



WorldLink

Linking people management professionals around the globe

Africa's Talent Challenge

By Rre Elijah Litheko

The greatest problem facing African businesses today is the immense difficulty of attracting sufficient talent. There are not enough skilled workers to fill the specific needs of the expanding economies of the continent.

During the long decades of colonialism and apartheid, little was done to develop an educated and capable population of skilled workers from the indigenous African communities. Now we are dealing with the consequences of that—people who are unable to contribute because they are underskilled and underemployed, and companies that are therefore unable to expand. It is essential that we bring Africa's workforce up to par to compete globally.

It takes more than graduating a certain number of students with the “right” degrees. These individuals must have practical experience as well.

Here in South Africa, we have an amazing economy, and opportunities for graduates are improving every day, but unemployment is unacceptably high—among the highest in the world. In a country of almost 52 million people, the official unemployment rate is almost 30 percent, but experts believe the real number is closer to 35 percent. About 40 percent of the unemployed have become so discouraged that they have stopped seeking jobs altogether. This is unsustainable for a country that is being hailed as a powerhouse among Africa's emerging economies.

A large proportion of the unemployed population has higher education degrees. However, according to South Africa's Department of Higher Education, there are approximately 3 million young



The Board of the World Federation of People Management Associations met April 3-6 in Amsterdam, holding discussions around the theme “Raising the Bar in Global HR.” Sessions featured case studies in global talent management presented by senior HR leaders from AirFrance/KLM and Royal Dutch Shell, and a review of HR standards and certification in Europe and the Americas. Board members pictured from left to right are Henry G. “Hank” Jackson, Tiisetso Tsukudu, Miguel Ropert, Ernie Espinosa, Jorge Jauregui, Pieter Haen, Horacio Quiros, Bill Greenhalgh, Stephanie Bird, Filippo Abramo and Aida Puello.

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Tapping into Youth
as an Engine for
Success



Strategies for
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people in South Africa between the ages of 18 and 24 who are not accommodated in either the education and training system or the labor market.

Many students are steered into courses and programmes where space is more plentiful and tuition less expensive, but these tend to be in subjects that do not align with market needs. For instance, there is an overproduction of students with qualifications in the humanities, as opposed to those in the fields of science, medicine or engineering. Tertiary institutions also do not produce enough graduates in business-related fields, despite the demand for such skills.

South Africa's Human Resource Development Council was established in 2010 to develop long-term strategies to meet the country's socioeconomic development needs. It is looking closely at the critical workforce skills needed for the country, but it cannot create change alone. South Africa needs all stakeholders represented in this effort—academics, businesses, researchers, professionals, government officials, etc.—to co-create the future.

It takes more than graduating a certain number of students with the “right” degrees. These individuals must have practical experience as well. To better prepare graduates for the world of work, South Africa's Department of Higher Education is encouraging employers to give university students opportunities for on-the-job experience. When they graduate, they need to demonstrate experience not only in the job skills needed but also in understanding the challenges they will face in maneuvering the modern workplace and how very high expectations are for the country.

Because of the backlog of development in Africa, we need to aggressively implement programmes like mentorships, internships and coaching to expose the next generation of workers to all facets of a company and industry—not just to do a specific job but also to manage people and run an operation. By doing this, the environment and culture won't be threatening to them, and they can excel in their careers into the future.

With a “disaffected youth,” South Africa is facing the same challenges as many other countries in the world. Our young people are emerging from schools and universities with poor job opportunities and prospects. At the same time, they are connected to each other and the world through new social technologies and have

more voice than ever before. We need to listen to them using these new channels and focus our efforts on how to address challenges with them, not only for them.

Some employers do provide opportunities for student internships, but these tend to be the larger corporations. Among small and medium-sized businesses, this is not the norm—and that is a wasted opportunity. Employers and universities need to work more closely together to establish relationships that allow students to move more easily between classroom learning and on-the-job training. This should become a common standard.

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Employers must also make sure human capital is utilized across the workforce spectrum, such as by including women and people with disabilities. Policies and practices in hiring need to be aligned with what governments are trying to do to create an inclusive environment and to redress the underdevelopment of the past.

Specifically, companies need to take women's issues very seriously, especially during the period of their lives when they become mothers. Human resource policies must be made flexible enough to accommodate the challenges of working women with children.

Another issue that must be addressed relates to allegations of nepotism. It is alleged that nepotism is ingrained into the culture of many African countries, trickling down from government into the public and private sectors. This practice, where it potentially exists, should be rooted out with vigor and an attitude of non-acceptance. Nepotism in the workplace is dangerous. When employees are hired or promoted seemingly without merit, it hurts productivity because the prevailing attitude is that work performance, effort and excellence are not important.

Alleged nepotism is only one form of corruption that African countries must deal with. Civil society organizations like South Africa's Corruption Watch, government ombudsmen like Public Protector and other similar organizations that advocate for a corruption-free society contribute significantly to raising awareness about corrupt practices wherever they are found—be it in government or business—and further advocate for the eradication of such practices.

I noted briefly earlier that social technologies are connecting us like never before. They are also opening up ways of accessing opportunities. South Africa's Institute of People Management (IPM) recently partnered with Regensys to bring Mass Open Online Education to South Africa. This free online education can be accessed at <http://regensys.co.za/free-edu>. Employers and educators would do well to look to new ways of learning and networking online, particularly by drawing on the expertise of those already in the workplace.

Everyone is looking to South Africa as the continent's shining star. Expectations are very high. The prevailing attitude is that if South Africa can build a robust, skilled and highly productive workforce fit for the 21st century, other African countries can do the same. Those countries all have the same need to develop processes that demonstrate to the world that Africa is ready to lead. We need to assure global investors that we are not only aware of the talent challenges we face but we are also ready to identify solutions and meet these challenges. WL

Rre Elijah Litheko is chief executive officer of IPM South Africa.

Tapping into Youth as an Engine for Success

By Martha J. Frase

By 2035, Africa's labor force will be larger than China's. Africa is experiencing what sociologists and economists call a "youth bulge," and it usually follows a stage of development where a country's infant mortality rates have fallen but its birthrates remain relatively high. The result: A lot of young people coming to maturity at the same time and competing for their place in work and society.

This demographic situation carries both benefits and risks for Africa. On the plus side, there are more people of working age to support the older, more-dependent population. (We see the opposite trend in North America, Europe and Japan, where the number of non-working older people is outpacing the number of younger working-age people and threatening the solvency of social safety nets for health care and pensions.) If the growing cohort of young Africans can be fully employed and self-sufficient, per capita income should increase.

However, on the negative side, if there is significant unemployment among youth, social unrest and economic instability can follow. This is the challenge for Africa. How can it ensure that countries are not burdened by, but instead benefit from, this imminent demographic dividend?

Right now, youth unemployment is a problem in many African countries, even though today's youth are better-educated than their parents. According to the report *African Economic Outlook 2012*, around 60 percent of the continent's unemployed are ages 15 to 24, and more than half of these, many of whom are women, have given up on finding work.

Unprepared Graduates

Education is at the root of the problem, experts agree. Nathalie Delapalme, director of research and policy at the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, noted the many challenges to be addressed. "In some African countries, only two-thirds of students progress from primary to secondary education, secondary school achievement has regressed, and current African educational levels are lower than China's and India's," she said. In Nigeria, for example, nearly 9 million primary school-age children are out of school, she explained.

African universities are also struggling to supply the numbers and types of young workers needed in Africa's growing economies. A study last year by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concluded that African universities were failing to prepare young people for the current labor market on the continent. "There is a huge gap between the education programs available to students and what industry needs," Delapalme said. "Africa is well-known as the continent with the largest natural resources potential, specifically in oil and mining, and the continent with the hugest need in infrastructure, yet Africa has the lowest share of engineering graduates in the world."

Instead, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest share of social science and humanities graduates of any world region. Between 2008 and 2010, they made up more than 70 percent of graduates, compared with 53 percent in Asia and 61 percent in Latin America, the OECD found. This situation persists despite increasingly high demand for skills in manufacturing, engineering, mining, agriculture, retail and hospitality. Graduates in these fields are relatively scarce.

"We need to reinvent the university system. We have to think differently, teach differently," said Saliou Ndiaye, rector of Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal.

The university is slowly introducing reforms even amid financial constraints and strikes by students and lecturers over poor working conditions. It launched a civil engineering course this year, partnering with firms such as France's Eiffage, with a curriculum structured jointly by company executives and lecturers. But Ndiaye expects the reforms to come slowly as the school struggles with severe overcrowding.

It is a problem that plagues many African universities, according to Burunsi Juma Shabani, principal specialist at the UNESCO office for Education in Africa. The increase in student enrollment has surpassed the capacities of universities, making it difficult to provide the quality education hiring companies are desperate for. "The unemployment of graduates reflects that their training has no relevance or quality that corresponds to employment needs," he said.

The way forward probably lies in a more strategic approach to education policies, which need to be more closely linked to employment outlooks, Delapalme said. "This means building bridges between public actors—such as governments or donors, who design education policies—and the private sector, which is the main sustainable actor in employment creation," she explained.



But even those graduates who have the right qualifications on paper may not be ready to work. Results from the 2011 McKinsey Survey of African Business found that employers cite cost, insufficient experience and lack of job readiness as the main obstacles to hiring young candidates.

It is crucial to get employers involved in providing students and new graduates with company-led training, such as apprenticeships, internships and on-the-job training. "This is what builds the bridge between education and employment, and makes sure that supply meets demand," Delapalme said. "We certainly cannot have potential employers stating 'lack of experience' as the main obstacle for them to employ young people." (For more on preparing talent for a growing Africa, see our cover story, "Africa's Talent Challenge," on page 1.)

Another issue to be tackled, Delapalme adds, is encouraging

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Getting to Know Today's Young Africans

African youth are currently more unemployed than their parents:

- Youth unemployment is higher in North Africa and Southern Africa than in other regions of the continent.
- Youth unemployment is around 50 percent in South Africa and Namibia.
- Youth unemployment is above 30 percent in Lesotho and Tunisia.
- After prolonged unemployment, 61 percent of youth are willing to retrain and 48 percent are willing to relocate within their own countries.

Almost 40 percent of the continent's youth is "occupied" in agriculture, with important differences between countries:

- In North Africa, where unemployment is highest, less than 10 percent of youth work in agriculture. Many hope to work in government or be self-employed.
- In most Sahelian countries, more than 60 percent of youth work in agriculture.
- 20 percent of African youth are dissatisfied with farming.

Young Africans tend to be optimistic, and more interested in the economy than in freedom:

- 56 percent of African youth are interested in current affairs. Urban youth have a higher level of interest than rural youth.
- Across a majority of countries, the economy is perceived as the most important national priority, followed by freedom.

But their faith in democracy is faltering:

- Less than one-fourth of African youth surveyed by Gallup think their country is a full democracy, and less than half are satisfied with their democracy.
- Less than half of African youth have confidence in the honesty of elections.
- Since 2000, youth voter turnout has declined in most countries, except Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi.
- In some African countries, youth have more confidence in the military than in government.
- While a majority believe that violence is not justified in politics, youth are in general more likely than adults to believe that it is. (South Africa, Lesotho and Nigeria are exceptions.)

Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2012 Ibrahim Forum Facts & Figures.

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the return of the highly educated and skilled diaspora (African professionals working and studying abroad). "In Africa, tertiary-educated people have the highest migration rate," she said. "More than half of tertiary-educated people in Cape Verde, Gambia, Sierra Leone and Mauritius/Seychelles leave their country to work abroad."

There are signs that this situation is improving in some countries, however, as a number of skilled young workers are returning from a difficult job market in Europe to seek opportunities in the improving economies of their countries of origin. Many have grown tired or frustrated with rigid career prospects in developed countries and are attracted by the wide-open opportunities in African business. One Kenyan software developer, Sitati Kituyi, who returned to his home country from England, remarked, "You're a very small part of a very big thing in the UK's IT industry. It's hard to do anything but follow in others' tracks. Here in Kenya, you can be part of something

in its formative stages, and that is really exciting. There's a lot more flexibility, a lot more opportunity to find gaps in the market that you can take advantage of."

Back to the Land

Opportunities can also be found in the most traditional of vocations. At a time when the global food demand is soaring, the African continent has the largest agricultural potential—and yet less than 2 percent of African youth are studying agriculture. The situation is particularly acute in Nigeria, where over the years young people have left rural areas to come into cities in search of oil-boom jobs, often unsuccessfully.

Nigeria's National Directorate of Employment (NDE), which works to stimulate job creation through training in agriculture, entrepreneurship and business, is attempting to reignite the unemployed youth's interest in agriculture.

This is not your father's farm, however. "We are encouraging them to practice farming quite different from the way our parents did it in order to make it more attractive and profitable," said Mike Mbata, coordinator of NDE for the state of Anambra.

The program emphasizes modern agricultural practices in crop production, crop processing and preservation, livestock production and management, and other agro-allied ventures. It is managed through the Rural Agricultural Development Training Scheme at Agricultural Skills Training Centers, which can be found in almost all the Nigerian states and Abuja.

The New Entrepreneurs

Establishing new companies that create jobs is another tool for putting unemployed young people to work, but it should be noted that an important source of entrepreneurs can and should be young people themselves. The Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPM) has advocated for a drastic change in the way young people think about employment—from job-seeking to job-making.

"Entrepreneurship and skill development ... is actually part of our corporate social responsibility," said Victor Famuyibo, president of CIPM, at an entrepreneurship and career fair in Abuja last month. "Human resource management is about people, and it's about creating value."

He noted that more than 75 percent of Nigerian youths are not fully employed. "Even those who have what it takes are not actually fully engaged," he said. "Some people have great ideas but don't have the money; there are people who have tons of money in the bank lying idle waiting for people who can turn it around." Connecting the two is essential.

But many skilled youth bent on business careers are not comfortable with the risks that come with entrepreneurship. Jon Foster-Pedley, dean of Henley Business School in South Africa, spoke last month at the DHL Tomorrow's Leaders Convention in Johannesburg about how to develop entrepreneurship in that country. "When unemployment is so high, of course skilled people will be hesitant to take risks," he said. "They may pursue accounting jobs at the Big Four firms because their employment will be secure there at least for a while. But if we really want to develop our private sector, we need our talented people to pursue different kinds of careers and take risks."

This view is supported by research conducted by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor showing that South Africa's pool of intentional entrepreneurs is only 14 percent—far below the average of 27 percent among similar economies. Moreover, only 5 percent of South Africans ages 18 to 24 are involved in early-stage entrepreneurial activity, and that number is dropping. One of the biggest impediments, according to the study, is government policies regarding processes for starting a new business. Registration delays are common, and finance is often hard to access for those new to the startup scene.

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But it's not just about finding cash. According to the *Accelerating Entrepreneurship in Africa* report compiled by Omidyar Network Africa and released last month, financiers say many new ventures are simply not fundable. They lack solid business plans, underpinned by issues ranging from the quality and feasibility of the business idea to the commitment of the entrepreneur and his or her team.

Establishing new companies that create jobs is another tool for putting unemployed young people to work, but it should be noted that an important source of entrepreneurs can and should be young people themselves.

Again, education is a factor. The research advises that management and other entrepreneurial skills should be fostered in schools, pointing out that entrepreneurs in Africa require training and education to allow them to succeed in starting or growing a business, so more time should be devoted to entrepreneurship at the primary and secondary school levels.

Sometimes all a young entrepreneur needs is to connect with people who have been there and want to help. Last month, Venture Capital for Africa launched its online Mentorship Marketplace. Entrepreneurs of any age looking for advice on growing their business in Africa

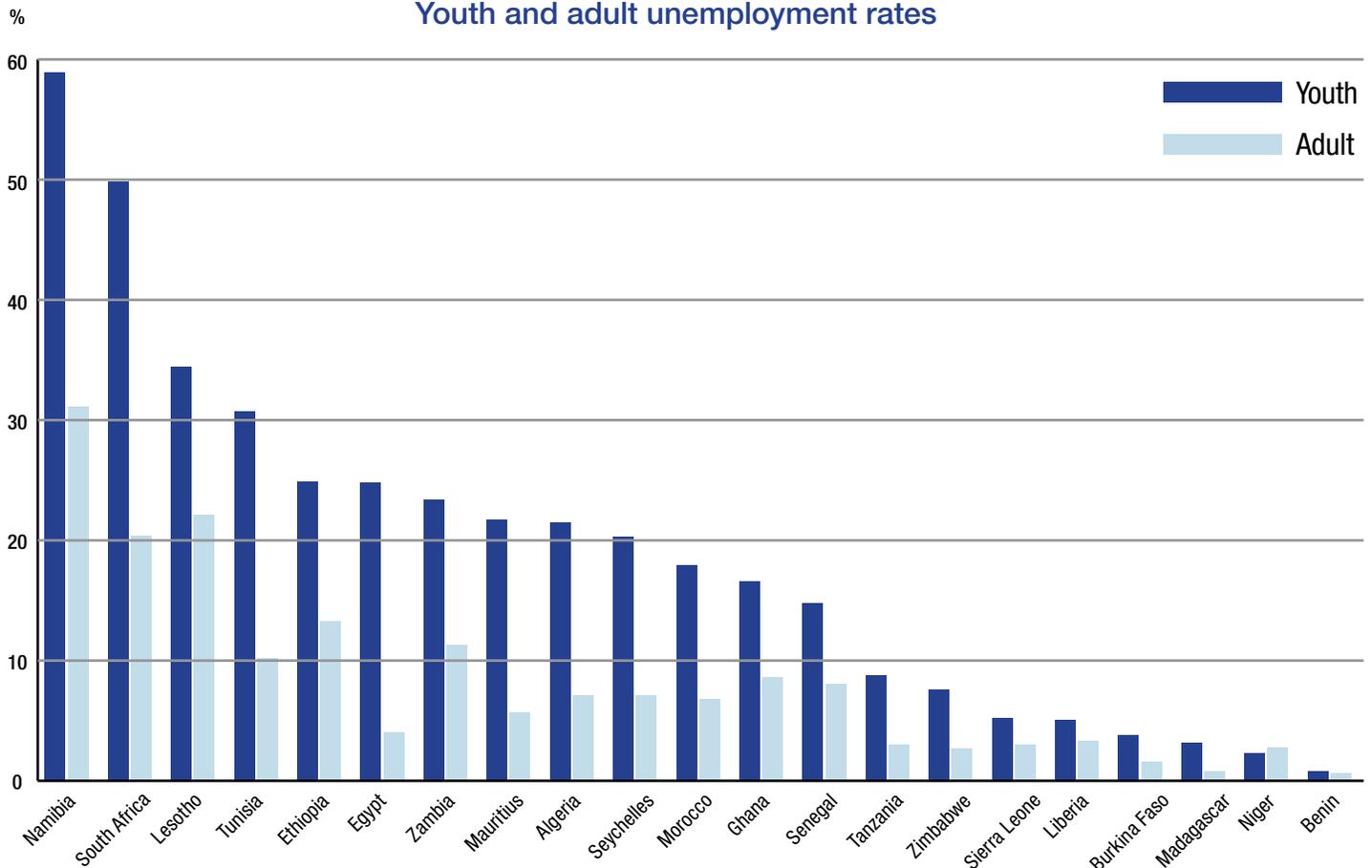
will get direct access to a searchable pool of dedicated mentors. At the same time, Africans living abroad and business experts from around the world can get directly involved with venture creation and provide critical feedback to promising entrepreneurs across the African continent.

One advantage African youth have over their counterparts elsewhere is the deep penetration of mobile communications technology on the continent. Use of fixed-line telephones was never widespread, so when mobile phones arrived, Africans adopted that technology quickly to fill a longtime need and applied it to multiple uses that still seem ultramodern in more developed regions. "In Kenya, Sudan and Gabon, for example, more than half the population uses mobile banking," said Delapalme of the Mo Ibrahim Institute. In fact, of the world's top 20 countries using mobile banking, 15 are African. Mobile use is also spreading in the agriculture and health sectors, and the majority of African Twitter users are 10 years younger than anywhere else in the world. "This African velocity could certainly be leveraged," she said.

Indeed, many components are in place for young Africans to act as an engine of unprecedented economic growth and business success. When technology, targeted education and unmet consumer demand come together, as they are in Africa, progress can occur quickly. As Delapalme noted, "Africa is a continent where the ability to leap-frog is huge." [WL](#)

Martha J. Frase is editor of *WorldLink*.

Youth and adult unemployment rates



Source: International Labour Organization: Key Indicators of the Labour Market, latest data available 2000-2010

Strategies for Growing Jobs in Africa

By Martha J. Frase

Africa is a continent in transformation, with declining poverty and a growing consumer class. But a new report from McKinsey Global Institute shows how critical the issue of new job creation will be in the coming years to sustain this course. Estimates show that the continent will generate 54 million new jobs over the next 10 years; however, more than 122 million people will be vying for them.

The central proposition of the report, *Africa at Work: Job Creation and Inclusive Growth*, is that African countries must create sufficient employment to absorb this growing potential labor force. Sufficient employment means people working in stable wage-paying jobs. Currently, only 28 percent of Africa's labor force holds such jobs. Another 68 percent are engaged in vulnerable employment such as subsistence farming, street hawking and other forms of informal self-employment.

Africa has already made progress in creating wage-paying jobs, and it is expected to take that 28 percent up to 32 percent of workers by 2020. But when Brazil, Thailand and South Korea were at similar stages of economic development, they were creating stable jobs at double and triple the rate of Africa today.

The McKinsey report predicts that in an upside economy, Africa could create up to 72 million wage-paying jobs by 2020, with more than half of stable jobs coming from agriculture, manufacturing, retail and hospitality through specific strategies that accelerate the pace of job creation.

"The experiences of other emerging markets—and of African countries themselves—illustrate how to accelerate employment growth," said David Fine, a senior McKinsey partner in South Africa and one of the report's authors. This means job strategies should target a few sectors that are the most promising employment creators—sectors where the country in question has a real competitive advantage over others.

Fine added, "If the examples of success we have already seen can be replicated more broadly across the continent, Africa has the opportunity to lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, expand its consumer class and emerge as a key part of the global labor market."

The McKinsey report put forward a five-part strategy to accelerate the pace of job creation in Africa:

1. Identify one or more labor-intensive subsectors in which an African country has a global competitive advantage or could fill strong domestic demand.

Lesotho capitalized on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (2000) by granting some African exports duty-free access to US markets. Disadvantaged by being a landlocked nation surrounded entirely by South Africa, Lesotho developed industrial zones for the apparel industry and built rail links between them, offered incentives to foreign investors, and simplified the regulation of the sector. Today, Lesotho's apparel exports to the United States are almost 100 times as large as South Africa's on a per capita basis, and the sector is the single largest creator of jobs, employing more than 50,000 people in this country of 2 million.

2. Improve access to finance in target sectors.

Cape Verde encouraged foreign direct investment as a way to ease financial constraints on its tourism sector. To capitalize on the country's beautiful beaches, it offered investors a five-year tax holiday, exemption from import duties and unrestricted expatriation of profits. Revenues generated by foreign tourism increased from \$23 million in 1999 to \$542 million in 2008, and the sector now employs 21 percent of Cape Verde's workforce.

3. Build a suitable infrastructure.

Countries that remove infrastructure constraints in target subsectors, particularly in export-oriented industries, can reap sizable benefits. Mali's exports of mangoes to the European Union, for example,

grew sixfold between 2003 and 2008 after a concerted public-private program helped the country build integrated road, rail and other infrastructure necessary to access export markets. These moves cut the transit time for shipments in half.

4. Cut unnecessary regulations.

Removing needless red tape in certain sectors is key. In Rwanda, streamlining the procedures needed to open a business dramatically increased the number of new companies from 700 a year before the reform to 3,000 a year today.

5. Develop skills in target sectors.

Around 40 percent of African workers now have at least some secondary education, and that share will rise to 48 percent by 2020. Still, Africa's educational attainment lags behind that of other regions, and the continent would undoubtedly benefit from continued improvement. Two things are of particular importance: work readiness among school graduates and, in some countries, specific vocational skills.

Even in the best case, workers in the vulnerable, informal jobs described above will dominate African employment for many years to come—and policies need to recognize these workers, too. In Africa's most diversified economies, such as Egypt, Morocco and South Africa, wage employment is projected to grow faster than new entrants to the labor force over the next decade. However, in the rest of the continent, the total number of people in vulnerable jobs will continue to grow for at least another 20 years, even if Africa achieves the upside potential the McKinsey report identified. Programs to improve the livelihoods and living standards of vulnerable workers, and to expand education and health care, will remain important to sustainable growth.

A full copy of the report can be downloaded at <https://mckinseysociety.com/africa-at-work-job-creation-and-inclusive-growth>.

Martha J. Frase is editor of *WorldLink*.

Ripening Opportunities

When considering the future prospects for Africa's workforce, particular data points project an intriguing picture of emerging opportunities:

- Nigeria's four largest cities, with a combined population of 19.5 million, have only six shopping malls altogether, compared with 207 shopping malls in three of South Africa's largest cities with a combined population of just over 10 million.
- Africa has about 60 percent of the world's uncultivated arable land.
- It is cheaper for an Ethiopian to buy a wooden chair made in China than in Ethiopia—even taking into account transportation costs.
- Today, 40 percent of Africans have a secondary or tertiary education, up from 32 percent 10 years ago. By 2020, that share is set to rise to 48 percent.

Source: McKinsey Global Institute.

African Countries Achieve High Levels of **Employee Engagement**

By Martha J. Frase

The term “employee engagement” refers to employees’ level of emotional and intellectual involvement in their work that motivates them to give their best efforts. It is a crucial factor in retaining high-value employees and reducing staff turnover, and African companies seem to be good at cultivating it.

Seventy-two percent of employees in sub-Saharan Africa are considered “engaged”—a higher percentage than those working in the world’s developed economies—according to a new survey conducted by Johannesburg-based Emergence Growth in partnership with Aon Hewitt. By comparison, the Asia/Pacific region scored 58 percent; Europe, 52 percent; Latin America, 71 percent; and North America, 64 percent. The global average is 58 percent.

“The emphasis has to be on customization of appropriate solutions that connect with and enable employees, many of whom are at different life stages and have very different needs.”

The first-ever Sub-Saharan Africa Employee Engagement Survey measures key drivers of employee engagement such as quality of life, work processes, relationships with managers and peers, rewards and employee benefits, career opportunities, and company practices.

“Companies that make a concerted effort to engage with and listen to their employees will benefit from improved staff retention and better business performance,” said Ndivhuwo Manyonga, deputy CEO of Aon Hewitt in South Africa.

However, there are significant regional differences in employee engagement across African regions. East Africa leads, with 74 percent, followed by Southern Africa (represented by Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland) at 70 percent, while South Africa scored 68 percent. Not enough data was available from West Africa to compare that region.

“For the first time, HR practitioners in Africa have access to reliable employee engagement data. This will enable them to play a strategic role in identifying those interventions that support the attraction and retention of key talent in their organizations,” Manyonga said.

However, it is essential that any attempt companies make to improve employee engagement are not one-sided. They must be implemented in consultation with employees and need to be relevant to the unique needs of a diverse workforce. One-size-fits-all templates will not work.

“By working closely with leaders, HR practitioners will truly be able to craft employee value propositions that add value,” said Pat Smythe, chair of Emergence Growth. “The emphasis, however, has to be on customization of appropriate solutions that connect with and enable employees, many of whom are at different life stages and have very different needs.”

For example, scores by generation show that Millennials are substantially more engaged (71 percent) than both members of



What Do High-Value Employees Want?

Key findings of the Sub-Saharan Africa Employee Engagement Survey reveal the employer-controlled factors that encourage employee retention and engagement:

- Employees rated more **freedom and autonomy** as crucial to better performance.
- **Recognition from management, team-building activities and workplace flexibility** were rated as important.
- **Trust, creativity and honesty** were also positively rated. This is an important aspect of employee engagement and suggests that corporate values and corporate role models have never been more important.
- 21 percent of participants said their employers were not doing enough to **reward high performers**. Reward and recognition is essential in building an engaged and productive workforce. Most organizations have concentrated on fixed pay and benefits to the detriment of variable pay and a more flexible approach to benefits.
- Only 4 percent of employees are dissatisfied with their relationships at work with peers and management, and only 2 percent are extremely dissatisfied. **Promoting a collaborative environment** should remain a key priority for employers.
- 29 percent of participants are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the career development opportunities within their organizations, while 26 percent were satisfied and another 26 percent were dissatisfied. One-quarter believe there are **prospects for proper career growth**. Another quarter do not believe there is room for growth, and they are likely to look for new opportunities outside their organizations.
- 29 percent of respondents do not believe that they are adequately **equipped or trained to perform well** in their current roles, suggesting a greater emphasis needs to be placed on appropriate skills development programs.
- In terms of **total rewards**—the complete package of remuneration, benefits and incentives—the study found that the elements most valued by employees are:
 - » Salary (65 percent).
 - » Pension fund (63 percent).
 - » Health care (63 percent).
 - » Performance bonuses (62 percent).
 - » Maternity leave (52 percent).
 - » Compassionate/family responsibility leave (49 percent).

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Tech Talent Called Home

By Martha J. Frase

For decades, young Africans have been leaving the continent for greener educational and professional pastures. But that trend may be reversing, with help from innovative entrepreneurs and employers, especially in the information and communications technology (ICT) sector.

Massive deployment of mobile networks has seen a more than 2,000 percent increase in mobile subscriptions in a little over 10 years. There are 700 million mobile phone users on the continent today, creating many opportunities for tech professionals. For example, increasing mobile phone penetration in Kenya has made it possible for the mobile money transfer platform mPesa, with 15 million registered users, to employ 50,000 people.

In addition, there are revolutionary new satellite technologies in the works intended to provide broadband access to more Africans and citizens of other emerging markets. An example is SWANSAT, a satellite technology that would require high-level skills to develop and operate the associated terrestrial networks.

With these ICT developments in Africa, tremendous demand is being created for technical and entrepreneurial skills to develop complementary networks such as data centers, Internet exchange points, technology parks and other assets that can take advantage of expanding networks.

“Do we have a single telecommunications equipment supplier on the continent? This would never have happened in China. They have forced companies to open manufacturing plants there and to transfer technology and skills to Chinese people.”

But experts say African governments and the private sector do not seem to be pursuing every opportunity to develop African skills at home and bring back the diaspora (African professionals working abroad) to support the ICT boom. Most telecommunication opportunities in Africa—including network design, deployment, commissioning, operation and maintenance—are outsourced to foreign companies, especially those from China. This leaves few opportunities for Africans as technical expertise is flown in from overseas.

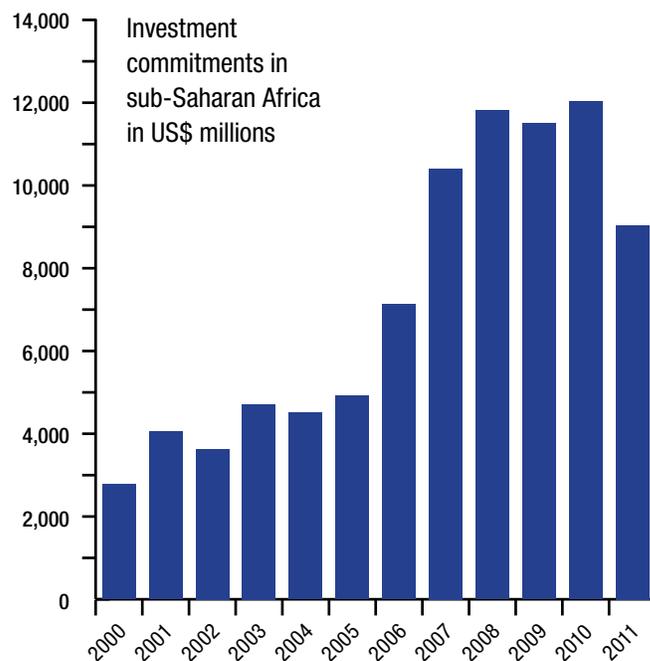
“We do not understand [Africa’s] strength as the fastest-growing telecommunications market in the world,” said Mo Ibrahim, Ph.D., the well-known Sudanese global telecommunications entrepreneur. “Do we have a single telecommunications equipment supplier on the continent? This would never have happened in China. They have forced companies to open manufacturing plants there and to transfer technology and skills to Chinese people.”

A number of organizations, including the International Organization for Migration and NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development), have attempted to link African diaspora talent to opportunities in Africa. To support these initiatives, the online news and information service ICT Africa has developed a portal allowing companies, organizations, government departments and entrepreneurs to share opportunities with thousands of expat Africans who visit its website (<http://ictafrica.info/searchJob.php>).

ICT Africa is a free service to the African ICT industry, and it requires no fees to post jobs. “We challenge any African employers who have problems identifying suitable ICT talent to share their opportunities on the site,” said Happyson Simbini, one of the founders of ICT Africa. **WL**

ICT driving Africa’s renaissance

Private investment in telecoms, 2000-2011



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, PPI Database.

Employee Engagement continued from page 7

Generation X (63 percent) and Baby Boomers (64 percent). The survey highlights that as employees’ lifestyles change, it is important to understand the different drivers of engagement and the implications for talent management and career development.

In the rapidly expanding economies of Africa, highly skilled and experienced staff are in high demand, so employee engagement is critical to a company’s sustainability. “Issues around values, transparency, trust, ethical business practices, promoting teamwork, recognition and rewards, and career development opportunities are equally important as competitive pay and benefits to encourage attraction and retention of key skills,” Smythe said.

Manyonga of Aon Hewitt added that the demand for skilled individuals is no longer a local issue: “The shortage of highly skilled individuals with experience is a global phenomenon. Headhunting of key staff is no longer limited to local markets. One only has to look at rapidly growing economies such as China and a number of African countries to realize that there will be a serious increase in high-value employees applying for positions both locally and abroad. Proactive employers must start identifying unique ways of creating an attractive value proposition for their staff if they are to arrest such an exodus.”

When one considers that the replacement cost of a highly skilled employee is in the order of 100 percent of annual salary, the need for engaged employees becomes a business imperative. **WL**

Martha J. Frase is editor of WorldLink.

Democratic Republic of the Congo Mobile banking



Civil servants in the DRC are welcoming mobile banking and the end of envelopes of cash on payday. Aside from getting paid on time, workers are now receiving what is actually owed to them, circumventing the practice of corrupt superiors dipping into employee pay envelopes for “tips.” Employees commonly received just a fraction of their wages as a result.

With bank branches scarce, fewer than 6 percent of Congolese have bank accounts; mobile banking is expected to change that. Using text messaging, clients can pay bills, make deposits or conduct other transactions on basic (non-“smart”) mobile phones. By June, 1 million civil servants are expected to have bank accounts.

Kenya “Tech City”



The Kenyan government has begun construction on a \$14.5 billion project to build a new city intended to be an IT business hub. Konza Technology City is located about 60 kilometers from Nairobi and is expected to take 20 years to fully complete. It is hoped that more than 20,000 IT jobs will be created in Konza by 2015, and more than 200,000 jobs by 2030. Despite Kenya’s usually divisive politics, the project has the backing of all political parties.

Konza is part of the government’s ambitious Vision 2030 initiative to improve much-neglected infrastructure over the next 18 years. The government is hoping to take advantage of the growing number of software developers in the East African nation.

Namibia Massive oil and gas expansion



Rapid growth of Namibia’s oil and gas sector is anticipated over the next five years, with the exploration of six to eight new wells to start within two years, says a new Frost & Sullivan report. This will aid in job creation and improve the general state of the nation. It is also expected to boost Namibia’s economic growth potential by stimulating expansion of its mines—particularly uranium—and enabling increased energy independence.

Nigeria Electricity sell-off



President Goodluck Jonathan signed deals last month to hand over state electricity assets to 15 bidding companies, a milestone in a privatization process meant to end decades of power blackouts. Nigeria’s state electricity provider is being broken up into 15 firms handling generation or distribution in different parts of the country. Despite being Africa’s top energy producer, Nigeria makes and distributes only enough power for a few hours a day, with some areas getting none at all. Economists say power outages cost the country billions of dollars in imported diesel for generators and in lost output. They predict that Nigeria’s current GDP growth of around 7 percent could be pushed into double figures if the electricity supply becomes more stable.

Rwanda Supporting young entrepreneurs; recruitment irregularities



A government program aims to stimulate youth entrepreneurship to create 200,000 off-farm jobs every year. The program, called “Kuremera,” will be streamlined and expanded at all levels of administration in the country—districts, sectors, cells and villages—to help young people without capital start their own businesses. Street vendors, craftspeople and tradespeople will receive funds to build markets and workshops where they can make and sell their products and services. Kuremera is a word that describes the Rwandan tradition in which family and friends donate to young adults to help them start their lives and families.

The Public Service Commission has admitted that irregularities in the recruitment of public servants led to the employment of incompetent

individuals, while others who met all the requirements were ignored. Last year, the commission analyzed 208 job recruitment reports from 96 public institutions. Its research revealed such problems as institutions using different requirements during candidate selection than were initially announced, giving incorrect marks to candidates to favor others and recruiting for positions that were already filled. The commission said it received 77 appeals last year from individuals requesting a review of their recruitment exams or oral interviews.

South Africa New national HR strategic plan; gains by black managers



The Human Resource Development Council of South Africa endorsed a revised National Integrated Human Resource Development Plan last month, which will guide its work over the coming three to five years. The strategic goals outlined in the plan include:

- Universal access to quality foundational learning.
- Expanded access to the post-schooling system.
- Creation of a capable public sector with effective and efficient planning and implementation capabilities.
- Production of appropriately skilled people for the economy.
- Improved technological innovation and outcomes.

The plan is also designed to address South Africa’s youth unemployment problem by matching education and training efforts with the demands of the labor market.

South Africa’s annual report on employment equity found a slight increase in the representation of the black population in top management positions. Black individuals occupied 12.3 percent of top management positions in 2012, compared with 10 percent in 2002. White individuals held 72.6 percent of such positions, down from 81.5 percent.

South Sudan Foreign-worker restrictions



South Sudan plans to cut down on expatriate workers and encourage foreign firms and aid groups to hire more local residents to combat high unemployment. The move by the government of one of the world’s poorest countries would affect mainly nationals of African neighbors such as Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya. The Labor Ministry has said it is working on a bill to cut down on immigration in a bid to create jobs for Sudanese. South Sudan has been trying to attract firms outside its vital oil sector, but an economic crisis, lack of legislation and tribal violence have deterred investors.

Tanzania Uranium boom



Tanzania’s decision to grant a license to a major uranium mining company could catapult the nation into the top five countries producing the strategic resource. The project is projected to yield \$448 million in foreign direct investments and create 1,600 jobs during the mine’s construction. The deal already has caused controversy because of the mine’s location on a small patch of the Selous Game Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Activists have aired concerns about how mining for uranium in the area could threaten the environment and public health.

Tunisia Labor shortages



Despite a significant uptick in Tunisia’s unemployment rate since the revolution, many sectors are complaining about a lack of manpower. In December the employment ministry reported 653,000 jobless people, but other data point to 120,000 unfilled jobs, especially in the sectors of public works, agriculture, carpentry and services. Labor shortages are also due to many workers going to Libya, where construction workers can earn higher wages. Another issue cited is the unwillingness of jobless graduates to engage in manual labor, preferring instead to wait for administrative jobs to open up.

Sources: *Africa Review*, *BBC News Africa*, *African Business*, *Reuters*, *New Times*, *Rwanda Focus*, *Engineering News*, *Biz-Community*, *Sabahi*, *Magharebia*.

THE WORLDLINK HR CALENDAR

June 5-6, 2013

Hungarian Association
for Human Resources
Management
XXIII National HR
Conference

Lake Balaton

Siófok, Hungary

E-mail: singh.gyongyver@ohe.hu

Website: www.ohe.hu

June 16-19, 2013

SHRM 65th Annual
Conference & Exposition
**McCormick Place Convention
Center**

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Tel: 1-703-548-3440

Website: <http://annual.shrm.org/>

July 17-19, 2013

CIGEH 2013 XXIII
Inter-American Congress on
Human Resources

**Hard Rock Hotel Convention
Center**

Panama

Tel: 1-507-221-8555

Website: www.cigehpanama2013.com

September 11-12, 2013

48th AMEDIRH International
HR Conference and
Exhibition

World Trade Center

Mexico City, Mexico

Tel: 52-55 5140-2219

Website: www.amedirh.com.mx

October 3-5, 2013

47th Congreso Internacional
AEDIPE

Seville, Spain

Tel: 91-420-06-12

Website: www.aedipesevilla2013.com

October 17-18, 2013

International HRD
Conference

Le Meridien Hotel, Mauritius

E-mail: hrdconference@hrdc.intnet.mu

Website: <http://hrd-conference.com/>

November 3-6, 2013

Institute of People
Management 57th Annual
Convention

**Sun City, Northwest Province,
South Africa**

Tel: +27-11-716-7503.

Website: [www.ipm.co.za/
content/2013_ipm_annual_
convention.htm](http://www.ipm.co.za/content/2013_ipm_annual_convention.htm)

November 5-7, 2013

26th Bi-Annual EAPM
Congress
2013 CIPD Annual
Conference & Exposition

Manchester Central

Manchester, UK

Tel: +44-(0)20-8612-6248

Website:
www.cipd.co.uk

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Editor's note: Please submit events
for the calendar to Martha Frase at
Martha@frasecommunications.com.

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WORLDLINK

welcomes news stories, announcements of events and ideas for articles.
These should be accompanied by a telephone number and e-mail address.

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *WorldLink*
will feature the Interamerican
Federation of People Management
Associations and HR news in
Latin America.

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