration and infrastructure development, including the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), have played a crucial role in driving economic activity. However, challenges such as political instability in some member states and external economic shocks remain areas of concern.

### Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)



ECCAS faced a slower economic recovery compared to other regions, with GDP growth projected at around 3.2% for 2023-2024. The region's economic performance is hampered by persistent security issues, political instability, and a heavy reliance on oil exports. However, efforts to diversify economies and improve governance are ongoing, with some positive impacts expected in the medium term.



### Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)

CEN-SAD showed mixed economic performance due to varying conditions across member states. The region's GDP growth is estimated to be about 3.8% for 2023-2024. Factors such as conflicts, climate change, and economic diversification efforts influence the economic landscape. Some member states have benefited from improved agricultural outputs and trade activities, while others continue to struggle with instability and economic challenges.

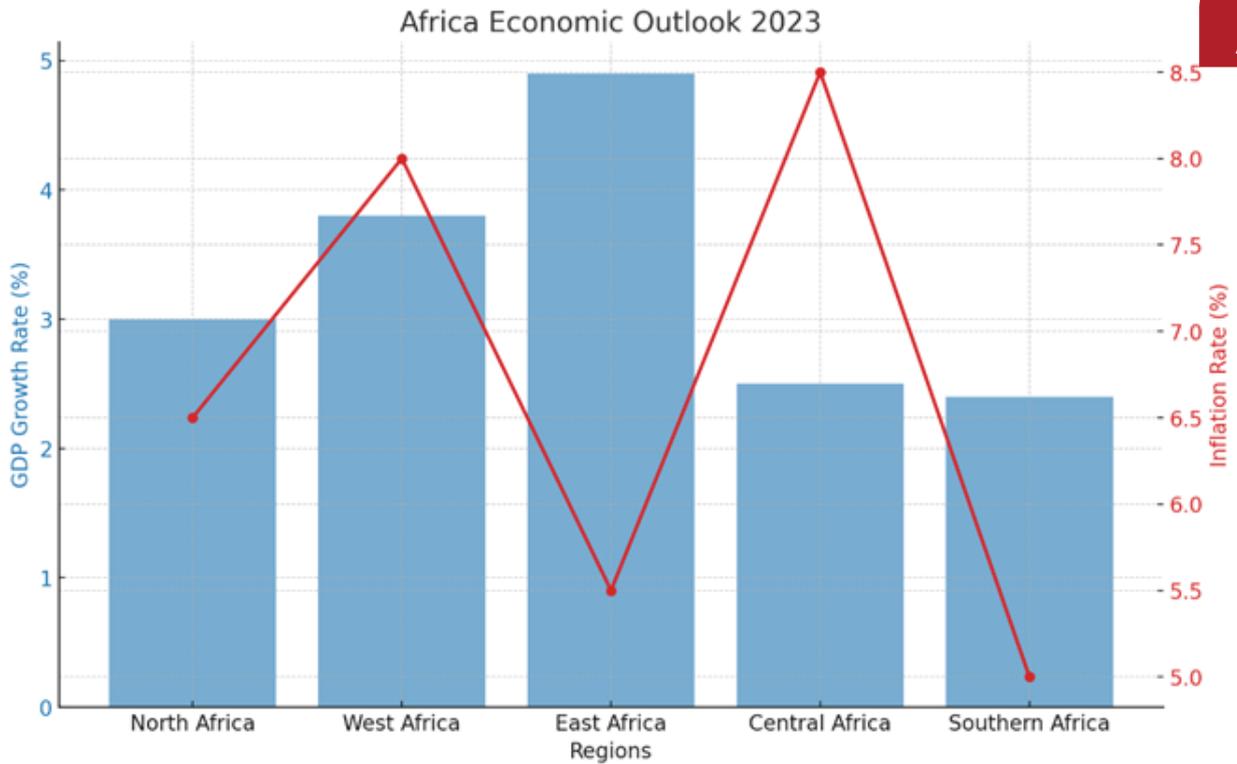


Figure 1: Chart depicting the economic outlook for Africa in 2023

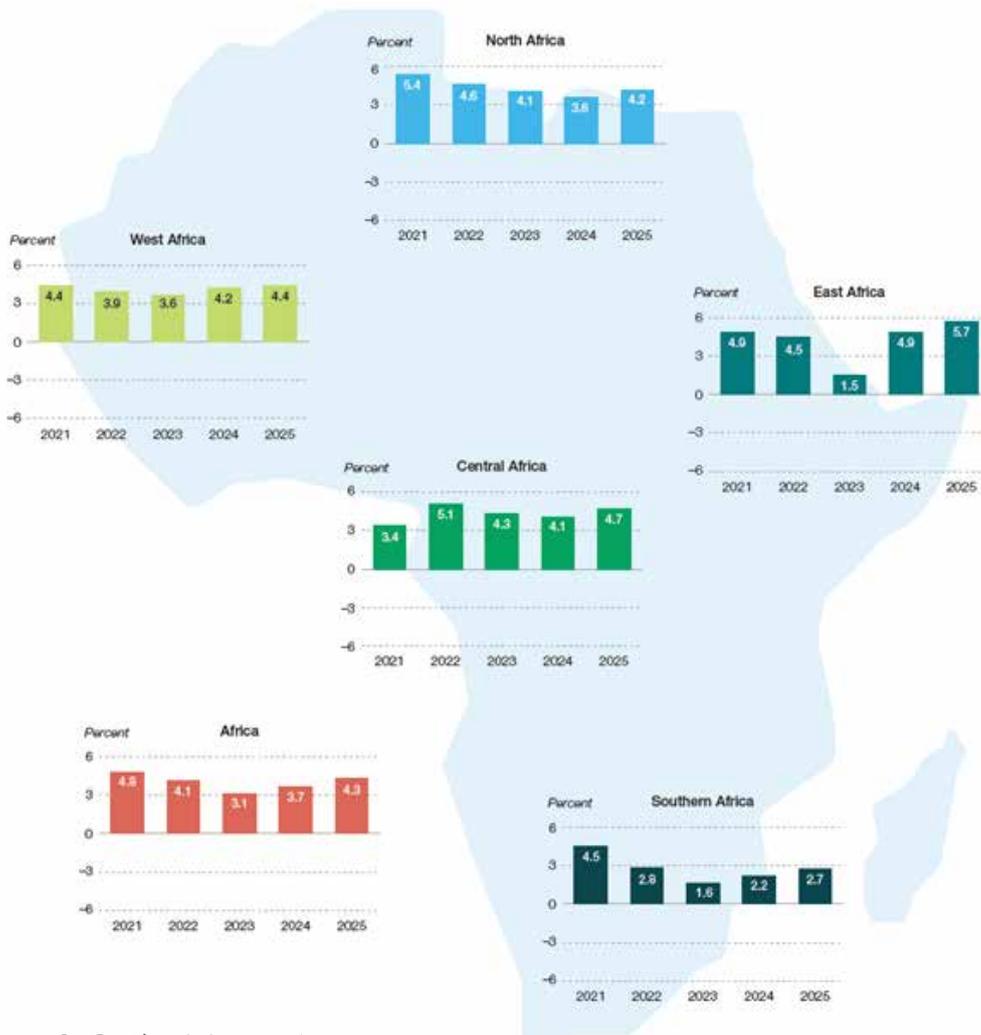


Figure 2: Outlook by region

## Youth unemployment

Youth unemployment remains a significant challenge across Africa, with Sub-Saharan Africa facing particularly high rates.

Approximately 12 million young people enter the labor market each year, but only about 3 million formal jobs are created annually, leading to high levels of unemployment and underemployment among youth.

## Migration

In 2023, approximately 80% of African migration was internal. Around 36 million Africans were living outside their country of origin by the end of 2023. Key destinations include Europe, the Middle East, and North America. Migration rates increased by about 5% compared to 2022, primarily due to economic and political instability in certain regions.

## Skills mismatch

Approximately 40% of the African workforce is employed in sectors that do not match their skills. This mismatch is more pronounced among young graduates. Vocational and technical education is growing but still only accounts for about 15% of post-secondary education. Efforts to align education with market needs have led to a slight improvement, reducing the skills mismatch by 2% from 2022 to 2023.

## Global Events:

Continued to impact economies, with GDP growth rates in many African countries remaining below pre-pandemic levels. However, recovery is underway, with an average growth rate of 3.5% in 2023. Increased frequency of extreme weather events affecting agriculture and livelihoods. Over 10 million people were displaced due to climate-related events in 2023. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has impacted food and fuel prices, exacerbating economic challenges in many African nations.

## Informal employment

The informal economy is a substantial part of the African labor market, with around 83% of employment in Africa being informal. This sector includes a significant proportion of the youth population, providing critical income but often characterized by low earnings, lack of social protection, and vulnerability to economic shocks.

## Gender disparities

Gender disparities in education are gradually decreasing. Female enrollment in primary education reached 90% in 2023, up from 87% in 2022. However, secondary and tertiary education still show gaps, with female enrollment at 65% and 35%, respectively. Women's participation in the labor force stands at 55%, compared to 70% for men. The gender pay gap remains significant, with women earning about 20% less than men for similar work. Women hold 24% of parliamentary seats across Africa, up from 22% in 2022.

## Government Policies and Initiatives:

These include labour market regulations, investment in infrastructure and human capital, and efforts to promote entrepreneurship and innovation, play a crucial role in shaping employment trends. Proactive policies aimed at creating an enabling environment for business growth, job creation, and inclusive development. Several countries have launched initiatives to boost economic recovery post-pandemic. For example, Nigeria's Economic Sustainability Plan and South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. Kenya and Ghana have expanded vocational training programs to address the skills mismatch. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is also expected to create job opportunities and improve skills mobility.

In 2023, policy trends in Africa, as highlighted by both the United Nations (UN) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), focused on economic resilience, climate action, digital transformation, and sustainable development.

## Economic Resilience and Growth

The AfDB's 2023 Economic Outlook emphasized efforts to mitigate the impacts of global shocks, such as the aftermath of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. African economies are striving to stabilize GDP growth, projected at around 4% in 2023-2024. Many countries, including Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, pursued policies aimed at bolstering private sector investment to address unemployment and foster innovation. Strengthening infrastructure was a key focus, with renewed efforts to improve transportation and energy networks across the continent.

## Climate Action and Green Growth

Both the UN and AfDB highlighted Africa's increasing commitment to climate resilience. In 2023, the continent made strides toward transitioning to green energy by investing in renewable resources, such as solar and wind, particularly in countries like Morocco, Egypt, and South Africa. The AfDB's focus on climate finance underscored the importance of mobilizing private capital to support these transitions. African countries are also looking to harness their vast natural resources—such as minerals critical for green technologies—to support the global energy transition.

## Digital Transformation

Africa's digital revolution remains a key driver of development, with countries advancing in technology infrastructure, expanding internet access, and promoting digital skills. As highlighted by the 2023 Africa Sustainable Development Report, several African nations are pushing for broader mobile network coverage and improved cybersecurity frameworks. This shift is designed to enhance sectors such as e-commerce, fintech, and education, all of which are crucial for modernizing economies.

## Social & Sustainable Development

The UN's 2023 Africa Sustainable Development Report showed progress in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in access to safe drinking water and electricity. However, significant challenges remain, particularly in poverty reduction, gender equality, and rural development. Climate change, food insecurity, and regional inequalities continue to stall broader economic and social gains. 2023 marked a year of determined policy action across Africa, with a strong emphasis on economic recovery, climate adaptation, and technological innovation as key drivers for sustainable development.

BUSINESSAfrica emphasizes several aspirations for Africa, primarily focused on economic development, job creation, and sustainable growth. These aspirations align with broader efforts across the continent to realize Africa's potential and address persistent challenges, ultimately contributing to its overall development and prosperity. These aspirations often include:

- 1 Partnerships with Governments & Stakeholders**  
To collaborate with governments, trade unions, and other stakeholders to develop and implement labor policies that promote economic growth while safeguarding workers' rights and interests.
- 2 Entrepreneurship Promotion**  
BUSINESSAfrica encourages entrepreneurship and supports the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), recognizing them as critical drivers of economic development and innovation.
- 3 Skills Development & Job Creation**  
To meet the demands of evolving industries, BAEC advocates for continuous skills development and training programs to empower the African workforce with the necessary expertise. One of the primary goals is also to generate employment opportunities across various sectors, reducing unemployment rates and enhancing livelihoods for African citizens.
- 4 Investment Promotion & Regional Integration**  
BUSINESSAfrica seeks to attract both domestic and foreign investment into Africa by creating a conducive business environment, fostering innovation, and ensuring regulatory frameworks that support business growth. Regional cooperation and integration efforts harness collective strengths and resources, which then foster intra-African trade, and address common challenges.
- 5 Promotion of Decent Work**  
BUSINESSAfrica aims to advocate for the promotion of decent work standards, including fair wages, safe working conditions, and access to social protection, in line with international labor standards.
- 6 Gender Equality at Workplace**  
BUSINESSAfrica aspires to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the labor market, advocating for policies that address gender disparities in wages, representation in leadership positions, and access to opportunities.
- 7 Adaptation to Technological Change**  
Given the rapid changes of technological advancement, BUSINESSAfrica is ensuring that African workers are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to emerging technologies and participate in the digital economy to promote digital literacy.

## Engagement with Partners



### **BUSINESSAfrica Hosts The Director-General of International Labour Organization (ILO), Gilbert F. Houngbo**

BUSINESSAfrica was privileged to host the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Gilbert F. Houngbo, on 28th November 2023 at Waajiri House, Nairobi. This was the first visit to Kenya since his election by the ILO's Governing Body as the Organization's 11th Director-General, becoming the first African to hold the position.

The Director General was received by Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, the Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica. In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, expressed her gratitude to the Director General for honoring FKE with the visit "we are honoured to host you at FKE. It is indeed exciting to us that we have for the first time an African leading the ILO", said Ms Mugo.

Other concerns raised by BUSINESSAfrica include Strengthening Tripartism, building capacity of Employers Organization in Africa and Scaling up implementation of strategic projects that will ensure that Africa is not left behind in the face of global challenges.

While making his remarks, The Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Gilbert F. Houngbo, acknowledged the role played by employers in the Labour sector in promoting job creation, productivity and skills development. "The moment we are going through in the labour sector as a country and employers is crucial. Despite this I recognize the effort done by employers in the development agenda for Africa... There is no way a government can run a country without labour and there is no way you can have labour without employers" Said the ILO Director General.

Mr. Gilbert F. Hougbo recognized the adverse impact of geopolitics on private sector but encouraged the private sector to remain resilient and focus on inclusive and sustainable development, promoting labour rights for all, ensuring universal access to social protection systems, closing the skills gap in the informal economy and promoting sustainable enterprises.

He pointed out the important role played by Kenya in the technological advancements and called upon employers to embrace these new technologies, including the Artificial Intelligence (AI) 'major opportunities have emerged. The expansion of the digital economy and the progress in artificial intelligence have opened prospects for millions of people. Yet the general impression is that of an overall worrying state of play,' said Mr. Hougbo

On enterprise productivity, the Director-General made a commitment to advancing initiative that will support enterprises towards the transition to a green and digital economy. He further affirmed ILO's commitment to support employers' organizations in building capacity through resource mobilization and technical support, skilling, reskilling, and upskilling of Employers organization staff.

The Director-General further lauded the role that employers in Kenya and Africa have played in skills development and adoption to green economy " I am talking about a commitment to ensure that new technologies create decent jobs, to provide the skills and support needed for just transition so that workers and enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, can benefit from the new low-carbon economy, and to support social protection in ever fairer, more cohesive and more resilient societies" Said the DG.

Mr. Gilbert F. Hougbo welcomed the idea for the BUSINESSAfrica to take the lead and bring together employers in Africa to collectively work towards enterprise growth and decent work "I fully support the idea of the BUSINESSAfrica to bring together employers in the continent and ILO will fully support this idea...this is indeed a Strategic and bold move that will unleash creation of wealth and quality jobs in the continent" said Mr. Gilbert F. Hougbo.

//

*I fully support the idea of the BUSINESSAfrica to bring together employers in the continent and ILO will fully support this idea...this is indeed a Strategic and bold move that will unleash creation of wealth and quality jobs in the continent*

//

**Gilbert F. Hougbo**

Director-General, International Labour Organization (ILO)

# BUSINESSAfrica Confederation of Employers Calls for Transformation of Financial System Towards Climate and Sustainability



*Ms. Jacqueline Mugo Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica attending the 2023 Finance in Common Summit Virtually.*

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica attended virtually the 2023 Finance in Common Summit on 30th March 2023. Under the theme “Leveraging Public Development Banks for resilient Ms. Jacqueline Mugo Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica communities: towards social justice and just climate transitions”, The Summit focused on four major cross-cutting issues: social mainstreaming and development impact, private capital mobilization towards SDG goals, collaboration with civil society and incorporation of human rights in strategies and programs, and Latin America and Caribbean perspective.

While making her remarks, Ms. Mugo acknowledged the role that the private sector plays in tackling the interlinkages between social and environmental aspects through investing in policies and actions that ensure the development of the societies and care of the environment.

“Employers’ organizations such as FKE have always been aware of social and environmental aspects and their linkages, and are consistently helping the members to tackle, anticipate and adjust to these linkages” she said.

She opined that the private sector had continued to collaborate with other state

holders on advancing objectives of international frameworks such as the SDGs, MNE Guidelines, and UN Guiding Principles among others. In addition, Ms. Mugo pointed out that the private sector had implemented initiatives such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Responsible Business Conduct (RBC), Occupational Health and Safety (OSH), as well as through structures like philanthropy.

The Secretary General also recognized the role of private sector in Education and health “The private sector globally is already contributing in many ways to education, health and social protection particularly through long-established systems like taxation, pension systems, social protection schemes, training and different employment benefits, job creation and investments in many different projects,” said Ms. Mugo.

On matters public development banks support toward businesses, such as SMEs, to advance social justice and just transitions, Ms. Mugo said “26% of Public Development Bank (PDBs) assets globally are under a mandate to support SMEs, so they are already doing a lot, but it needs to be more focused, scaled and blended with other financial mechanisms. Small and midsize businesses will have to make significant investments and capacity development to adapt their supply chains over the next 30 years, if they are to remain competitive and ensure higher productivity.

Finance in Common is the global network of all Public Development Banks (PDBs), which aims to strengthen partnerships among PDBs to accelerate the convergence towards shared standards and best practices, to support banks’ commitments to shift their strategies towards sustainability, and to give PDBs more visibility in the global fora discussing international policy issues between PDBs and crucial stakeholders, from private sector to civil society organizations as well as employer organizations.



## The Doha 5-Point Private Sector Strategy for SDG Advancement, One LDC at a Time.

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica Employers Confederation recently attended the 5th conference for Least Developed Countries (LDC) which was held in Doha, Qatar from 5th – 9th March 2023.

The conference which brought together the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and the Presidents of employer federations from 20 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), aimed at addressing the challenges faced by the LDCs in achieving sustainable economic growth as well as mobilize international community's commitments towards the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs (2022–2031) adopted by the UN General Assembly in April 2022.

In his opening remarks, the IOE Secretary General Mr. Roberto Suarez Santos urged the governments and multilateral institutions to do more to address the barriers to economic growth in LDCs and, most importantly, to include the private sector as an essential partner in sustainable development as well as producing creative ideas and transform

pledges into tangible results. “Economic development in LDCs through the current multilateral financing system is going too slow and, in too many LDCs, having very little impact. If the international community is serious about moving from potential to prosperity and achieving the SDGs, the private sector must be a partner with governments and multilateral institutions in determining development plans and actions. We have presented a concrete and realistic road map to achieve the SDGs. Let’s start working on implementing it.” IOE Secretary-General Roberto Suárez Santos.

On her part, Ms. Jaqueline Mugo stressed the importance of private sector involvement in the implementation of the 5-point strategy to spur economic growth. She noted that the private sector is critical in driving economic growth and creating jobs in LDCs. She also highlighted the need for increased collaboration between the public and private sectors to achieve sustainable economic growth.

The LDC Business Report, which was recently published by IOE outlines the major obstacles to economic growth in 25 LDC countries. They include ambiguous tax laws, numerous, conflicting administrative processes, shoddy social and physical infrastructures, difficulties obtaining financing and foreign currency, and weak legal and labour systems.

It was opined that Africa ought to pursue all-encompassing methods to combat informality and promote the transition to the formal sector. In addition to this, businesses seek governments to alter their legal and administrative structures to reduce these barriers and facilitate the shift to the formal sector and lastly to create an environment that supports business and entrepreneurship.

The conference further provided a platform for CEOs from LDCs to engage with policymakers, development partners, and other stakeholders to address the challenges facing LDCs in achieving sustainable economic growth and to ensure 46 LDCs benefit from social, economic, and environmental growth through a new global partnership. The presentation of the 5-point strategy by the CEOs was a significant step towards identifying actionable solutions to promote economic growth and development in the LDCs.



*Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica giving her speech at the 5th conference of Least Developed Countries (LDC) held in Doha, Qatar.*

The profound 5-point strategy highlights the following:

- ✓ To Pursue comprehensive and innovative strategies to tackle informality and promote the transition to the formal economy. Employers request that countries review their regulatory and administrative frameworks to reduce these barriers and facilitate transitions in the formal economy.
- ✓ Create an enabling environment for business that fosters entrepreneurship, job creation, economic growth, sustainable development, trade, and market openness. This specifically means the development and implementation of easy-to-understand, employment-friendly labour and tax regulations that promote the full scope of employment opportunities and decrease the burden of non-wage labour costs.
- ✓ Establish effective and efficient public policies, services, and governance - including sustainable social protection schemes, education, and skills development systems - that are transparent, accountable, responsive, combat corruption with more ambition, and align with labour market needs.

Ms Mugo stressed the importance of private sector involvement in the implementation of the 5-point strategy. She noted that the private sector is critical in driving economic growth and creating jobs in LDCs. She also highlighted the need for increased collaboration between the public and private sectors to achieve sustainable economic growth.

Business Africa remains committed to emphasizing the crucial part that the private sector plays in fostering economic growth and development in Africa. This policy, when put into practice with the help of the private sector, LDCs will have the conditions necessary for long-term economic growth. This remains to be our want for Africa.



## BUSINESSAfrica Continues to Advocate for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality at the Workplace Globally

The BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation participated in the International Organization of Employers' (IOE) One Global Women Empowerment (OGWE) Conference. The conference which was held in March 2023 aimed to accelerate further developments for women in the workplace and promote gender equality in employment.

OGWE was an event that brought together leaders from employers' organizations, multinational companies, civil society, and governments to discuss issues related to women's empowerment in the workplace.

BUSINESSAfrica, the main employers' organization confederation in Africa, was represented by the Secretary General, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, who spoke during the conference, as a panelist mainly focusing on key messages that businesses want to convey to the G20 so as to make concrete progress for women in business.

While making her remarks, Ms. Mugo highlighted the importance of women's empowerment in the workplace and the role that employers' organizations play in

promoting gender equality in employment. She emphasized the fact that women's empowerment is not just a moral imperative but also makes good business sense. She noted that research has shown that companies with a higher proportion of women in leadership positions tend to perform better financially and are more innovative and adaptable to change.

Ms. Mugo also spoke about the challenges that women face in the workplace, such as the gender pay gap, lack of access to leadership positions, and discrimination. She called for greater collaboration between employers' organizations, governments, and civil society to address these challenges and promote women's empowerment in the workplace.

The IOE One Global Women Empowerment Conference provided a platform for stakeholders to share best practices, experiences, and strategies for promoting gender equality in employment. It also highlighted the importance of women's empowerment in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and creating a more inclusive and equitable world.

## Breaking Barriers: BUSINESSAfrica's Impact on Women in Management Across Africa



*Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica during the Malkia Africa Webinar*

On 17th October 2023, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation was a guest speaker alongside Ms. Lindiwe Sephomolo, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Lesotho Employers and Business during the Malkia Africa Webinar which focused on the State of Play for Women in Management.

The Malkia Programme was launched by the International Training Center of the International Labour Organization (ITCLO) with the aim of empowering women to rise into leadership roles by skilling them towards success. Both Mrs. Mugo and Mrs Sephomolo shared their personal life experiences with the delegates which interestingly had a lot of similarity.

Ms. Mugo narrated her story from childhood up to where she is now and the factors that have led to her being a leader in the Labour Sector and the Employers' realm.

"Growing up, I always stumbled upon teachers and supervisors who saw my potential and made a point to guide me towards the best version of myself," Ms. Mugo said.

"Successful women leaders often recognize the importance of mentorship and paying it forward. By guiding and supporting others, they contribute to the development of future leaders. This not only builds their own legacy but also strengthens the leadership pipeline for women" emphasized Ms. Mugo.

Ms. Mugo highlighted the following on being a successful Woman Leader:

- ✓ Personal Branding - Authenticity is the cornerstone of building a personal brand. Women leaders who boldly embrace their true selves set a powerful example for others.
- ✓ Vouching and standing up for oneself- Nobody will do this for you as a woman, learn to always voice your thoughts and your rights, unapologetically.
- ✓ Acquisition of knowledge and proper research is key prior to a presentation - Speaking from a point of knowing builds credibility.
- ✓ Championing Diversity and Inclusion- Bold women leaders understand that true leadership is not just about individual success but about fostering an inclusive environment where diverse voices are heard and valued.
- ✓ Balancing Work and Personal lives - Many women leaders have mastered the art of balancing their professional and personal lives. Their ability to maintain this equilibrium showcases the importance of work-life balance and self-care, setting a precedent for others to follow.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Mugo persuaded the delegates to shatter the glass ceiling and to lead boldly. This was followed by an interactive question and answer session where Ms. Mugo and Ms Sephomolo virtually interacted with the delegates.



## Exploring Business Ethics and Human Rights In Africa: Highlights from the IOE Business Caucus and African Business & Human Rights Forum 2023

The International Organization of Employers (IOE) Business Caucus and African Business & Human Rights Forum 2023, held on 5th to 7th September 2023, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and virtually, brought together businesses, governments, and civil society organizations to discuss the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) in Africa, particularly in relation to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Representing Employers in Africa was Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica who was a panellist covering the topic 'Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) in Africa: Why it matters for Africa'. Ms Mugo addressed the economic, social, and environmental challenges and opportunities in her remarks. She also highlighted the RBC principles and standards aim to minimize negative impacts on the environment and society while contributing to sustainable development.

"Employer organizations in Africa play a critical role in promoting the UN Global Compact, which encourages businesses to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies and practices. Strategies used by these organizations include raising

awareness, advocating for the UN Global Compact, and facilitating networking and collaboration among member companies" she said.

Some of the key highlights from the forum include:

- ✓ The importance of African voices and perspectives in the global business and human rights agenda. The forum emphasized the need to develop and implement solutions that are tailored to the unique context of Africa, and to ensure that African voices are heard and respected in global discussions on business and human rights.
- ✓ The role of businesses in promoting sustainable development and human rights in Africa. The forum reaffirmed the important role that businesses can play in promoting sustainable development and human rights in Africa through responsible business practices. Businesses were encouraged to adopt and implement the UNGPs, and to work with governments and civil society to create a conducive environment for business and human rights.

✓ The linkages between the implementation of the UNGPs and the operationalization of the AfCFTA. The forum discussed the potential of the AfCFTA to accelerate the implementation of the UNGPs in Africa, and to create a more sustainable and inclusive business environment on the continent. Participants highlighted the importance of developing and implementing policies and regulations that support responsible business conduct, and of strengthening cross-border cooperation on business and human rights.

Specific commitments made by businesses at the forum include:

The adoption of the UNGPs by a few African businesses. Several businesses at the forum announced their commitment to adopting and implementing the UNGPs, including the development and implementation of human rights due diligence processes.

The establishment of a new African Business and Human Rights Network. A new African Business and Human Rights Network was launched at the forum, with the aim of providing a platform for African businesses to share best practices and collaborate on the implementation of the UNGPs.

The development of new tools and resources to support businesses in implementing the UNGPs. The forum also saw the launch of several new tools and resources to support businesses in implementing the UNGPs, including a new online platform for businesses to report on their human rights performance.

The IOE Business Caucus and African Business & Human Rights Forum 2023 was a successful event that helped to advance the business and human rights agenda in Africa. The forum provided a valuable platform for businesses, governments, and civil society

organizations to discuss the challenges and opportunities of implementing the UNGPs in the context of the AfCFTA. The commitments made by businesses at the forum reflect a growing recognition of the importance of business and human rights in Africa.

**“**  
*Employer organizations in Africa play a critical role in promoting the UN Global Compact, which encourages businesses to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies and practices. Strategies used by these organizations include raising awareness, advocating for the UN Global Compact, and facilitating networking and collaboration among member companies*  
**”**

**Jacqueline Mugo**  
Secretary General,  
BUSINESSAfrica



*The International Organization of Employers (IOE) Business Caucus and African Business & Human Rights Forum 2023, held virtually in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*



## International Labour Conference 2023

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica Employers Confederation lead a team of 17 delegates who represented employers at the 111th Annual International Labour Conference in Geneva, which took place between 5th – 16th June 2023.

The conference whose theme was "Social Justice for All", brought together employers, workers and government delegates from the ILO's 187 Member States who tackled a wide range of issues, including a just transition towards sustainable and inclusive economies, quality apprenticeships, and labour protection.

Ms Mugo was the Employer's Spokesperson of the Tripartite General Discussion Committee on Just Transition which came up with conventions to guide the work of the ILO. The Employers identified five key drivers for enabling just transition which include:-

- ✓ **Sustainable Enterprise Development**, which required a conducive business environment and business support.
- ✓ **Skills development**, which acted both as an enabler for growth and as a buffer against the negative impacts resulting from climate and environmental change and other global crises. Filling skills gaps and adapting to skills mismatches required coordination and strengthened frameworks for skills anticipation, mapping, and training.
- ✓ **Technology transfer and adoption** were crucial. Access to key technologies like renewable energy infrastructure, energy efficiency improvements, digital management, electric mobility, and agricultural productivity measures was thus critical, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- ✓ **Productivity must be boosted through investment in human capital**, innovation, and societal well-being.

✓ **The transition from the informal to the formal economy must be accelerated.**

Persistent structural issues such as poor regulatory frameworks and unpredictable business environments were barriers to a swift transition.

Various outcomes emerged because of the ILC. Some of them include adoption of new Recommendation on Quality

Apprenticeships, aiming to support opportunities for people of all ages to skill, reskill, and upskill continuously in rapidly changing labour markets. The new labour standard provides a clear definition of apprenticeships and specifies aspirational standards for quality apprenticeships, including rights and protection for apprentices.

The General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition and Recurrent Discussion Committee on Labour Protection also adopted resolutions, charting a way forward towards more inclusive, adequate, and effective labour protection for all workers.

The Conference also adopted a resolution on Belarus, aiming to secure compliance with the recommendations of an ILO Commission of Inquiry. The plenary sitting approved the report of the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAN), which examined 24 individual country cases related to the observance of ILO Conventions. The ILO Programme and Budget for 2024/25 was adopted, reaffirming the commitment expressed by all ILO's tripartite constituents to combat discrimination and exclusion for the benefit of all.

Additionally, a high-level World of Work Summit was held on June 14-15, discussing social justice issues, including the proposal for a Global Coalition for Social Justice. The conference marked World Day Against Child Labour on June 12th, calling on the international community to support greater social justice and step up the fight against child labour.

African Employer leaders from Algeria, Egypt, DRC Congo, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya are a few of those who made presentations during the ILC. Below we have highlighted the BUSINESSAfrica Confederations' President and the Secretary General speech. To access other African Employers talking noted during the ILC, kindly use the link below: Transcript of the discussion of the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairpersons of the Governing Body.

**June  
2023**

Date of the Conference

**ILO**

Employers Body

**187**

Member States

## 347th Session of the ILO Governing Body in Geneva



*347th Session of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Governing Body in Geneva, Switzerland*

Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General of BUSINESSAfrica Employers Confederation, attended the 347th Session of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Governing Body in Geneva, Switzerland in her capacity as a titular member of the ILO Governing Body. The session was attended by representatives from governments, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations from around the world.

The agenda for this year focused on key issues that promote employment and social protection, Social Dialogue and Development Cooperation among other issues. Some of focus areas on the agenda includes:

- ✓ Report of the Director-General as well as reports of the Officers of the Governing Body
- ✓ ILO strategy on decent work in supply chains
- ✓ A normative gap analysis on decent work in the platform economy
- ✓ Final report of the tripartite working group on the full, equal and democratic participation in the ILO's tripartite governance

- ✓ Proposals and road map for the review of the Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health adopted at the 91st Session (2003) of the International Labour Conference and the promotion of a safe and healthy working environment as a new fundamental principle and right at work
- ✓ Analysis of measures introduced in Governing Body meeting arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic and their relevance for future sessions of the Governing Body and other meetings
- ✓ Follow up report on further developments concerning the Social Dialogue Forum and the implementation by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of the agreed plan of action to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry in respect of Conventions Nos 26, 87 and 144
- ✓ Inclusion of safe and healthy working conditions in the ILO's framework of fundamental rights,
- ✓ Russian Federation to 'immediately and unconditionally cease its aggression against Ukraine' and expressing grave concern at reports of civilian casualties and the situation of refugees.

The Governing Body of the International Labour Office is the executive body of the International Labour Organization which is tripartite in nature bringing together governments, employers and workers. It meets three times a year, in March, June and November. It takes decisions on ILO policy, decides the agenda of the International Labour Conference, adopts the draft Programme and Budget of the Organization for submission to the Conference, and elects the Director-General.



## Strengthening Apprenticeship Systems in the Informal Economy in Africa to Promote Quality, Innovation and Transitions to Formality

International Labour Organization (ILO) organized a workshop on Strengthening Apprenticeship Systems in the Informal Economy in Africa to Promote Quality, Innovation, and transitions to formality. The workshop was held in Cotonou Benin, between 22nd and 23rd February 2023 bringing together experts, representatives of governments, employers and workers' organizations, crafts associations, and their federations from selected countries in Africa, other international skills development experts and interested development partners.

The Objective of this workshop this workshop was to support policy dialogue and contribute technical reflections on how to preserve and upgrade existing apprenticeship systems in the informal economy to promote quality, innovation, economic development, social justice, and transitions to formality. More effective apprenticeship systems, capacity and innovation at local level will trigger a process of structural transformation leading to more inclusive development.

The informal economy in Africa is a significant source of employment and income for millions of people, particularly young people considering that most African countries have over 70% of their economies driven by the informal sector and that 70% of jobs are in the informal sector, we cannot ignore the contribution this sector brings. However, many workers in the informal economy lack access to training and skills development opportunities, which limits their ability to improve their livelihoods and transition to more formal, secure employment.

To address this challenge, a new report by the ILO and the African Union Commission (AUC) proposes the strengthening of apprenticeship systems in the informal economy in Africa. The report highlights the potential of apprenticeships to promote quality, innovation, and transitions to formality in the informal economy.

Apprenticeships are a form of work-based training that combines on-the-job learning with classroom instruction. They have proven to be an effective way to develop skills and prepare workers for employment in a wide range of industries and occupations.

BUSINESSAfrica Employers' Confederation, being the continental umbrella body of employers in Africa continued to ensure its participation and that of the Employers' Organizations in Africa on discussions on various policies.



### **BUSINESSAfrica Promoting Labour Migration Governance**

BUSINESSAfrica was privileged to host a delegation from the Government of Zimbabwe in Nairobi on 13th July 2023. The objective of the visit was to share best practices in labour migration management as well as understand the labour migration governance framework in Kenya. The Zimbabwe delegation was led by Ms. Nyashal, Director Public Service, Labour and Social welfare, and accompanied by representatives from different agencies and organizations including; - Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Private Employment Agencies Association of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions.

Representing Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica, was Mr. Stephen

Obiro, Head of Advocacy, Consulting and Partnership. In his opening remarks, Mr. Obiro underscored BUSINESSAfrica's commitment in supporting initiatives that promote ethical, safe and orderly labour migration practices, which ultimately benefits both the migrant workers' country of origin, and the destination countries.

Mr Obiro further noted that BUSINESSAfrica's support to clear, transparent, and efficient migration policies that are conducive to business, catalysing innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship.

BUSINESSAfrica's approach to labour migration is based on Mobility, Development and Protection. Labour migration is regarded as a key pillar of economic integration and development and if well managed benefits both countries of origin and destination.



## BUSINESSAfrica Advocates for the Elimination of Child Labour

The forum attracted participants from African businesses, employers' organizations, governments, workers' organizations, and civil society. It took into consideration relevant international frameworks, such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the International Labour Standards by factoring the importance of integrating National Action Plan (NAP) on child labour in a National Action Plan on human rights.

The objective of the discussions was aimed at accelerating the achievements of the SDG Target 8.7 of ending child labour in all its forms by the year 2025.

The forum attracted participants from African businesses, employers' organizations, governments, workers' organizations, and civil society. It took into consideration relevant international frameworks, such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the International Labour Standards by factoring the importance of integrating National Action Plan (NAP) on child labour in a National Action Plan on human rights.

The objective of the discussions was aimed at accelerating the achievements of the SDG Target 8.7 of ending child labour in all its forms by the year 2025.

# Regional Stakeholders' Forum on Migration for Unskilled Labourers



Mr. Stephen Obiro, Head of Advocacy, Consultancy and Partnership attended the Regional Stakeholders' Forum on Migration for Unskilled Labourers held in Kenya on 27th June, 2023 under the driving theme; Promoting free movement and protection of unskilled migrant workers including women Domestic Workers, within the East African Community (EAC) through the EAC Secretariat and other stakeholders.

The round table discussions focussed on the issues affecting unskilled migrant workers in the EAC, including mobility limitations and access to legal and arbitration services. It also discussed mechanisms for up-skilling and re-skilling opportunities, and review progress in implementing recommendations from the forum of Ministers responsible for labour and employment, the Technical Working Group, and the Memorandum of Understanding.

The main objective of the meeting was to develop a comprehensive legal and policy framework for a free movement and protection of unskilled migrant workers, including women domestic workers, and present the findings to the EAC Secretariat.

## Skills Development



Employers' Spokesperson, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, Secretary General, BUSINESSAfrica Employers, delivered her stand on skills development at the centre of ILC2023 discussions.

## Industrial Relations

BUSINESSAfrica continues to provide a platform for discussing industrial relations topics and bringing together its members within the Industrial Relations Policy Working Group. In this Group, topics such as industrial action, collective bargaining systems, the collective rights of independent contractors, mediation, and dispute resolution mechanisms are debated with a view to

finding common ground and issues of concern for employers.

This goes a long way in assisting BUSINESSAfrica in drafting different policy papers. BUSINESSAfrica also provided a network for members to interact with each other on specific points of industrial relations policies.

## Announcement: Bridging Prosperity and Partnerships



BUSINESSAfrica is proud to announce that it is finalizing a partnership with the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to support the deployment of Agora—a matchmaking platform intended to connect entrepreneurs in frontier and emerging economies with investors and experts.

Through Agora, Business Africa believes it can use this platform to elevate the profiles of our employer-members to capital providers in domestic and international capital markets. Business Africa also sees Agora as a tool that has the potential to connect our employer-members to experts who can provide the mentoring and guidance that can support long-term growth and profitability.

Business Africa plans to host a virtual workshop to explain the benefits of registering on the Agora platform, as well as provide a tutorial on how to register to Agora.

Take a moment to learn more about Agora by reading the questions and answers below:

- ✓ **What is Agora:** Agora is a pioneering web platform that provides a comprehensive and unparalleled solution for connecting entrepreneurs in emerging and frontier economies with investors and experts.

With the support of UNCDF and a select

group of initial partners possessing vast networks and significant presence in these economies, Agora utilizes cutting-edge algorithms and AI to facilitate connections.

Entrepreneurs gain access to a diverse pool of investors, increasing their funding prospects. Investors discover tailored opportunities, unlocking the potential of emerging markets. By spearheading these transformative efforts, Agora plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and advancing sustainable development.

Currently, no other comparable solution or public good encompasses the entirety of frontier and emerging economies, making Agora an unprecedented asset for all stakeholders involved.

- ✓ **What Problem does Agora Solve:** Agora solves the problem of connecting entrepreneurs, investors, and experts in frontier and emerging markets. It addresses the scarcity of investable opportunities that hinder economic growth.

By leveraging advanced technology, Agora streamlines the matching process, transcending geographical barriers and revolutionizing investment practices. Agora's focus on digital technologies enhances efficiency and maximizes impact. It creates a vibrant ecosystem, fostering connections, sharing expertise, and generating opportunities for sustainable development.

- ✓ **What is the value of Agora to Entrepreneurs:** Agora provides a virtual space for entrepreneurs to showcase their ideas and projects to potential investors and business partners. It would feature various areas and activities

designed to facilitate effective communication, collaboration, and connection between entrepreneurs and investors.

In addition, it onboards quality experts who want to provide valuable insights and guidance in various areas such as finance, marketing, human resources, digital innovation to assist entrepreneurs at different stages of business development. This immersive environment aims to enhance engagement and interaction, fostering meaningful connections between stakeholders.

A business resource hub is also available with more than 1500 pieces of practical information covering different topics for the business community.

- ✓ **What is the value of Agora to Investors:** With the transparency that Agora will deliver, actors in the capital markets will be able to make informed decisions as to which opportunities/projects/companies to consider for capital investment as well as other means of support.

Our innovative approach to enterprise assessment provides business owners with valuable insights into their operations, highlighting areas for improvement and offering a reliable, objective evaluation of their enterprise.

Our proprietary algorithm uses an extensive questionnaire to assess all aspects of an enterprise, providing a unique qualification that signifies the overall strengths and weaknesses of the enterprise. For investors, our algorithm serves as a valuable first assessment of an enterprise's potential, helping to identify high-potential opportunities for further exploration.

- ✓ **When will Agora be available:** The first version of Agora (Agora 1.0) had been piloted in Uganda and Senegal in October 2022. Approximately 500 enterprises registered on the Agora platform during this pilot phase. Scaling up from the pilots, UNCDF decided to temporarily remove Agora from the web to focus on a new version, Agora 2.0, which we will launch this September.

UNCDF is currently planning for the rollout of Agora in about 20 targeting countries in Africa, Asia- Pacific and Latin America as phase one of the global launch will commence this year. UNCDF will endeavour to introduce Agora to all 152 developing countries by next year.

- ✓ **What is the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF):** The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is the United Nations' flagship catalytic financing entity for the world's 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs). With its unique capital mandate and focus on the LDCs, UNCDF works to invest and catalyse capital to support these countries in achieving the sustainable growth and inclusiveness envisioned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Doha Programme of Action for the least developed countries, 2022–2031.

## Call to Action

*We encourage all of you to participate during the upcoming onboarding training session, in partnership with Agora and the UN Capital Development Fund, to register onto the Agora platform to take advantage of this platform's capabilities. We will notify you when this session takes place.*



**Membership**

Membership of BUSINESSAfrica shall consist of the most representative central organisations of employers of African countries.



**Membership Acceptance**

BUSINESSAfrica shall not, in the absence of special circumstances:

- ✓ Accept an application from an employers' organisation which is itself a member of, or eligible for membership of another employers' organisation which is qualified for membership of BUSINESSAfrica.
- ✓ Accept an application from an organisation other than the employers' organisation most representative employers in the country concerned.



**Membership Application**

Application for membership shall be made in writing to the Secretary General of BUSINESSAfrica who shall communicate the application to the Executive Council for approval. Admission to membership shall be done by resolution of the General Assembly.



**General Assembly Attendance**

Representatives of employers' organisations which are not eligible for membership of BUSINESSAfrica, may with the approval of the General Assembly, attend a meeting of the General Assembly as observers.

**Engagement with the Secretariat:**

- ✓ Members are encouraged to engage BUSINESSAfrica through the office of the Secretary General on any matter they need BUSINESSAfrica to support them in and for sharing of information at [info@businessafrica-employers.org](mailto:info@businessafrica-employers.org). Updates on BUSINESSAfrica initiatives during the year can also be accessed through the website [www.businessafrica-employers.org](http://www.businessafrica-employers.org)

**Benefits of Being a Member:**

Reasons why you should become a member of BUSINESSAfrica:

- ✓ A common voice regionally and globally to advocate for a conducive business environment for enterprise competitiveness.
- ✓ Access to a wide range of resources and knowledge on labour, economic and social policy issues.
- ✓ Networking employers and businesses in Africa and beyond.
- ✓ Participation in events, forums, conferences, and benchmarking visits for peer-to-peer learning.
- ✓ Driving the growth and competitiveness of enterprises in Africa to create wealth and jobs.
- ✓ Effective representation within and partnerships with many regional and international bodies.

**BUSINESAFRICA EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBRE 2023**

	Note	2023 USD	2022 USD
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Receivables account	6	241,010	212,010
Cash and bank balances		101,313	114,345
		<u>342,323</u>	<u>326,355</u>
<b>Represented by</b>			
Income reserve		59,231	62,716
Project funds		35,054	44,601
		<u>94,285</u>	<u>107,317</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables and accrued	7	248,038	219,038
<b>Total assets and liabilities</b>		<u>342,323</u>	<u>326,355</u>

## **BUSINESSAfrica Members**

### **ASSOCIACAO DES EMPRESAS PRIVADAS DE MOCAMBIQUE (AEPRIMO)**

Rue Timor Leste No 58 1 Sala, Maputo, Mozambique.

Tel +264 61 233397 Fax: 264 61 233397

Email: egmalda@teleda.mz

### **ASSOCIATION OF EMPLOYERS OF BURUNDI (AEB) (ASSOCIATION DES EMPLOYEURS DU BURUNDI (AEB))**

Secrétariat Général, 23B2 Rue de la mission, B.P 141 Bujumbura,

Télécopieur : +25722221120, Téléphone : 221119,

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