



Kenya: Ruto Gets Last Laugh

Zambia:
Zoom On A Year Of Hichilema

Nigeria:
The Peter Obi Phenomenon

Mozambique:
Banking On Gas

Brazil-Africa Forum
Returns To Rio



Angola: Another Mandate
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Ruto's Victory, Kenya's Triumph and Lessons For Africa

By Ajong Mbapndah L

In what many will describe as an upset, it is Vice President William Ruto who will be the 5th President of Kenya. When you have the legendary opposition leader Raila Odinga running for the 5th time in what was most likely going to be his last shot at the presidency, when you have a President, a boss you have served for two terms, throwing his weight behind the opposition leader, it is easy to understand those who thought Ruto stood no chance. The outcome of the elections sent shockwaves across Kenya and beyond, as victory for his opponent Raila Odinga is what was widely expected.

From the violence plagued elections of 2007, successive elections in Kenya have attracted global attention and scrutiny. And for good measure, there has hardly been a dull moment in Kenyan elections. Permanent suspense, abundant drama, heightened tensions, tribal acrimony, complex alliances, and for the elections of August 2022, the world was treated to a new meaning of politics making strange bed fellows and epic upsets. The election was a victory for William Ruto, it was a triumph for democracy in Kenya with key lessons that the rest of Africa could learn from going forward.

The trio of outgoing President Uhuru Kenyatta, his Deputy and now President elect William Ruto, and opposition leader Raila Odinga have dominated the political space in Kenya for about a decade now or more. Despite serving for two terms together, the relationship between President Kenyatta and William Ruto soured for much of the second term. Treated with so much disdain, humiliated on many instances, and pushed to the brink, Vice President Ruto endured, but never cracked. With President Kenyatta's open embrace and endorsement of his former rival Raila Odinga, Mr. Ruto never wavered in articulating and marketing his own vision for Kenya. At the end he got the last laugh!

President Uhuru Kenyatta was the son of Kenya's founding President Jomo Kenyatta, opposition leader Raila Odinga was the son of Kenya's former Vice President and historic opposition

leader Oginga Odinga. Without taking anything from the political prowess and achievements of both men, their name recognition and background gave them an edge that William Ruto never had. He was a top lieutenant of opposition leader Raila Odinga in the bloody elections of 2007, before switching his allegiance to Uhuru Kenyatta in 2013.

In a country where the rate of unemployment for young people is estimated at some 40%, the story of William Ruto mirrors that of most struggling Kenyans. He is said to have attended primary school barefooted, wore his first pair of shoes when he was aged 15, and hawked chicken and peanuts by the roadside. His victory should be an inspiration to other Kenyans and Africans that background and circumstances should not limit ambitions and dreams.

With the phrase "hustler nation", Ruto endeared himself to the struggling and downtrodden and made promises on a bottom-up approach to address the economic woes bedeviling Kenya. At 55, Ruto's first presidential run made him the 5th president of Kenya. Coincidentally, it is the 5th time 77-year-old opposition challenger Raila Odinga was running for office without success.

That the presidential dream has eluded him does not in any way negate the huge contributions that Mr. Odinga has made in building the inspiring democratic story that Kenya is today. From bitter political foes to a friendship that many did not think possible, President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga set the stage for the relative political calm that Kenya has enjoyed in the last few years including the 2013 elections.

On the international scene, Mr. Odinga has met and interacted with numerous world leaders, he is still the serving African Union High Representative for Infrastructure Development. Additionally, on the diplomatic front, at the behest of President Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga has served as a Special Envoy to the conflict in South Sudan. On



Ajong Mbapndah L, Managing Editor

that score, he has been instrumental in the peace process in South Sudan and bridging the differences between President Salva Kiir and his Deputy Rick Machar.

A presidential term would have been a befitting cap to the rich political career that Mr Odinga has had, and how he missed this one would always be baffling. Even the supreme court that nullified the elections of 2017 when he petitioned it for irregularities affirmed the victory of Ruto in the 2022 elections. Still, Mr Odinga has earned his place as an elder statesman and hopefully the new administration treats him with the respect he deserves.

As Ruto basks in victory, the triumph of democracy in Kenya must be pointed out. Opinions on the conduct of the elections may vary depending on whose side you were on or who you talk to, but the fact remains that a sitting person will be leaving office after serving the maximum of two terms as permitted by the constitution. The fact remains that the elections were organized by an Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission- IEBC. That as afflicted as he was with the outcome, Mr Raila Odinga and his coalition took grievances and evidence of fraud to the Supreme court where a verdict was given.

That Kenya was spared the ugly scenes of the 2007 elections speaks volumes on how far Kenya has gone in its democratic journey. Examples of leaders who have done away with term limits are legion in the continent, but Kenya seems to have gone past that stage for good. For all the limitations that he had, for all he left undone, a

highlight of President Kenyatta's legacy will always be that he respected constitutional term limits and added flair to the presidential role.

His historic handshake with Raila Odinga that set the tempo in reducing political tensions in Kenya should be a template for easing the kind of political animosity that still engulfs many countries. It should be disappointing that his preferred choice for the next president did not win, but such is the nature of democracy... the same democracy that earned him two terms of office.

Back to incoming President William Ruto, Kenyans will be watching, the world will be watching. Painted black on issues like corruption, he is now saddled with onerous task of delivering on campaign promises and proving to Kenyans that he was more than an accidental president. To his credit, he has vast experiences garnered over his reach political career and his stint as Deputy President should serve him well.

For the rest of African leaders both in power and the opposition, the audacity or successful political gamble of Ruto should be inspiring. There are many young leaders out there who could do their countries and continent a world of good. If William Ruto could defy the odds, why should others not borrow from his playbook?

One country that got it right with a much-needed change of leadership is Zambia where President Hakainde Hichilema has put the country back on the rails. This issue of PAV takes a look at his first year in office; and how well he has fared on campaign promises. In Angola Joao Lourenco is sipping champagne in celebration of another "victory" that maintains the 50-year-old hegemony of the ruling party in power. In Nigeria, a third force in Peter Obi is finally giving the two dominant parties a run for their money in the build up to the 2023 elections. How real is the potential of Peter Obi of the Labour party pulling a "Ruto like" upset in Nigeria? Find out in this issue of PAV ... Happy Reading!!

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THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA
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Nigeria: Will Peter Obi Spring An Upset?

By Richard Mammah

Half a year ago, both his party platform, the Labour Party, and his candidacy were not serious issues on the Nigerian political firmament. But not anymore. By the day, the chances of Mr Peter Obi, former Governor of the South Eastern State of Anambra, in the ongoing contest to find a replacement to outgoing President Muhammadu Buhari are getting brighter and brighter.

Underscoring his rising fortunes is a commentary made by the maverick political player, Femi Fani Kayode. Though he acknowledged that he was himself yet to be sucked in by the Obi charm and was still solidly behind the aspiration of Bola Ahmed Tinubu, candidate of the ruling All Progressives Congress, APC, the politician who served as Minister of Aviation in the Olusegun Obasanjo presidency insists that it would be foolhardy to underrate Obi.

Indeed, so troubling is the Obi phenomenon that the two more entrenched political parties, the APC and the People's Democratic Party, PDP are going the extra mile at the moment to contain it.



Peter Obi and his partisans are seriously shaking up the 2022 Presidential race in Nigeria. Photo courtesy

An Elder of Interest

After photos of Obi, and then Obi and his running mate, Yusuf Datti, went public showing the Labour Party flagbearer and his running mate in relatively cosy relations with former President Obasanjo, the rival APC and its flagbearer also moved on a charm offensive to the Abeokuta home of

the godfather. However, when one or more exuberant members of the entourage began to publicly insinuate that Obasanjo had virtually endorsed Tinubu's aspiration during that visit, an upset Obasanjo responded that no such thing was discussed, and that Camp Tinubu was simply up to mischief.

London flights

Underscoring the high-wire tensions and rivalries already being generated in the political space in Nigeria presently is the associated saga of Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike. The maverick politician who had, like Obi, initially aspired to be the flagbearer of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, but had lost out to the current flagbearer, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, is presently in London where he is playing the 'beautiful bride' and receiving different and competing visiting delegations of Nigerian politicians. One of those who came calling to Wike's London lair as the month was closing is Peter Obi. Notably, he was there at the same time with, if not in the company of Obasanjo.

'Obidients are rude and noisy'

Opponents of the Peter Obi candidacy now and again argue that the core of Peter Obi's supporters are rude and noisy.

Some of them have in this respect referred to verbal and written brushes that the likes of Femi Kuti, Sam Omatseye and Reno Omokri have had with them.



Peter Obi has developed a cult following within his partisans.

But some of the accusations being levelled against Obi's political base are not sustainable. For example, on account of his merely originating from the Igbo ethnic stock where the separatist, Independent People of Biafra, IPOB, operate, he has been branded an IPOB sympathiser without any concrete evidence in that respect.

Evidently, politics in Nigeria is a definitely rough tackling sport. And it is one where jabs, propaganda and fallacious content are pelted at political opponents. This also is how Obi has also come to be tarred with the brush of the unfortunate violence that had accompanied the EndSARS protests of 2020. But just like the IPOB charge, this is also unsubstantiated.

Some political commentators see the attacks on Obi and his supporters as part of an elaborate project to draw him out and ensure he is maximally distracted. One person who believes this is the analyst, Wellington Okoro. According to him, Obi is facing a barrage of attacks from establishment players intent on pulling him down.

'Two sides of the coin'

To be sure, there are a number of things going for the former Anambra State Governor. The first is his relatively solid grip on his South Eastern Igbo base. But this should not surprise many. Given that the South East has long complained of being marginalised in the political firmament, it always was going to be that the presence of a credible South Easterner on the ballot would have that effect. And in many respects, Obi fits the bill.

Second is Obi's fortune in attracting



Former President Olusegun Obasanjo is one of the leaders that Obi has routinely met for consultations.

the support and endorsement of the mass of Nigeria's angry youth. This also is not an out of the blues development. Given the widespread disenchantment from within this group for the mainstream political parties, the All-Progressives Congress, APC and the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, there was always a possibility that the prospects of a third major party appearing on the firmament was not only going to be a matter of time but that it was similarly also going to be widely embraced by this demographic category. In Obi's candidacy, many within this demographic segment seem to have been given the voice they have long craved for about the first time in a long while. And they are basking in the moment. Across social media and on the streets also, they are

turning out daily in large numbers to register their impact.

Man of Peace

The allegations hurled at Camp Obi however fly in the face when it comes to the man himself. Soft-spoken and humble, Obi comes across as a simple 'can't hurt a fly' person. In a society where the African Big Man syndrome is in heavy display, he has long cut the image of one with little or no airs. And this is a major part of why the crowds love him. He largely connects with them naturally and effortlessly.

But winning an election in Nigeria is indeed very serious business. And Wellington Okoro, who identifies himself as one who finds the Obi Movement as an interesting phenomenon, would want Camp Obi to fully count the costs.

'Obi's campaign is strong and moving. But the establishment he is up against is also sturdy and entrenched. However, one thing I have seen with Camp Obi now, and particularly the young people who populate its ranks is that they look like they are fully determined. And this is a major positive for their principal's aspirations.'

And Tony Egbufulu agrees:

'I will give it to Camp Obi. They know the odds are stacked against them in the traditional spots. But they are going on in a manner that makes you want to wonder where their fuel is coming from. The elections are definitely not going to be easy. And for Nigeria's sake, I wish them well.'

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Kenya: William Ruto Confirmed As Kenya's Fifth President

By Samuel Ouma

Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto is the fifth President of Kenya following the Supreme Court's ruling on Monday, September 5, 2022.

Ruto was declared President-elect on August 15 by Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission chairman Wafula Chebukati. He garnered 7,176,141 votes (50.49 per cent), defeating Azimio La Umoja One Kenya alliance flagbearer Raila Odinga who had 6,942,930 votes, equivalent to 48.85 per cent).

Roots Party presidential hopeful George Wajackoyah came a distant third with 61,969 votes, followed by Agano's David Mwaure, who polled 31,987 votes.

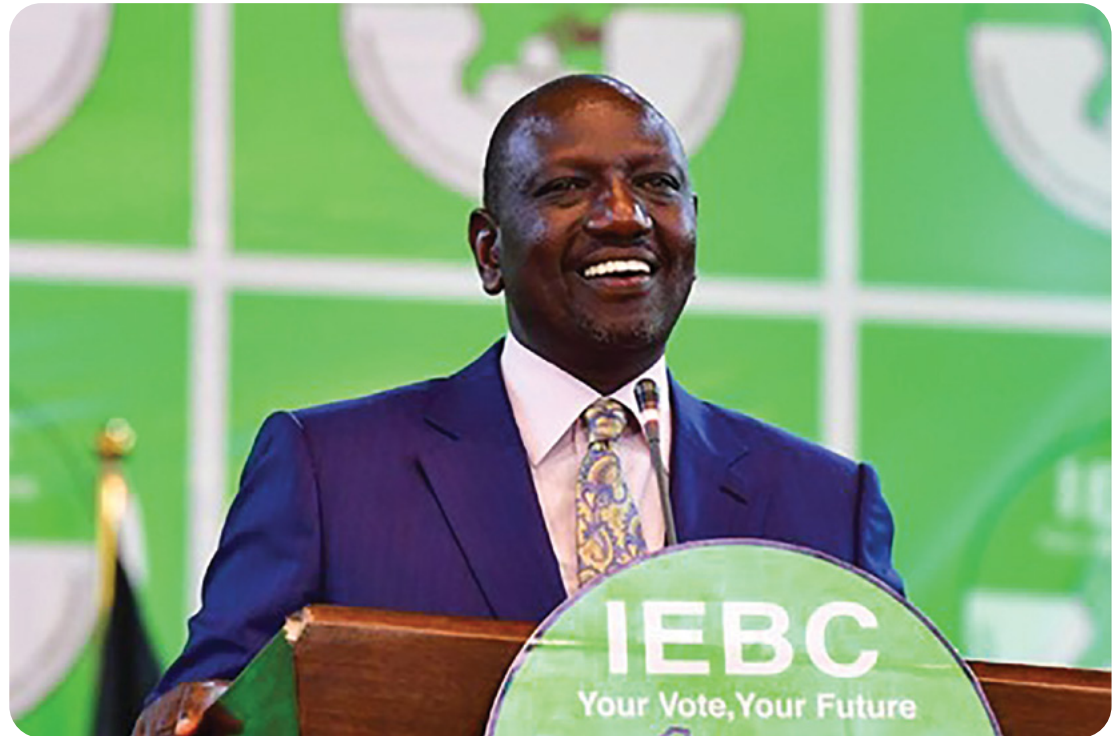
Most of Ruto's votes came from his backyard in Rift Valley and Mt. Kenya region, President Uhuru Kenyatta's backyard. On the other hand, Odinga consolidated most of his votes from Nyanza, his backyard and the western and coastal part of the country.

However, a section of people opposed Ruto's victory as eight petitions were filed seeking to have his election overturned on the grounds of irregularities and illegalities.

The first petition was from Odinga and his running mate Marth Karua. They asked the court to nullify the elections claiming it is marred with discrepancies. In a separate petition, Busia Senator Okiya Omtatah also dismissed the presidential election results announced by the IEBC, saying that no candidate had reached the constitutional threshold of 50% plus one.

The Supreme Court also received a petition from Khelf Khalifa, a renowned public interest process, calling for the results of the presidential election to be annulled. Reuben Kigame, a gospel artist, also filed a petition asking the Court to null and void the nomination and clearance of the four presidential candidates.

Another petition came from a voter named John Njoroge Kamau, asking



William Ruto speaks after being declared the winner of the close-fought presidential election. Photo Tony Karumba, AFP via Getty Images.

the courts to clarify whether the IEBC chairman had made a mistake by excluding other commissioners from the final count. Also, a lobby group Youth Advocacy Africa, called for the presidential election to be annulled. They alleged they had evidence the election result was rigged to ensure a candidate passed the 50%+1 threshold reached.

Another petition was filed by a lobby consisting of Juliah Nyokabi Chege, Joseph Mutua Ndonga and Simon Mwaura Njenga and another by a voter called David Kariuki Ngari.

Since the petitions raised similar issues, the seven-judge bench led by Justice Martha Koome consolidated them into nine issues used to determine the case. The first issue was whether the technology used by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) during the election met standards of integrity, auditability, security and transparency to ensure accurate and verifiable results.

Another issue was whether there was any interference with the

uploading and transmission of Forms 34A from the polling stations to the IEBC portal and whether there was a difference between the Forms 34A uploaded to the portal and the forms submitted at the National Census Center at the Bomas of Kenya.

The court was to determine whether there would be a postponement of the gubernatorial elections in Mombasa and Kakamega counties, the general elections in Kitui Rural, Kacheliba, Rongai and Pokot South constituencies, and the constituencies in Nyaki West in North Imenti Constituency and Kwa Njenga in Embakasi South Constituency came at the expense of the petitioners in the suppression of voters.

Other issues were whether there were unexplained discrepancies between the votes cast for presidential candidates and other elective offices and whether the IEBC conducted the verification, census and declaration of results in accordance with the provisions of Article 138(3)(C) and Article 138(10) of the Constitution.

The apex court was also to find out

whether the declared president-elect achieved 50 per cent plus one vote of the votes cast, pursuant to Article 138, paragraph 4, of the Constitution and whether there were irregularities and illegalities of such magnitude as to affect the final result of the presidential election. The last issue was reliefs and orders the court can issue or grant.

While delivering the verdict, Chief Justice Martha Koome ruled that claims by Odinga that IEBC were tampered with by deported Venezuelan national Jose Camargo were "no more than hot air".

«Upon considering all the pleadings, submissions and all the ICT scrutiny of the vote tallying and recounting report, which fully examined the IEBC's elections system, we are not persuaded by the allegation that the technology deployed by the IEBC failed the standard of article 86 (a) of the Constitution on integrity, verifiability, security and transparency to guarantee accurate and verifiable results,» Koome said.

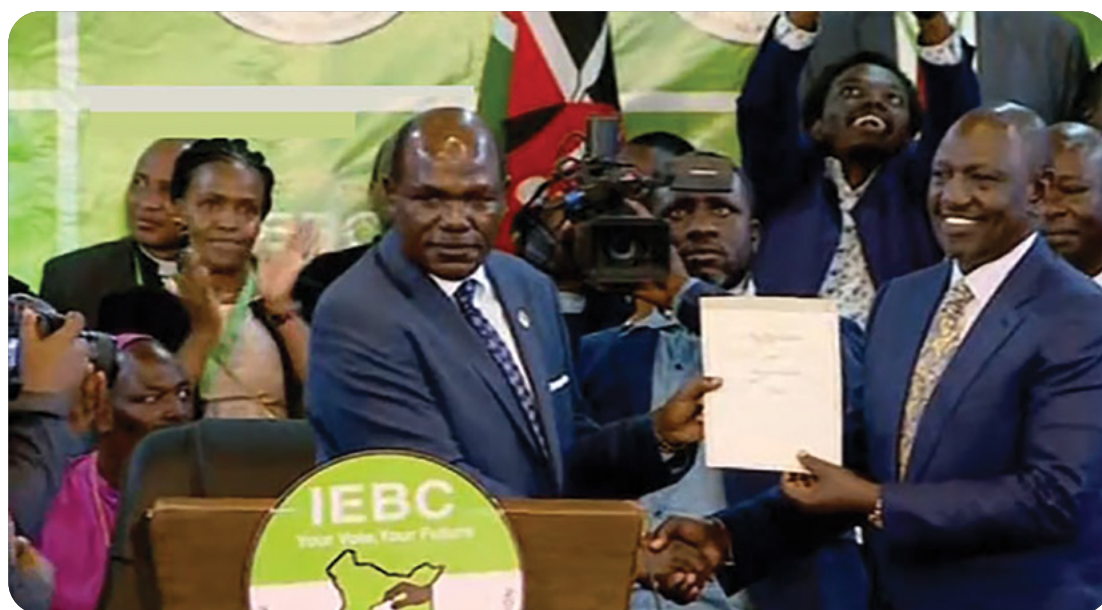
«Turning to Gacharage Primary School's Form 34A, sensationally presented by attorney Julie Soweto to show that a certain Jose Carmago accessed the RTS and influenced the results contained therein. That, too, turned out to be hot air, and we were taken on a wild goose hunt that turned up nothing of probative value,» she added.

On whether there was interference with uploading and transmission of forms 34A from polling stations, Koome said there was no evidence.

In response to whether the postponement of gubernatorial elections resulted in voter suppression to the detriment of the petitioners, Koome stated that they were postponed due to «genuine» errors.

The Supreme Court also ruled that the discrepancies between the President's votes and those cast at other polling seats were explained by the IEBC's statement that prisoners and Kenyans in the diaspora voted only for the head of state.

«From the explanation tendered, we are satisfied that the postponement was occasioned by a genuine mistake which in our view could have been avoided had the IEBC staff been



President-elect Ruto receives his results certificate from Chebukati. Photo courtesy.

more diligent when they went to inspect the templates in Greece where the printing of ballot papers was undertaken,» said Koome.

The judges also ruled that Ruto garnered 50 per cent plus one votes cast.

Following the ruling, the President-Elect took it to his Twitter account, saying he owes his success to God.

«With men, it is impossible, but not with God: for with God, all things are

possible,» said Ruto.

On his part, Odinga expressed disappointment with the decision to uphold Ruto's win.

«We have always stood for the rule of law and the constitution. In this regard, we respect the opinion of the court although we vehemently disagree with their decision today,» said Odinga in a statement.

He was born in Uasin Gishu, Rift Valley to Daniel Cheruiyot and Sarah

Cheruiyot. He attended Keretot Primary School for his primary education and then transferred to Wareng Secondary School for his regular education before moving on to Kapsabet Boys, Nandi for his advanced levels. He then received a BSc (Botany and Zoology) from the University of Nairobi, graduating in 1990.

Two years after graduating from the university, Ruto joined politics as the organizing secretary of youth for Kenyan independence party, Kenya African National Union (KANU). They rallied behind the late President Daniel Moi who won Presidency in 1992 general elections.

His active role in Kenyan politics started in 2006 when he expressed his interest in Presidency slated for December 2007. However, he later shelved his ambition and backed up Odinga in an election that ended in impasse. The Kenya Electoral Commission declared Kibaki the winner, while exit polls had put Raila Odinga in the clear lead. Chaos erupted in the entire nation, leading to the deaths of at least a thousand people and displacement of thousands of others.

To end the conflict, Kibaki and Odinga agreed to form a power-sharing government in 2008 and Ruto was appointed the Minister for Agriculture. In April 2010 he was transferred from the Ministry of



Questions remain as to what will become of veteran politician Raila Odinga after yet another presidential debacle.

Agriculture to the Ministry of Higher Education but one year later he was relieved of his ministerial duty over graft allegations. After resigning as a minister, Ruto ditched Odinga's ODM party and formed UDM and later came up with the United Republican Party (URP)

Following the 2007/2008 poll disputes, Ruto was named among the six suspects who were alleged to be the masterminds of the chaos. They were taken to the International Criminal Court based in Hague, Netherlands, but were late acquitted for lack of evidence.

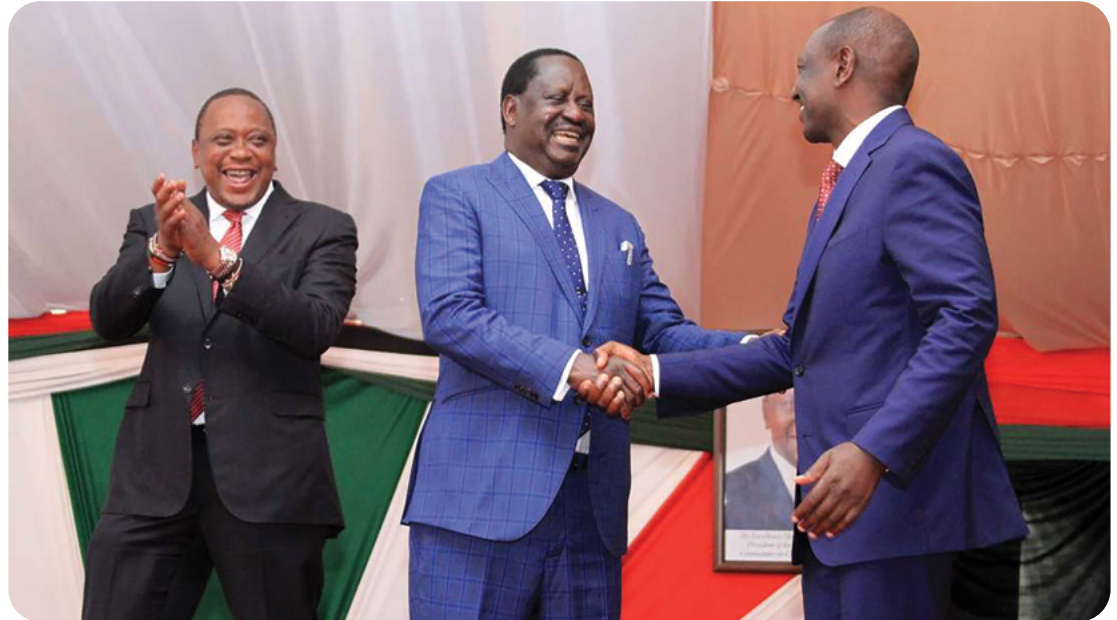
Ahead of 2013 polls, Ruto's URP teamed with President Uhuru Kenyatta's The National Alliance (TNA) and formed Jubilee alliance. They vied for the Presidency with Uhuru as the Presidential candidate and Ruto his running mate and they trounced Odinga and 4 other candidates in a disputed Presidential result.

In 2017, the duo formed Jubilee party, an outfit they successfully used to seek their re-election. Though their victory was annulled by the Supreme Court, they won the round two after the opposition boycotted elections held on October 26, 2017.

Prior to August 9, 2022 general elections, Ruto quit Jubilee and formed the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) over alleged fallout with his boss. With other like-minded parties, Ruto formed Kenya Kwanza alliance, an outfit that drive him into power.

As Ruto takes over, he promised to reached out to his predecessor and Odinga who he described as his worthy competitor in the just concluded elections to ensure Kenya moves in the right direction. Speaking after the court's ruling, he rubbished speculations that he will revenge against Kenyatta for betraying him by supporting Odinga.

«When I chose to support Uhuru Kenyatta I did not give him conditions that he must support



The enigmatic side of Kenyan politics is epitomized in this file photo of outgoing President Uhuru, defeated opposition challenger Odinga, and incoming President Ruto.

me, I made that very clear. I take no offence that he decided to choose and support someone else. We will remain friends as we have been in the context of where we are and we look forward to building on the foundation that is already there in the many issues that I worked with him and be able to take Kenya to the next level,» said Ruto.

President Ruto has a lot to do especially fixing the country's economy which is in its deathbed and uniting the country which is divided along tribal lines. He must find ways of bringing together supporters of Odinga and his supporters who do not read from the same script.

A section of Kenyans who spoke to the Pan African Visions asked the incoming President to improve the dwindling economy. With the biting drought and the Covid-19 pandemic, food prices have hit a record high.

«Life has become unbearable in the last two years, and the economy is deteriorating. We urge the incoming President to put initiatives to boost our economy,» said Raphael Musyoka, an entrepreneur in Nairobi.

There are mixed reactions from Kenyans concerning Ruto's presidency. While others believe that

he will outperform his predecessors, some argue that his administration will have no big differences from the previous regimes. His leadership is expected to change Kenyan politics with voter apathy expected in the upcoming general elections.

Most of Odinga's supporters have vowed not to vote again as they claimed their candidate is always being rigged out in favour of others.

In 2027, we expect to witness a repeat of this year's election or something worse than that. Out of 22 million registered voters, only 14 million people casted their votes according to the statistics released by the IEBC.

With Odinga expected to retire after unsuccessfully contesting for the presidency five times, low voter turnout from his backyard is expected in future. Even though he is yet to chart his way forward, his age factor might hinder him from vying again. At 77, Odinga is expected to retire from politics after advocating for devolution, human rights and democracy in the East African country.

Meanwhile, President Kenyatta will be remembered for improving

infrastructure, enabling easy access of government services and trying to unite the country. However, Kenyan witnessed rampant corruption, wastage of resources and fall of economy during his tenure.

As usual, rigging allegations that mar every election in Kenya were not absent from the 2022 elections. A significant percentage of Kenyans have lost confidence in the IEBC with many claiming rogue politicians use the commission to ascend to power. Can IEBC redeem itself in 2027?

In terms of democracy, Kenya is the father of democracy in Africa. This was witnessed in 2017 when the Supreme Court of Kenya becomes the first country in Africa to nullify presidential elections. The court also declared the Building Bridges Initiatives spearheaded by Kenyatta and Odinga early this year as well as handling eight presidential petitions in a professional manner. This year's polls have also revealed that Kenyans are maturing democratically since there was no violence after the elections compared to the previous ones.

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Zoom On Hichilema's First Year.

By Kelvin Mbewe

From a grass thatched house where he was born in Kalomo Western Zambia in 1962 to occupying the highest office of a democratic country as the seventh republican President of Zambia, a Southern African country. Later arrested and detained at a maximum correctional facility for 127 days by his political rival and President at the time Edgar Lungu.

This is the story of 60-year-old Hakainde Hichilema, the president of the United Party for National Development (UPND) - The man that has lost elections as president five times until 2021.

President Hichilema and the UPND took over power from the Patriotic Front (PF) under President Edgar Lungu, a lawyer in last year's August general elections. On 11 April 2017, Hichilema was arrested and charged with treason, a move that was seen as an illegitimate act by Lungu to silence a political rival. The arrest and charge were widely condemned, with protests held in Zambia and abroad, demanding Hichilema's release and condemning the increasing authoritarianism of Lungu's regime. Hichilema was released from prison on 16 August 2017, and the charge of treason was dropped.

September 2022 marks one year of President Hakainde Hichilema and the UPND in power, the economist, businessman and farmer who according to his curriculum vitae has a bachelor's degree in economics and business administration from the University of Zambia as well as an MBA in finance and business strategy from the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

The million-dollar question is whether Mr Hichilema and the UPND are delivering on their campaign promises and whether will they change the narrative for Zambia. Before the UPND was elected to office,



A year of President Hichilema has given Zambia fresh hope.

Zambia's economic and social, and the public were reportedly struggled by both local and international media. According to the 2015 global hunger Index Zambia was named the third hungriest nation. And towards the last elections in August 2021, the country's inflation rate which is the rate at which commodity prices increase was 26 per cent. The exchange rate was equally soaring with the local currency (Zambian kwacha) trading at k24 to 1 US dollar. The former ruling party cadres became the judges and the juror. They were reportedly harassing any opposition political sympathies. They took marketplaces, bus stations, some

companies, and contracts among other undemocratic tendencies. Charles Silungwe, a citizen of Zambia, said President Hichilema and the UPND have so far performed well in restoring the rule of law. "However, some cadres are still misbehaving but not as it were before. I hope it will be completely dealt with as promised by The President," he said.

Juliet Mwila said despite peace being restored, there is still hunger in Zambia. "Not many promises have been delivered, we shall give them time," she said. Leonard Mwale is optimistic that the economy will be okay with time. "It is slowly balancing, we can't complain, I am seeing the

difference," he said.

One of Zambia's leading economic research institutes has described President Hichilema and the UPND's year rule as impressive owing to the economic gains such as the appreciation of the kwacha, decrease in inflation, and the success of the US\$ 1.3 billion bailout package among others. The Institutes research fellow Dr Silvia Mwambazi said in an interview that the economic gains can be attributed to fiscal consolidation, commitment to policy actions, and investor confidence among others.

"Some government action and commitment to policy can be seen in the 2022 budget in which it has shown commitment to decrease the fiscal deficit to 6.7 per cent of Zambia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Previously the country's debt levels were too high, there was evidence of wastage of resources and a global factors such as COVID-19 which led to an economic slowdown," she said.

However, after one year of UPND and President Hichilema's rule, Development expert Charity Musamba has noted that the party lacks inter-party relations and gender inclusion. "I would like to see a situation where political parties have mutual relations among themselves despite having different interests. The silence on political relations exhibited by the UPND is worrying. The party has also not shown much in advancing gender equality, especially in decision-making positions and platforms," she said.

Speaking on the 'Red hot breakfast show', a live talk show on Hot FM, a local radio station, President Hichilema said he and the UPND are successfully restoring an economy that was in a mess owing to mismanagement of the country by the previous government. He said that public resources



A year after he took office, President Hichilema remains clear eyed on what direction he wants Zambia to take

were mistaken for personal resources hence the high debt acquisition, overpricing of projects and other government undertakings.

Mr Hichilema added that he and the UPND have, however, managed to restructure the debt that Zambia owes to China, Euro bond, Paris Club and others while also managing to stabilize the exchange rate, reduce inflation and interest rates, stopped load shedding, and restoring the rule of law among others.

"Look at the kwacha, remember where it was k25 against one United States dollar, it is now around k15. We brought it down to stability. The inflation rate was at 25 per cent, and we have lowered it to 6 per cent, which is a single digit. Interest rates were too high, now they come down," President Hichilema said.

President Hichilema added that is why some banks in the country recently announced a reduction in mortgage rates from 26 per cent to 16 per cent, which will see a lot of people owning houses and growing their businesses. He further said he and his party have stopped load shedding which was reducing the country's production capacity.

"We simply looked at some parameters. One of them was that Kafue Gorge lower was abandoned in 2019, five generators were not functional, and we simply raised money and bought new generators. Today we are exporting electricity to Zimbabwe, South Africa and Congo and there is no load shedding," he said.

With regards to the restoration of law and order, President Hichilema said people are no longer fighting in markets, but now doing business freely. "That was one of our campaigns. Some people think that they can continue doing what was happening before, but the law will take its course," he said.

And Mr Hichilema has called on citizens to be patient as money will soon be restored to the economy. "People are saying that money needs to be available, the issue is that the money got taken away but two things before we took office, high debt. Most



Diplomatic victories for Hichilema include a meeting in Washington, DC with US Vice President Kamala Harris.

of the money was going towards debt servicing. When we were in opposition, we said that we will restructure the debt and we are doing exactly that. We now have a debt framework agreed upon. This will release resources into the economy. Imagine as a household you earn k10,000 and you have to pay k7,000 per month to service the debt. Then you find the answer to restructuring this debt, by extending the period of payment and interest comes down and now you have k6,000 in the house and k3,000 for debt repayment per month; The money will be released and people will start seeing it," he said.

He says that his team also promised to ramp up the economy and bring growth to the economy which seems to be working out. "At the time we took over office, the economy had collapsed from 6 per cent growth per year to 5, to 3 and 1 to 0 and minus. We have been able to turn around the economy from negative growth to positive 3. Traders and marketers will now see this liquidity which is more money in circulation. That is a simplistic analysis," he said.

Another reason why there was no money in Zambia's economy was due

to corruption, according to President Hichilema. "A road that should cost 1 million dollars costs two million dollars. We are now rearranging things, saving the one million and diverting the other to buying desks from Zambia and not somewhere else. We are on the road to repairing the economy," he said while adding that, unlike the previous government his team is paying farmers and others suppliers on time to ensure that there is more production.

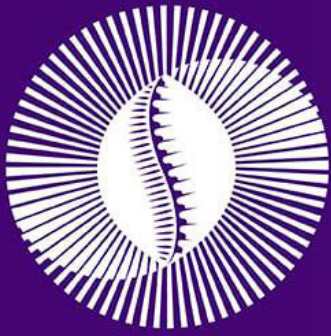
"People must rate, we can't rate ourselves, people can have a checklist of what we said we would do," he said. Before the UPND came into power Zambia was struggling to get an IMF package to help restructure its debt but the new dawn government has managed to bring the debtors to the table and has agreed on terms of managing it. There were also debt defaults; we are not reducing the debt after restructuring it. Creditors have agreed to come to the table, we have been able to get an IMF programme, and previous government couldn't get it, within 8 months."

President Hichilema and his party have also re-introduced Free education and employed over 40,000 civil servants in just one year.

And because he was born in a grass thatched house, Mr Hichilema said he wants Zambian health centres to have a maternity wing and running water to ensure that no child is born in the condition he was born.

The coming of the UPND came with the creation of a new ministry called the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment. Mr Hichilema said the goal of this ministry is to ensure sustainable resource management. President Hichilema said: "As we utilize our resources from mining, agriculture, and forests, we must do it in a manner that does not destroy our environment. We need to contain the increase in global temperatures to 3 degrees centigrade which is why we are also promoting clean energy. You will see a lot of investment in these areas."

It has taken 365 days for President Hichilema and the UPND to reverse some of what critics of the past government (the Patriotic Front, PF) saw as mismanagement. What do the next four years of the party's jurisdiction look like? Will they take Zambia forward as their slogan states or will the country see darker days?



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The Best Is Yet To Come- Hichilema Hakainde On His First Year As President

The Best Is Yet To Come- Hichilema Hakainde On A Year As President

On 24 August 2021, Hichilema became Zambia's seventh president after beating then incumbent president Edgar Lungu with over one million more votes after highly dissatisfied Zambian voters ended the former ruling Patriotic Front's 10-year reign. A nearly collapsing economy, wrecked rule of law, and reports of grand corruption in government gave Hichilema and his UPND that much-needed catalyst to record Zambia's second-biggest ever election victory against an incumbent president.

"Zambians do not have to thank me for the job I am doing," President Hichilema Hakainde said. "It is what they voted me to do. They must not agree with me when I do wrong things like acquire debts. Your economy is 25 billion dollars, and somebody borrows 19 to 20 billion dollars."

"I stand before you and with you, as your President and a true servant. A President devoted to taking our country to greater heights. I pledge a better Zambia for all." One year on, and his words still reverberating from a packed National Heroes Stadium, Mr Hichilema has matched his words with action. President Hichilema sat down with journalists at Hot FM Zambia and examined the achievements recorded so far. While his supporters see him as a saviour, his critics see him as an abject failure.

Have you relinquished all your businesses and if not, who is running your businesses?

President Hichilema: How can we relinquish who we are? Because we have worked for ourselves from the age of 27. All these years we have been working for ourselves. We have sought public office; how can we now throw away what we have created and worked for? Not possible or right either. So, the thing is to structure them properly so they can continue running. We must work to grow what



I am here to serve Zambians , says President Hichilema.

we created as the country must be grown. Secondly, those assets also belong to the children because that is the way it should be.

Lastly, it is important for those seeking public office whether councillor, mayor, council chairperson, member of parliament, Minister or president, I encourage people to work for themselves first; to create value for themselves so that when they come into public office, they are not eyeing the nice things you see around - that belongs to the public. We create a separation; public assets are for the public - 18 million of them plus. Why do I say 18 million? Including the unborn ones. Those are their assets. Private assets must remain private; that distinction will help the country fight abuse of resources; fight corruption and we are determined to continue with that separation.

Still on the subject of business, many Zambians want to know why you have not publicly released or declared your assets and liabilities.

For someone like you who is championing the corruption fight and open governance, this is rather odd.

President Hichilema: I am not sure why you find it odd. I have been declaring assets ever since I was obligated to do that by the law. Maybe you have not been paying attention. If you remember there was a debate in 2015 when we declared assets because we were required to and they were made public. All of us presidential candidates declared assets. Remember the election in 2015 was in January and then we had another in 2016 and we declared assets again. There was a huge debate that amongst the presidential candidates, one had declared a figure in 2015 (for the 2015 elections) and another for the 2016 elections and in one and a half years there was a huge difference. Just last year, we declared; that we submitted by the law so that notion is not right. We have made our position very clear.

I do not steal; I do not take what is not mine and I challenge that person

who said I stole a Lima bank house (and they named the house; Michael Longo house) and I challenge them to go to court and they didn't. I gave them time; if you do not go to court I will go to court and I went to court - first round I won. I am very unhappy that I have had to suspend that litigation because the law now does not allow a sitting president to litigate. It demonstrates to you how much of transparent we are, and how much disclosure we give. What disclosure are we talking about is all in the public institution and some of it is in the courts of law and the courts of law documents are available for anyone to check. We come with clean hands, we conduct businesses with clean hands and we encourage other Zambians to do the same.

What are your reactions to how Zambians rate you?

President Hichilema: It is important to know what Zambians are saying. The important thing to pick here is what people are picking

about what you were campaigning about. For example, the issue of law and order; I think they agree that there is law and order. That was one of our campaign promises that we will restore law and order. There will be lingering cases of old habits dying hard and some people think they can continue doing what was happening before but the law will take its course. People are talking about how money needs to be available which is true. But the money was being taken away due to high debts (most of the money was going towards servicing the debts). What did we say when we were in opposition? That we were going to restructure the debts and we are just doing exactly that. We have now got a debt framework agreed upon with our campaign promise. What this will do is release money into the economy and the people will start seeing the money.

We also promised that we will ramp up the economy; we will bring growth into the economy. At the time we took office, the economy was down, had collapsed from 6 per cent growth per year down to 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and minus. In this period, we have been in office we have been able to turn around the economy and now we are projecting to grow by 3.5 per cent and then you will start seeing money in the economy. Corruption is also another thing that was taking the money out. A road that should cost 1 million dollars was costing 2 million dollars. Now, we are rearranging things so that we spend the 1 million dollars, save the other 1 million and then we can use it to buy desks in schools from Zambia and not from outside. It means a desk manufacturer now has a customer who will make money to circulate in the economy. I want to assure my colleagues (Zambians) that we are on the road to restoring the economy and the economy is slowly coming back. It is good to have feedback from the population.

If we have to look at your performance for this one year, it will come with mixed reactions. Some observers say you are overpromised. Do you feel you overpromised? And if you are to rate yourself out of ten, what will be the score?



For a man who became President after some five unsuccessful attempts, Hichilema is under the obligation to deliver for Zambians.

President Hichilema: First, the writing is not by us. That is mischief; we cannot rate ourselves – the people must rate us because it is the people we are committed to working for. We can only explain what we have done based on what we committed to the people and the way to do that is to maybe do a checklist of what we said we will do and what have we done. It is also important to say we inherited an economy in a crisis; we inherited an economy where we were failing to service debts. What have we done to the economy is that we have restored growth and the projection is at 3.5 per cent from zero or minus- is that a success? It's a success, no question about it. We have been able to get an IMF programme which our colleagues before us were seeking and could not get and we have got it. In under eight (8) months in office, we were able to get it – is that a failure or success, it is a success. People say we don't need the IMF. Why? IMF is our own IMF; we are shareholders of the IMF and it is our organization. We are getting facilities at the IMF, we got the SDR at 1.3 billion at zero interest, no grant. Now we are going into the mid of the debt restructuring; in September or October, you will hear the good news. Again, that will release money that

was going to service the debts owed and bring it back into the economy. We can put it into agriculture to support more farmers to produce more food for our consumption and export.

We are going to now be able to put money into education; we are going to put money into health and other services; water and sanitation. We have agreed that any clinic anywhere whether public must have a maternity wing so that mothers do not deliver under a tree. My mother gave birth to me in a grass-touched house and not even in a maternity wing, with no running water. I can not sit in this presidency and allow those things to continue in Ikate, Ichikalaba, and everywhere. We agreed that every health centre wherever it is located at the bare minimum must have a maternity wing and must have running water – we have allocated money for that. Have we succeeded in that issue we said when we were campaigning? Yes, it is very clear. The success list is long, and it is up to you otherwise we can go on and on and articulate that this is what we said we will do and this is what we have done. Success or failure, the judgement is for the people. Things cannot be done in one year and we have a five-

year mandate. It means we have to do what is called priorities and move on to the next

On the issue of debt, some Zambians feel like we engage China a little bit too late. Shouldn't you have engaged the Chinese much earlier seeing as we owed them a huge chunk of money?

President Hichilema: It is not true we engaged them six months after forming a government. We engaged every creditor and remember, we said we will engage creditors when we were still in opposition. Before we took over office, we started engaging creditors. I went to London to have a meeting with Euro bondholders when I was in opposition. One of the things we were doing is to establish what they were owed. Everyone was engaged except for the way the debt was acquired; the arrangements were different with each creditor. It is not true that we engaged China late; we were engaging everybody, understanding the term sheet. Zambians should know that we are working in an organized way.

We also needed to engage in a way that no creditor felt disadvantaged – it is called common framework and we managed to do that. We had the

first creditor meeting on June 16 and the negotiations were very difficult. Would China have come to the table on June 16 if we were not engaging them? The answer is no, so, we were engaging them. The group of creditors in their numbers and diversity we were talking to them. The second meeting with the creditors took place last month and we had a fantastic agreement. The objective is to lower the cost of the debt.

Are we looking at seeing a new constitution from the UPND (United Party for National Development)?

President Hichilema: The constitution is the people's mandate, that is why when a government tries to run a constitution to their own dictate they do not succeed. It is the people's domain. We know what is wrong in the constitution, by and large, Zambians know through the various constitutional review commissions and also the lacunas that were identified. For example, the 2016 amendment of the constitution required that when there is a change of government you cannot appoint an attorney general, or solicitor general until you get parliamentary approval. But, after elections, it takes long before parliament sits. Now you wait but business does not wait. Those are lacunas and we agree and we will like it changed but how do we get it changed through the people and they must agree.

What else? We want more women, and youth in parliament and to do that we have to amend the constitution. For me, we are wasting money on by-elections. We should ensure that after the general elections there should be no other elections until the next circle of five years. No by-elections and the constitution provide for by-elections and to stop the by-elections so that we do not waste money. My hands are tied and those others who agree with my view, we are bound by the law. There are necessary constitutional changes, but the process requires the people to be involved. This government is fulfilling its commitment that it will amend the Public Order Act. We have



HH at the inauguration of a water supply project in Lusaka. Photo courtesy

already started the process. Many things that are off the constitution we are changing because some of the issues are inhibiting growth and we have to attend to them, and we are attending them.

You have added over 40 thousand workers to the public sector in general. Are you not worried that without a corresponding expansion of the economy adding more civil servants to the payroll might just collapse the economy?

President Hichilema: The coin has two sides. 40 thousand civil servants in two areas. Zambians agree with free education but in schools, there were no teachers. What is the point of sending students to school when there are no teachers? Free education meant the children who were not in school had to go to school. Teachers are essential and can we debate whether teachers are necessary or not? We committed to the opposition and we have done it. Nurses and medical staff are essential; you go to a clinic and you find no medical staff. Even if the medicines were there, there was no medical staff.

Having established the need for kids to be in school they need teachers; we employ teachers in line with our campaign promises. The question of numbers is the question of priorities. We now retrieve money from building expensive roads to now supporting teachers. That is why you elect governments, parties and their teams who can make that distinction and that is why we are employing twelve thousand staff. We have been able to bring billions of investments in a short period.

On the issue of international relations, you voted to reprimand Russia for invading Ukraine. Some people feel like your administration is too West leaning. How do you respond to that?

President Hichilema: We voted against war; we do not support the war. You have heard me instability anywhere is instability everywhere. We are against the war in Mozambique because when there is trouble in Mozambique there is trouble in Zambia. Our vote was against war and not against Russia.

Any last point you will want to share?

President Hichilema: We must encourage citizens to be able to find this government as theirs and where we go wrong let them correct us. Let us work as a team. Divisions, negativity, and fighting are not helpful. Let us focus on the thing that will create value for our country. I am very delighted that we as a country are beginning to stitch together because we were pulling away from each other. More things unite us than those that divide us; let us work on those things that unite us then we can focus on law and order; fighting corruption, managing the economy, creating opportunity; better lives, jobs, and schools for all our people without segregation. We will remove the bottlenecks and we agreed on how to remove them and we expect more delivery from CDF and many more to come. I am very thankful to the people of Zambia for allowing me to serve and not to be served; we are here to give not to take, to unite and not to divide.

*Courtesy of Hot FM Zambia



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Here's Zambia's Secret To Controlling Inflation And Strengthening Its Currency

By Faustine Ngila*

When he first came into office, almost a year ago, Zambia's new president was ridiculed by skeptics who called him, "the calculator boy," for his strong focus on the economy and his background as an accountant.

Looking back now, it's evident that these were the exact skills that Zambia needed to pull itself back from the economic mess it was in at the time, having become the first African country to default on repayments during the pandemic. Since he became president in August last year, Hakainde Hichilema has steered the economy towards stability.

The Zambian kwacha is the best performing currency in the world against the US dollar, rallying over 18.5% from Jan. 22 to Sept. 1.

While continental peers South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya have been unable to control rising inflation and plunging currencies, Hichilema's government has managed to reduce the inflation rate from 24.4% in August 2021 to 9.7% in June this year.

Zambia's economy

What could be Zambia's secret in shining in economic areas where almost all countries in the world are struggling? A raft of both monetary



Zambia's 'calculator boy' is gradually delivering on his promise.

and fiscal measures, according to the Policy Monitoring and Research Centre in Lusaka, the capital.

When the government's monetary policy committee met last November, it decided to "raise the monetary policy rate by 50 basis points to 9%." The rate remains unchanged till now. The ultimate goal is to reduce

inflation to between 6% and 8% by mid 2023 and a decline in inflation had been achieved when it met again in May 2022.

To support agriculture and livestock, the government also removed 5% customs duty on the importation of cattle and chicken breeding. The rate of rise of food prices fell from 12% in July to 11.3% in August.

Challenges still prevail though in the mining sector, which contributes 10% to the country's GDP.

Restructuring Zambia's debt

An agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to restructure Zambia's debt, a \$1.4 billion bailout package has seen the Kwacha strengthen against the US dollar and helped contain the rate at which prices were rising due to supply-chain disruptions emanating

from the war in Ukraine and ravages caused by the covid-19 pandemic. The IMF board approved a \$1.3 billion 38-month loan to Zambia on Aug. 31 in addition to another \$1.3 billion special drawing rights allocation from the fund it received in August 2021.

Economist Patrick Chileshe says the other reason why the Kwacha has been gaining against the US dollar is increased forex supply. To guard against the volatility in the exchange rate, the central bank was offloading an average of \$13 million per day in June.

"We have seen the Kwacha gain strength, and that was driven by increased foreign exchange supply to the market by the Bank of Zambia which was consistent in the market, whereas the demand for US dollars has been low and that led to the appreciation of the Zambian Kwacha," Chileshe explains.

*The piece was originally published in Bloomberg



Getting it right on the Kwacha is vital to brighter economic fortunes for Zambians.

-After 5 Decades in Power: Angola's Ruling Party Wins Yet Another Presidential Election, Opposition Wants Results Nullified

By Amos Fofung

Angola's ruling party, the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA which has been in power for nearly five decades, has won yet another national election with a solid lead over the main opposition. João Lourenço has secured another five-year term after winning what has been termed the most competitive election in the country's democratic history.

The win for the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) thus extend its continuous rule since independence from Portugal in 1975. The incumbent Lourenço and his Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) were declared winner of Wednesday's presidential and parliamentary election with 51.17% of the votes.

The win extends the MPLA's 47-year winning streak and comes amid rising disenchantment with the party and situation in the southern African country. Only about 6.4 million of the 14 million Angolans who registered to vote did so, according to the electoral



President João Lourenço of Angola celebrating his election victory at his party's headquarters in Luanda, Angola. Credit. Paulo Novais, EPA, via Shutterstock

commission.

The main opposition party, led by Adalberto Costa Junior, took 43.95% of the votes and has refused

to accept the results.

«We have taken legal action to annul the elections,» said the chairman of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and Presidential candidate Adalberto Costa Junior on Twitter on Friday.

The electoral commission should recount the votes and publish the results of the vote in August in a transparent manner, UNITA announced.

Even before the official results were released, unease tension swept across the nation, and some 80,000 uniform officers were deployed into the streets to prevent possible unrest. This came after the opposition party UNITA's vice-presidential candidate Abel Chivukuvuku told Portuguese radio station TSF that the party would contest the results because they did not «correspond to reality».

Immediately after results were made public, UNITA is refusing to



Photo montage of the Opposition challenger Adalberto da Costa Júnior and Incumbent Angolan President João Lourenço. Image courtesy Ana Moreira.

recognize the results of the elections and has filed various complaints to the electoral commission. The party states that there were discrepancies between the party's own count and the commission's tally.

«The MPLA did not win the election... we have been at peace for 20 years, and we now need to embrace a true democratic rule of law,» UNITA leader Adalberto Costa Junior said in an address to the nation streamed on his Facebook page.

«I voted for UNITA, and I do not believe in these results,» said Jorge, a 40-year-old mechanic who did not give his surname, accusing the electoral commission of being in

cahoots with the ruling party. «I feel really bad. The country is not going to change, it's always the same story.»

UNITA's deputy leader Abel Chivukuvuku said the party's own tally showed it was ahead. «Our poll counting centers... give us clear provisional indication of a winning trend for UNITA in all provinces of the country,» he told a live streamed night conference. «We are confident, calm and tranquil.»

The MPLA traditionally wields a grip over the electoral process, and state media and opposition and civic groups have raised fears of voter tampering. Results in past elections have been contested, in a process that

can take several weeks.

Despite his recent unpopularity, the Incumbent President Lourenco, a Soviet-educated former general who had promised a new era for the southern African nation when he succeeded veteran leader Jose Eduardo dos Santos five years ago, has trumpeted a list of achievements.

He is credited with making far-reaching reforms, including boosting financial transparency and efficiency in parastatal organisations, fighting sweeping nepotism and corruption, and promoting business-friendly policies to lure foreign investors.

«I am happy, the MPLA has given young people opportunities, there is

more work and transparency,» said 27-year-old shopkeeper Madalena Antonio commenting on the results. «The government did what it could do. Things will get better.»

The election has been overshadowed by Angola's many woes -- a struggling economy, inflation, poverty and drought, compounded by the death of a former strongman president.

Angola is Africa's second largest crude producer, but the oil bonanza also nurtured corruption and nepotism under dos Santos, who died in Spain last month. The leader who served as president from 1979 – 2019 was buried last Sunday on what would have been his 80th birthday. _____



Simon TIEMTORE
Founder and CEO

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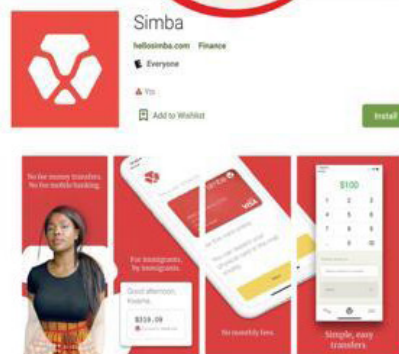
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Rwanda's Wanton Antics Threatening Peace in the Great Lakes Region – Senator Robert Menendez

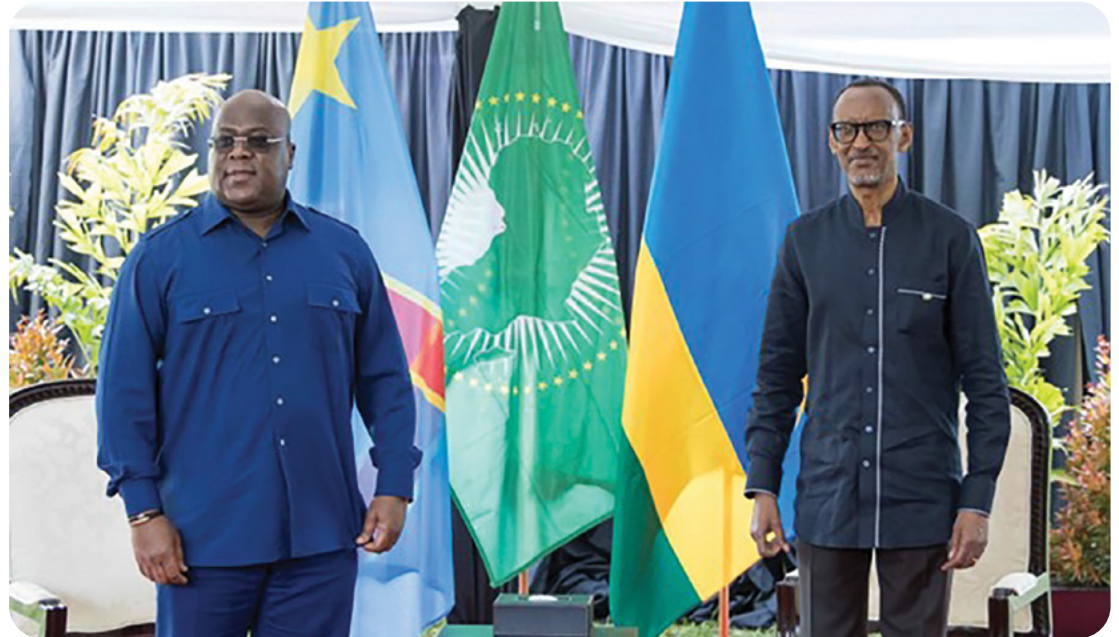
By Prince Kurupati

The Great Lakes region is in turmoil as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda are at loggerheads. Also incorporated in the squabbles are Uganda and the revitalised March 23 Movement (M23). The tensions which first emerged towards the end of 2021 are growing day by day something which security experts warn can lead to a full-blown conflict if not curtailed early.

The start of the tensions can be traced right back to the election of DRC president Felix Tshisekedi in 2019. Upon his election, Tshisekedi promised to “bring to heel the dozens of armed groups that were spawned over decades of conflict in the country’s east” according to U.S. Senator Robert Menendez who is the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Noble as his plans were, President Tshisekedi felt that he alone could not curtail the armed groups and hence needed external support from surrounding countries. This, therefore, led him to approach Rwanda and Uganda for support.

Unfortunately for Tshisekedi, “his plan to outsource that task to his neighbours, Uganda and Rwanda, both of which have a long history of plundering eastern Congo-K, appears to be one of the principled factors in stoking the return of the Tutsi-led M23 rebellion, previously backed by both countries,” Senator Menendez said. The M23 since its emergence has launched scathing and daring attacks on the Congo-K and other actors it presumes its enemies including “downing a UN helicopter and teeing itself up for a possible attack on Congo’s eastern city of Goma”.

The daring attacks and intelligence gathered by Congo forces have made the DRC government feel like Rwanda is backing the M23 rebels. Though Rwanda vehemently denies the accusations, its actions since the



All is not well between Tshisekedi and Kagame. Photo credit ISPI.

re-emergence of the rebels does paint a different picture. The statement by Rwandan President Paul Kagame on 23 June 2022, at the Commonwealth meeting did not help matters either as he said “With the M23, we defend the Congolese of Rwandan origin so that they can access property rights”. The statement left many Congolese and security experts convinced that Rwanda would work with the M23 rebels in as much as they claim some of the rebels as of Rwandan ‘origin’.

While a big case is made for the Rwandan government in triggering the frosty relations between Kigali and Kinshasa, the Tshisekedi government according to Senator Menendez is partly to blame for setting both Rwanda and Uganda on a collision course something which he thinks may play a part in forcing Kigali to partner with the M23 rebels.

Senator Menendez said that the Rwandan government was “outraged in November 2020, when Kinshasa agreed to a deal giving Ugandan engineering company Dott Services majority shares in a joint venture with Congolese parastatal Société

Aurifere et Industrielle du Kivu et du Maniema (Sakima), a company with rights to mine gold in Maniema province. Dott Services is widely believed to be linked to President Museveni’s brother Salim Saleh (aka Caleb Akandwanaho). That deal with Sakima came alongside another agreement giving Dott Services the contracts to rehabilitate more than 230 kilometres of roads connecting North Kivu to Uganda, a direct threat to Kigali’s commercial interests and its influence over the illicit economy in trafficked Congolese minerals”.

After Kigali expressed its dismay over the contract awarded to Sakima, Kinshasa responded by “signing a contract with Dither Ltd, a firm widely believed to be linked to Rwanda’s military, to refine gold produced by Sakima, setting Rwandan and Ugandan interested in Congo-K on a collision course”. Following the re-emergence of the M23 and the reports of its links to Rwanda, Congo responded by cancelling Dither’s contract and other bilateral agreements between Kinshasa and Kigali. This move angered Kigali

hence the increase in tensions between the two in recent months.

While fingers can be pointed at both parties in the latest Rwanda-Congo conflict, Senator Menendez believes that Rwanda is the biggest culprit owing to its wanton antics including its ‘support’ of the M23 rebels. As such, measures to diffuse the tensions should largely be aimed at stopping Rwanda’s wanton antics.

Senator Menendez’s first move in diffusing the tension was to urge the U.S. government to intervene by urging Paul Kagame to move his troops and M23 rebels from the Congo region. In a letter addressed to the U.S. Secretary of State Honourable Antony J. Blinken, Senator Menendez took the opportunity to remind the U.S. that it’s the Rwandan actions (together with Uganda) which in the late 1990s sparked a war in the Great Lakes region “that according to the International Rescue Committee resulted in as many as 5.4 million deaths”. He also went on to state that in 2012, it is Rwanda’s wanton antics in “supporting the M23 rebels who captured the eastern DRC city of

Goma, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing more than 100,000 people.”

If no action is taken to curtail Rwanda’s wanton antics, Senator Menendez claims that a repeat of the past conflicts would occur thus endangering the lives of hundreds of thousands in DRC. “Ten years later, in 2022, Rwanda has once again sent troops across the DRC border and reactivated M23 as a proxy militia now responsible for killing Congolese troops and UN peacekeepers,” Senator Menendez said.

Senator Menendez said in diffusing the Kinshasa-Kigali tensions, the U.S. should be guided by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee report. Among other measures, the report calls upon the U.S government to “bring hostages and wrongfully detained U.S. nationals’ home” such as Mr Rusesabagina. The report also calls upon the U.S. government to “elevate the Travel Advisory for Rwanda, which is currently at ‘Level 1: Exercise Normal Precautions,’ to



Secretary of State Tony Blinken meets with Rwandan President Paul Kagame in Kigali on Aug. 11. Photo credit Andrew Harnik, Pool, Reuters.

‘Level 3: Reconsider Travel.’ He also called on the government to reconsider the financial assistance it extends to the Rwandan government. In 2021, Rwanda received “more than \$147 million in foreign assistance”.



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Q & A With Prof. Joao Bosco Monte On The 2022 Brazil-Africa Forum

By Ajong Mbapndah L

After two years of virtual events, the Brazil African Forum will return to in person sessions come November 2022 in São Paulo. In the midst of unprecedented challenges, Prof João Bosco Monte, President of the Brazil African Institute- IBRAF has remain steadfast in making the case for stronger ties between Brazil and Africa. Disappointed that the President of Brazil has not visited Africa, Prof Monte hopes that the 2022 Forum will rekindle the bonds of friendship between his country and Africa. In the following Q and A, Prof João Bosco Monte sheds more light on the upcoming Forum and other developments from IBRAF.

The Brazil Africa Forum has been scheduled for November 29th-30th. How prepared is the Institute to host this year's event?

The Brazil Africa Forum 2022 will take place on November 29th and 30th in São Paulo and will be very welcome to happen presently after 2 years of virtual events. The idea is to have important leaders from many parts of the world, not only Brazilians and Africans, but also representatives of governments and civil society. Still, we count with NGO's and the private sector to discuss opportunities for cities in Brazil and Africa and other regions.

The theme is sustainable cities, global challenges and local solutions. How does this tie in with the vision of your institute?

This year the theme will be Sustainable Cities: Global Challenges, Local Solutions, which is very important not only for Brazil or



Prof Joao Bosco Monte hopes that the 2022 Forum will rekindle the bonds of friendship between his country and Africa.

Africa but for many locations around the world. We'll be discussing opportunities and activities related to sustainability of cities and we understand this topic is very timely because we need to understand how urban necessities should be implemented and the Brazil Africa Forum will bring the moments and space to discuss these specific issues. The entire team of Brazil Africa Institute is working together to see how we can facilitate the agenda of what is going to be discussed during the days of the event.

May we know some of the highlights of the 2022 forum and the key personalities who have so far expected to answer present?

We are very happy with the response

coming from many authorities that accepted the invitation to participate as speakers at the Brazil Africa Forum 2022. So far, we have the confirmation of important figures like Benedict Oramah, the president of Afreximbank, Donald Kaberuka, former president of African Development Bank and Maria Helena Semedo, deputy director FAO and Ylias Akbaraly, CEO of Sipromad Group, among others.

May we know how the current President of Brazil is doing with forging stronger bonds with Africa?

The President of Brazil never had the opportunity to come to Africa or to visit Africa and this is a worrying movement because it shows the current government doesn't give

the attention the African continent deserves. We see that the Brazil Africa Forum will give the message that Brazil should reconnect with Africa in a very pragmatic way. The discussions that we are going to raise will establish a new direction that Brazil and Africa should have together and bring the potential and opportunities we see in front of us. We hope that in the Forum it is possible to plan a bright and better future for Brazil- Africa relations for the years to come.

Looking at the history of the Brazil Africa Institute and your leadership, may I ask you the areas of progress and satisfaction, and some of the challenges you have had to grapple with?

From the very beginning, at the foundation of IBRAF, the objective was to connect Brazil and Africa and emphasize how crucial is to see good

experiences from both sides. We had some challenges at the beginning as every new organization when start its operations, but now it is easier to understand the directions we need to follow to stimulate the good relations and the engagement between Brazil and Africa. One thing that I understood earlier is that we cannot do things alone and we have some many partners of the Brazil Africa Institute that came on board in our activities in the last 10 years. It's very good to be recognized as the institution that promotes Brazil and Africa relations with a high level and assertive platform. This brings us the sense we should be together to go further, and this is the idea we have in Brazil Africa Institute. We should engage more and more partners from Brazil, Africa and other regions

to achieve the goals we established since the very beginning and put together the two sides of the Atlantic in order to learn from each other the best way to accomplish sustainable development.

To Africans, any direct pitch you want to make to them on why partnership with Brazil should get more consideration and what more could be done on their end to maximize opportunities that such a partnership may offer?

Every time I have the opportunity to speak with our brothers and sisters from Africa about the tremendous potential between Brazil and the African continent, I keep insisting to them that they should give us the opportunity to know more about the continent. I see that Africa has a great potential and I see the opportunities the continent might have to offer to Brazil. That is something I continue emphasizing whenever I have the appropriate moment to discuss the initiatives to stimulate partnerships in Brazil and Africa.

For those interested in



Prof Monte with the first batch of the Agro-Commodities Study Tour delegate in Brazil. The Brazil Africa Institute remains pivotal in fostering bonds of friendship and cooperation with Africa.

participating at the Brazil Africa Forum 2022, what do they need to do to get an invitation?

For those who want to participate in the Brazil Africa Forum 2022 we recommend to visit the event website and fill the registration form. In

case more information is required for the invitation, we have a specific channel for this purpose. www.forumbrazilafrika.com

What next after the Brazil Africa forum 2022, what other initiatives will you be working

on?

To better understand IBRAF's initiatives, we have divided the activities into 4 pillars:

1- Training and Capacity Building - We promote technical training in Brazil, bringing young Africans to knowledge and exchange information with some private and public organizations. On the other hand, we send Brazilian experts to Africa in order to have conversations and deploy knowledge too.

2- Research and Studies - We do have some researches in cooperation with partner organizations in Brazil and in Africa.

3- Portal ATLANTICO - It is a portal where we distribute some materials, information, interviews and showcases of success and good practices in Brazil, Africa and beyond to our network.

4- Events - Besides the Brazil Africa Forum, which is our flagship, we organize some other small activities in Brazil and Africa.



The Brazil Africa Institute opened its first headquarters in Africa in 2018 in Accra Ghana in the presence of former President John Kufuor seated in this file picture.



Zimbabwe Introduces Gold Coins to Fight Inflation

By Prince Kurupati

At one point in the not-so-distant past, Zimbabwe made history as its official inflation figures exceeded the billion per cent mark. The country managed to contain the situation however for some time but recently, the inflation figures started to escalate once again. To prevent a repeat of the 2008 hyperinflation period, the central bank in Zimbabwe recently came up with a noble strategy of gold coins. Zimbabwe is the first country to implement the gold coins strategy in the whole world in a bid to contain inflation.

According to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), the whole premise of gold coins is quite simple. Inflation by nature is driven by a huge supply of money in circulation. As such, to prevent this, the introduction of tradable gold coins will lead the central bank to stop injecting more cash into the economy hence

reducing the quantity of Zimbabwe dollars in circulation. Looking at it on the surface, the gold coins strategy seems to be a masterstroke and quite an easy-to-implement strategy.

RBZ in its official statement

announcing the introduction of gold coins said that the coins will be tradable both within and beyond the Zimbabwe borders. The central bank went on to state that the coins can be exchanged for cash. Each gold coin weighs one ounce, contains 22-carat gold and bears the image of Zimbabwe's prime tourist destination Mosi-oa-Tunya (Victoria Falls). Owing to the emblem on the gold coins, the central bank said the coins can also be dubbed Mosi-oa-Tunya coins.

On the security features front, each gold coin comes with a serial number and a certificate. The certificate is issued to the buyer upon purchasing the gold coins at selected financial institutions. In its official statement, RBZ said that the gold coin is going to be sold at a price "based on the prevailing international price of gold and the cost of production".

The pricing of the gold coins however has been the major sticking factor amongst local folks in Zimbabwe. As the price is based on the "prevailing international price of gold", many ordinary citizens fear that the gold coins are priced beyond their reach. In the week that the RBZ announced the introduction of gold coins, gold was globally trading at \$1,710 per troy

ounce. Most ordinary citizens both formally employed and informally employed earn only a small portion of this per month meaning they will need to save for months while cutting on other expenses to be able to purchase just one gold coin.

A senior researcher at the Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe Prosper Chitambara joined the masses in reiterating the fact that the gold coins are priced beyond the reach of ordinary citizens. He went on to state that the move can only benefit the elite and owing to that, its success may be hard to come by. "No ordinary person will be able to afford it... Right now, Zimbabweans are living hand to mouth," Chitambara said.

Carlos Caceres who is the International Monetary Fund's representative to Zimbabwe echoed the same sentiments but went further to question the efficacy of the gold coins strategy more so considering that no nation has previously used it before. Purely basing his analysis on this, Carlos Caceres said "In that sense, it is unusual" for the gold coins strategy to bear some positive results. Caceres talking from an IMF standpoint said that IMF prefers tried and tested economic tools. He said such tools would have been certified effective for their intended purposes.



Finance Minister Prof. Mthuli Ncube with Resident Rep of IMF Carlos Caceres.

Going against the tide isn't at all discouraged but precaution should be exercised.

Caceres however said it's not all doom and gloom when it comes to the gold coins strategy. He added that if there aren't any unforeseen challenges, the strategy could pay dividends if it manages to drive out the seemingly unquenchable thirst for the U.S. dollar amongst the Zimbabwean population. Caceres said that the key factor in the depreciation of the Zimbabwean dollar is the

desire for hard U.S. dollar currency hence tackling this desire via the gold coins could prove to be "a positive experiment".

The exorbitant pricing of the gold coins has necessitated a lot of ordinary citizens to take a back seat and watch the discussions about the innovation from a distance. Speaking to The Washington Post, a local vendor Trust Muyererwa said his focus is about day-to-day difficulties. "In January, I would pay \$10 U.S. to buy a pack of mealie meal, cooking oil, sugar and

salt and this would push me through the month... now a bottle of cooking oil costs \$5 U.S., and I cannot buy much more," Muyererwa said.

A local entrepreneur Hilda Musungu running a food stall echoed the same sentiments. She went on to state that the desire for the U.S. dollar is ever-increasing as the public has lost confidence in the Zimbabwean dollar. Musungu said that at her food stall, she is now charging all meals in U.S. dollars. "Last December, \$200 U.S. was enough for me to buy food

packs to sell the whole day... the cost has climbed to \$270," she said. Musungu's sentiments are ominous as they illustrate the fact that the desire for the U.S. dollar which the central bank aims at reducing is actually increasing amongst ordinary citizens. This in essence casts a very ominous future for the gold coins strategy unless more measures are put in place to accommodate ordinary citizens in the uptake of the gold coins.



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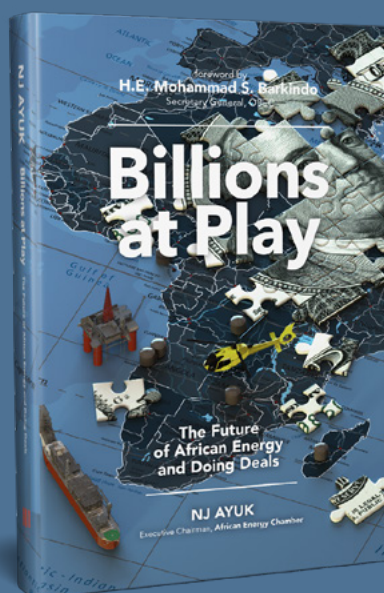
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Mozambique- Banking On The LNG Promise

The tanker **British Mentor** has been in Mozambique since 24 August to pick up the first-ever supply of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) produced in the southern African country. The export of LNG, extracted from the Coral South field, off the coast of Palma district, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, will start in October. While the start of exploration is good news on the one hand, it raises a number of concerns over the management of the billions in revenues on the other. The new boom era poses challenges to the Government in terms of transparency. A Mozambican Sovereign Wealth Fund will soon be set up, essentially to handle income from hydrocarbons.

By Jorge Joaquim

The export of liquefied natural gas (LNG), extracted from the Coral South field, off the coast of Palma district, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, will start in October. For this end, the tanker **British Mentor** has been in the Coral South Floating LNG terminal, off the Cabo Delgado coast since 24 August to pick up the first-ever supply of LNG produced in Mozambique.

The LNG will be produced on a floating platform, belonging to a consortium led by the Italian energy company, Eni. The platform, built in a Korean shipyard, arrived in Mozambican waters in January, and is now anchored in Area Four of the Rovuma Basin, some 40 kilometres from the mainland. This is the first deep-water platform in the world to operate at a water depth of about two thousand meters.

Budgeted at over seven billion US dollars, the Coral South project is expected to produce 3.4 million tons of LNG per year over its estimated 25-year lifespan. All of its output over the next 20 years has been bought by the British company BP.

A floating hotel, CSS *Temis*, is already in Cabo Delgado, where it will accommodate workers of the gas platform.

The Coral South Project is operated by Eni Rovuma Basin on behalf of the Area Four partners, who are Mozambique Rovuma Venture (MRV, an incorporated joint venture owned by Eni, ExxonMobil of the United States and the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation), Galp of Portugal, KOGAS of South Korea, and Mozambique's own National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH). The project is based on six ultra-deepwater wells in the Coral South field, at a



water depth of around 2,000 metres. ENI discovered this field in 2012, and it contains an estimated 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Second floating platform

Eni is also planning to accelerate deployment of a second liquefied natural gas production vessel offshore Mozambique that could be built in less than four years. The potential project would complement the Coral-Sul FLNG platform.

The second platform would help Europe diversify supplies of the fuel, in light of the energy constraints facing the EU as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Furthermore, according to the

former EU ambassador to Maputo, Antonio Gaspar, the European Union is considering acquiring Mozambican natural gas as an alternative to Russian gas.

The Russian assault against Ukraine, he said, had led the EU to the conclusion that "we cannot trust our former partner (Russia), which is an authoritarian state and is using gas as an instrument of war". "We have adopted a new strategy in Europe, named 'Repower EU', and it has several elements", said Gaspar. "With regard to gas, which is considered a transitional form of energy, we are looking for alternative suppliers. Mozambique is among the alternatives".

The European Commission has opened consultations on whether natural gas and nuclear power projects should be considered as "green" investments, in a move that could have major implications for the development of Mozambique's hydrocarbon industry.

Economy boost

These sources of natural gas will create the conditions for the development of Mozambique's economy and enable the country to mitigate the effects of property. According to estimates, the initial production could contribute an additional 1.1 percentage points to economic growth in 2023.

The Oil and gas exploration will catapult the country into the group of major producers, at a global level, posing additional challenges to Mozambique's tax system which has to be robust for the correct management of tax collection.

Mozambique's Tax Authority has set up an Extractive Industry Tax Unit tasked with the analysis of contract risks, tax control and capacity building for the auditing experts for the oil and gas sector. But there are lingering challenges on institutional coordination and the promotion of an even greater capacity to collect taxes.

However, Mozambique needs to improve the inspection of the natural gas exploration and production projects. With the discovery of huge gas reserves, together with the beginning of the production and sale of LNG, the country has become a relevant player in regional, continental and world energy security.

The country has the challenge to ensure that companies involved in

the exploration of energy resources fully comply with the Local content plans, especially regarding the creation of more jobs. The authorities should improve the mechanisms of inspection of gas research and production projects that are underway and those that may be approved.

Wealth fund

Observers in Mozambique have called for the urgent approval of the bill on the Sovereign Wealth Fund for

Mozambique before the start of the production of natural gas. They say Mozambique should secure a fund for the first revenues, even if they are minimal.

With the revenues, the deficit on the State Budget will be filled, but there will be money left over, and instead of the government having more money and creating more expenses, it will be able to save it to make sustainable and long-term investments that can lead to the development of the country.

However, Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi said recently that the \$96bn Sovereign Wealth Fund should be operational after the first exploration, but before the start of the "greater flow" of revenues.

The draft of the law about the fund is already done, and will be submitted to parliament. According to the plan, 50 percent of the fund's revenues should be reinjected into the fund, while the remaining 50 percent will go to the government's budget during the first 20 years of LNG production.

The other major venture currently underway is the Mozambique LNG Project using gas from Rovuma Basin Offshore Area One. The French oil and gas company, TotalEnergies, is the operator with its partners coming from Japan, India, Thailand, and Mozambique. When operational, the project will produce 12.88 million tonnes of LNG per year for domestic consumption and export.

A third development, the Rovuma LNG Project, will use gas from offshore Area Four to produce 15 million tonnes of LNG a year. However, the operator, ExxonMobil, has not yet taken its final investment decision.





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Severe Drought Brings Life To A Standstill In Kenya

By Samuel Ouma

Acute hunger is wreaking havoc in Kenya, with at least 4 million people needing relief assistance.

The number of people in need of help rose from 3.5 million in May to 4.1 million in June 2022. The number of people in need of assistance has increased from 3.5 million in May to 4.1 million in June 2022. Worsening food insecurity has been attributed to droughts from three consecutive poor seasonal rainfall performances, all below the five-year average, below average crop and animal production, local resource-based conflicts, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in rising prices for staple foods across the country led.

The drought results from the poor performance of the short 2021 rainy season combined with the previous two failed consecutive seasons and the early termination of the long 2022 rainy season.

Except for the highlands west of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin, the central and southern Rift Valley, the coastal region, and some areas over the Northeast and highlands east of the Rift Valley, several parts of the East African nation experienced dry weather conditions in May 2022.

Most of the country saw below-average rainfall, except for Wajir, which had two days of above-average rainfall at 129 per cent. Narok and Lamu saw near-average rainfall at 89 per cent and 84.4 per cent, respectively. All other stations recorded less than 75 per cent of their (average) LTM precipitation in May.

Kenya's two main rainy seasons are the long rains between March and May and the short rains between October and December. The Kenya Meteorological Department (KMD) warned earlier this month that the country is expected to receive poorly distributed rainfall during this year's October, November and December (OCD) seasons. This means that the ongoing drought crisis will not end soon.

The forecast indicated that the



Drought is threatening millions of livestock .Photo courtesy.

country will experience a late onset and an early finish, particularly in the eastern region, where several parts of the highlands west of the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria Basin and the central and southern Rift Valley will continue to receive light rainfall in September.

«The short rains constitute an important rainfall season in Kenya, particularly in the Central and South-Eastern regions of the country. The seasonal forecast indicates with high confidence that most parts of the country are likely to experience depressed rainfall with higher probabilities over the Eastern section,» said KMD Deputy Director Dr. David Gikungu.

23 Arid and Semi-Arid Counties are the worst affected by the ongoing drought. They include Baringo, Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu, Tana River, Turkana, Wajir. Others are Embu, Kajiado, Kilifi, Kitui, Kwale, Laikipia, Lamu, Makueni, Meru, Narok, Nyeri, Taita Taveta, Tharaka Nithi and West Pokot.

Six counties, namely Laikipia, Mandera, Marsabit, Wajir, Isiolo and Samburu, have been placed in the

drought alert period, while thirteen counties, including Kilifi, Turkana, West Pokot, Kwale, Meru (North), Embu (Mbeere), Garissa, Kajiado, Kitui, Nyeri (Kieni), Taita-Taveta, Tharaka-Nithi and Tana-River are in an alert drought phase. The remaining four counties, Baringo, Lamu, Narok and Makueni, are in a normal drought.

Kenya's drought crisis and loss of income, exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have made prices for basic food and water prohibitive. This has contributed to the deterioration of food security. Reports indicate that food and water shortages have disproportionately affected the rangelands of Marsabit, Turkana, Baringo, Wajir, Mandera, Samburu and Isiolo.

Acute malnourishment has also been reported throughout the country, with over 800,000 children aged five and under suffering from malnutrition.

«Across the country, we are approaching 800,000 malnourished children, with Turkana and Marsabit counties having the highest number of these children,» said Kenya Red Cross Society Secretary General Asha

Mohammed.

Mass animal deaths have also been reported, particularly in ASAL regions. The drought destroys the pastures, animals die, and herdsman report enormous losses. The remaining cattle are weak to run long distances in search of water and pasture and to provide enough milk and meat to feed their owners.

Aside from creating a humanitarian crisis, the drought has also increased animosity between rival nomadic groups as these groups now compete for limited resources. In areas such as Laikipia, Samburu, Marsabit, and Isiolo counties, increasing conflict was seen as herders competed for available pasture and watering holes.

Along with NGOs and well-wishers, the Kenyan government works tirelessly to cushion those suffering from hunger. The government has sent relief supplies to drought-hit areas, spending more than \$10 million on necessities such as dry beans, corn, rice, cooking oil and meat.

Recently, the Kenyan government made a paradigm shift from distributing relief food to implementing an emergency cash transfer program. The program

targets 360,696 households, each receiving Ksh3000 (\$30) a month.

According to Prof Margaret Kobia, Cabinet Secretary (CS) for the Department of Public Services, Equality, Senior Citizens Affairs and Special Programs, cash transfers have proven to be the most effective way to reach vulnerable people in emergency situations, including the benefits of

real-time assistance, good value for money -Ratio as the beneficiaries have a choice of purchases, uphold the dignity of the beneficiaries and stimulate the local economy.

The Livestock Off Take program was also launched, which aimed to support drought-affected communities losing their livestock due to the biting drought. Other initiatives include

water transportation; Excavating and repairing boreholes.

Kenya has experienced severe droughts over the past decade, most notably in 2021, when President Uhuru Kenyatta declared the drought a national disaster. This came four years after Kenyatta did the same in 2017.

The United Nations (UN) declared

the drought in parts of the Horn of Africa to be the worst in 60 years in 2011, affecting 13.2 million Kenyans, primarily in northern Kenya.

In addition, in 2004, the country experienced poor rainfall in the year's second quarter, and the resulting crop failures meant that 2.3 million Kenyans were affected.

Uganda: Oil And Our Audacity Of Hope

By *Elison Karuhanga**

What you need to know: We cannot afford to gamble the Uganda of future generations on hypotheticals

The debate about the development of our oil and gas resources continues to rage on. Many in Africa are justifiably sceptical of the option of lobbying for the money pledged under the Paris climate accords. After all, no continent has suffered more injustice than Africa and yet we have never been paid any reparations for the injustices we have suffered. If slavery, invasion, colonialism and neo-colonialism could not be paid for, will money for bad weather ever be remitted?

The other problem, apart from our scepticism that is rooted in historical facts, is the global political reality. Forgive my cynicism that the pledges made by leaders of the West have ever or will ever have the consent of their constituents. We saw former US president Donald Trump run for office and win with the promise of removing America from the Paris Agreement. While president Joe Biden has recently re-joined the agreement, he has not only issued a number of new licences but also opened US federal lands to oil drilling.

A report issued in September 2021 found that every single country in the G20 had failed to meet its climate obligations. The challenge of getting rich countries to limit their emissions has been made worse by the current global economic crisis. The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change has released a report stating that this year income across households in the



Elison Karuhanga is an advocate and partner at Kampala Associated Advocates.

UK will decline by seven percent, the biggest decline since records started in 1961.

So, like all populations around the world, we are seeing lower incomes, higher fuel costs and massive inflation affect developed and under developed countries. Which population will allow their politicians to transfer large swathes of wealth to people in Africa? A promise to pay Africa \$100b is, therefore, not just historically dubious it also lacks democratic legitimacy.

Oil revenue will have a significant impact on Uganda's economy. The chairperson of the Uganda Chamber of Mines and Petroleum, Mr Patrick Mweheire, pointed out this week that the oil resource has the potential to double our GDP within five years. The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) is not only a pipeline that

transports crude oil but also an opportunity to open a new trade route between Uganda and Tanzania.

In addition to the infrastructure, oil revenue creates synergy between the oil industry and other sectors of the economy. We are attracting a total investment of over \$20b which will be the single largest investment in East Africa so far. Tanzania will soon attract a \$30b investment for its gas project and we are likely to see a reverse gas pipeline along the EACOP route from Tanzania to Uganda. While Kenya will remain the logistics hub for Ugandan oil, as we continue to use the port of Mombasa, DR Congo, Tanzania and Uganda will reap huge benefits from their hydrocarbon resources.

Furthermore, the proposed refinery in Uganda will have a significant impact on the economy through the

production of petrol, diesel, heavy fuel oils, kerosene and liquefied petroleum gas which is a mitigation effort in the fight against deforestation and environmental degradation.

The need to mitigate against all social, economic and environmental risks that an oil project brings cannot be overemphasized. Serious and formidable work has been done to mitigate and avoid project risks as much as possible.

The opportunity the oil brings and has already brought to the region cannot be underestimated. The alternative to this oil development is that we leave the oil in the ground and instead be paid under the Paris climate agreement. Under this agreement, the rich countries committed to pay to poorer countries a total of \$100b per year. The commitment is almost 10 years old now. This money was some form of reparations for the climate damage the industrialisation of the rich countries had caused. We could abandon the oil with its macroeconomic benefits and then lobby for these resources as our development alternative.

Unlike wealthy nations, that as major producers will remain wealthy even when their oil and gas revenue is removed, we cannot afford to gamble the Uganda of future generations on hypotheticals, especially with the opportunity we have at hand. We will never be forgiven if we do.

*Originally published in Monitor Newspaper Uganda. The writer is an advocate and partner at Kampala Associated Advocates. elisonk@kaa.co.ug

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Overview This Month

All Transactions	My Transactions	Amendments
1.1k +12.2%	248 +1.5%	65 +24.9%

Transactions Today

Search by drug name or NDC

	ACTIVITY	STARTING	COUNT	ON-HAND	
fate 60 mg TAB 25	Dispensed	630	-100	530	***
ug/h PATCH	Dispensed	20	-20	40	***
Today, 14:09 Anastasia S.	Fentanyl 87.5 ug/h PATCH 0378-9127-98	Received	30	30	60 ***
Today, 13:45 Jeff M.	Oxycodone HCL and APAP 2.5/300 mg TAB 72245-193-03	Lost/Stolen	15	-15	0 ***

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Rwanda: Breaking Down Education Barriers For Visually Impaired Children

By Jean d'Amour Mbonyinshuti

It is about 11 a.m. at GS Rwisirabo in Karangazi sector, Nyagatare district.

Promise Manzi sits in the classroom following lessons. He is reliant on a slate and stylus he uses to take notes in braille. Sitting next to Manzi is a friend who assists him in taking notes. Manzi is the only visually impaired person in P4 class at this school.

He follows the teacher attentively and responds to the teacher's questions.

"Air is a mixture of gases," Manzi defines air, in response to the teacher's question.

Born blind due to illness from her mother, Manzi's parents were supportive but never thought that he could access education because they knew no single school that could accommodate him.

But now, the parents are excited that their 11-year-old son is at GS Rwisirabo.

GS Rwisirabo has embraced inclusive education promoted by the Rwanda Union of the Blind through the DREAM project.

It is aimed to break down barriers and ensure visually impaired children are not left out of education.

"I study well without major challenges. My facilitator, who is also visually impaired, assists me in taking notes and explaining lessons. He is always available whenever I need support," Manzi says.

Rwanda Union of the Blind deployed one, Jean Claude Mpagaritwenimana to assist Manzi to study flawlessly. Mpagaritwenimana's roles include supporting Manzi to take notes, read them in braille, and explain lessons to him.

He also supports teachers to learn how to read and write in braille and how to take care of persons with disabilities.

Manzi started primary school in Kibeho Centre of the Visually Impaired in Nyaruguru district



Mugisha raises his hand to answer to the question asked by the teacher. Jean d'Amour Mbonyinshuti

in Southern Province, over 320 kilometers away from his home in Nyagatare district.

For Edmond Ntagwabira, Manzi's father, the journey to Nyaruguru was scary.

"Travelling to and from Kibeho was so tiring and costly in terms of transport. Kibeho is very far and whenever my son was at school there was no communication for the entire term, I was always worried," he said.

"But thanks to RUB support, Manzi was transferred to a nearby school at GS Rwisirabo. He gets assistance from RUB/ DREAM project staff. I am so thankful that my child is fully supported to access education close to his home," he added.

Despite visual impairment, Manzi excels in class.

In fact, he was the best student in P2, P3 and only one pupil beat him in the first term of P4 to become the second in class.

"I am determined. I experience

difficulties in Math but I also try my best. I have been occupying the first position and slipped a little bit in the first term, but I am putting in all the efforts to retain my position," Manzi says.

Thanks to the DREAM project, Manzi has got a dream.

"My dream is to become a pianist, an actor or a journalist. I am working hard to achieve it," he says. Manzi is one of the 32 pupils with low vision supported at Rwisirabo school.

The pupils are assisted to get large printed notes and exams.

RUB is promoting inclusive education through the DREAM project, according to Donatille Kanimba, the Executive Director of the National Union of the Blind.

She noted that when people talk about inclusive education, they want to include those with physical disability only and claim that this is inclusive enough.

But RUB engaged the National

Union for People with Disabilities in Rwanda (NUDOR) to make them truly inclusive among established inclusive schools.

"We joined hands with NUDOR to make the schools truly inclusive because they were not, there were no learners with visual impairments, there were no learners with hearing impairments, so that means no learners with sensory impairments," she said.

RUB sent volunteers to the model schools and the schools were encouraged to enroll children with visual impairment from the surrounding areas.

The volunteers were tasked to teach the children to read and write in braille and also support the teachers, showing them how best to support the learners with visual impairment.

"So far I can say that the results have been quite amazing," she added.

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Record Details

Today, 14:12 by Jeff M.

76045-010-10

Hydromophone Hydrochloride 2 mg/mL INJ SOL

Amended: 50 Dispensed: 500

Starting Count	After Dispensing (Amended)
5,000	4,550
Original Count	Amended Count
500	50
Rx Number	Patient
1568537-09710	Caleb Montrose
Reason	Alibi
Recorded incorrect quantity	Jeff M.
Yesterday, 11:53 by Anastasia S.	Yesterday, 11:53

Recent Activity

for Hydromophone Hydrochloride 2 mg/mL INJ SOL

RECORDED	ACTIVITY	STARTING	COUNT
Today, 15:53 Anastasia S.	Dispensed	630	100
Today, 14:12 Jeff M.	Dispensed	20	20
Tues, 14:09 Anastasia S.	Received	30	30
Jun 2, 13:45 Jeff M.	Lost/Stolen	15	15
May 27, 11:01 Jeff M.	Amended	15	15

[View All](#)

Cameroon: Civil Society Organization and the fight to provide Humanitarian Services in crisis-stricken NW/SWRs

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

For the past six years, humanitarian workers and organizations have been facing the daunting task of providing much-needed humanitarian services to internally displaced persons brought about by the ongoing conflict in Cameroon's North West and South West Regions.

These humanitarian workers have been the target of assault by both warring parties who constantly accused them of supporting one camp or the other. Humanitarian workers have been arrested and kidnapped and some have lost their lives.

What is known as the 'Anglophone Crisis' today has been known for generations as 'the Anglophone question' or the 'Anglophone problem', with roots in a controversial decolonization process that remains contested by Anglophone Cameroonians. The crux of this controversy lies in the plebiscite that offered the former British Southern Cameroons the option to join either independent Nigeria or Cameroon,



Gabi Ambo, Executive Director of Finders Group Initiative.

without the opportunity for the formation of their independent state. More than 206 villages have been partially or completely burned since the beginning of the crisis. The rate of attacks on villages has increased steadily over the last couple of years.

Attacks of this sort have created mass displacement. Recent estimates suggest that 550,000 people have been internally displaced as a result of the crisis. "Around 80 per cent are thought to have sought refuge in the forest, where they have no access to shelter, water or sanitation," Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reported in 2019.

In celebration of this year's World Humanitarian Day 2022, UN Secretary-General, António Guterres acclaims humanitarianists stating: «There is a saying It takes a village to raise a child. It also takes a village to support people living through a humanitarian crisis. This village includes affected people who are always the first to respond when a disaster strikes. Neighbours helping neighbours. It includes a global community pulling together to support them as they recover and rebuild.» Indeed, due to a multiplicity of crises, including conflict, climate change, epidemics, poverty, hunger, and unprecedented levels of displacement, there has never been a higher number of people who need humanitarian assistance. Humanitarians everywhere

courageously dedicate themselves to serving those in need.

"There are quite a lot of issues that need to be redressed and we are working to ensure that those who are affected, afflicted, wounded, survivors on the ground to be able to assist wherever they find themselves," Gabi Ambo, Executive Director of Finders Group Initiative, an organization working in the North West Region of Cameroon said.

"We work to see how we can help the displaced persons so that politicians can handle their end but our position is that the victims have the requisite benefit or material they need so that they can be on their feet again."

The World Food Programme, WFP, has been providing humanitarian assistance to persons in the North West with some 230,000 benefiting in kind and cash every month. 130,000 people are being supported with general food assistance and 30,000 are getting support through cash assistance.

"We would have loved to do more because there are many people in need in this region but we are presently having resource constraints. We are working only with the most



Senjo Emmanuel, Programme Policy Officer, WFP.

vulnerable,” Senjo Emmanuel, Programme Policy Officer, WFP said.

The United Nations estimates that 4.3 million people need humanitarian aid in Cameroon. These civilians often lack food, water, shelter, or adequate medical care. Sexual and gender-based violence is increasing, and health centres have been targeted by combatants, facing burning, shooting, and raiding. In some Anglophone areas, children have been out of school for nearly three years. Pupils, students, and teachers have been kidnapped and school buildings have been burned.

Norwegian Refugee Council Director Jan Egeland, who recently visited the Anglophone regions, said: “[w]e risk losing a generation to illiteracy” Egeland’s statement was underlined by a UNICEF announcement in June 2019, that the targeting of education in the Anglophone regions has seen at least 600,000 children affected, with 75 schools destroyed.

Despite these efforts, peace faces enormous obstacles. Divisions in the international community mean that wars continue to rage as external actors dither or even fuel the



The Cameroon Anglophone crisis has led to thousands of displaced persons, kidnapped, and others killed.

violence. Civilians pay the price. The fragmentation of non-State armed groups and militias causes even greater chaos. There is a resurgence of populism and policies that contribute to resentment, marginalization and extremism, even in societies that are not at war.

“It is quite challenging to access some places to provide these humanitarian services due to the

present crisis. The belligerent’s crossfire puts the beneficiaries at risk and some of us who go out to deliver these materials are at risk as well. Some have been killed and many have been injured,” Gabi Ambo, Executive Director of Finders Group Initiative added.

“Another challenge being faced by humanitarian actors is that of communication with the population

on the ground sometimes misreading their actions like they are supporting one camp or the other. The authorities too have been a stumbling block as they want to intimidate for us to pay bribes before we can access the locations which are against the humanitarian principles.»

A Nation In The Dark: Malawi Hit By New Power Blackout Wave

By Joseph Dumbula.

Malawians are currently faced with a fresh energy crisis which is being equated to over six hours a day, a development that various sectors are describing as detrimental to national development.

Apparently, this has been aligned to a relatively huge damage to Kapichira hydropower Plant due to cyclone Ana earlier in this year.

The latest situation comes amid an admittance that there is a notable reduction in the power supply by 100 and 135 megawatts at power plant Nkula B Power due to maintenance works.

This is being compounded by an already existing a six-hour power



The outages have created embarrassing scenes and taken a toll on economic live.



President Lazarus Chakwera has challenged the stakeholders in the power sector to increase capacity to 1000MW by 2025 .Photo courtesy.

outage which has been attributed to effects on power stations from Cyclone Ana which hit the Southern African nation at the start of this year.

At the moment, various experts have called for a paradigm shift from the overreliance on hydropower to other suitable sources of energy including solar, whose national projects have already thrown off.

Until now, Malawi is struggling with persistent power outages, with the Electricity Generation Company Malawi Limited (Egenco) stating that it is generating about 220 megawatts (MW) against an estimated demand of over 600MW. The country has capacity of about 400MW.

President Lazarus Chakwera has challenged the stakeholders in the power sector to increase capacity to 1000MW by 2025 so that the country has enough power to support industries, attract investors and in turn create jobs but also boost the economy.

However, recently, the Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi (Escom) told a joint parliamentary committee that is probing the situation that the outages are a result of its unbundling in 2017.

The unbundling meant that an official creation of two companies, one responsible for power generation and the other distribution.

This also meant that the generation of power is carved out of Escom and that a new company called the Egenco is now operational.

But Egenco is now disputing the claims by Escom that the power outages are due to the said unbundling.

Escom Chief Executive Officer Kamkwamba Kumwenda openly said there have been a series of challenges emanating from the sector.

He said for instance, a country that has only 400 megawatts does not need many players in the sector.

“Since the exercise happened, Escom has been operating on a loss. We have been paying for electricity that has not been delivered. And little by little the operations are going down. As of today, we have K82 billion that we have to pay to Egenco on the Power that was not delivered. As Escom, where will we get this money from?” Kumwenda said.

Meanwhile, parliament has proposed that all blame game should be sorted.

In reaction, to Escom’s stand, Co-Chairperson of the Committee Peter Simba said they will among other things push for a change into how Escom and said there is chaos in the energy sector that needs saving.

“As parliament, we feel that there is so much blame game happening in the sector. It is high time the government sorted out the mess once and for all as people are suffering with blackouts,” Dimba said.

Meanwhile, an eminent energy scholar, Kenneth Mtato also believes there is need to review some energy related projects including the Malawi Rural Electrification Programme (MAREP).

The project is aimed at increasing access to electricity for people in peri-urban and rural areas as part of Government’s effort to reduce poverty, transform rural economies, improve productivity and improve the quality of social services.

But, Mtato feels that with just 12 percent of the populous connected to the national grid, there is need to review the project yet again.

“It is sad that most rural communities are not yet connected to the grid when we have this long-

standing project. So, I believe the parliament will move into making a change on how these projects operate,” he said.

The Southern African nation heavily relies on hydropower and it has little backup options, coupled with inability to import power from abroad.

In addition, the country faces a widening gap between electricity demand and supply which is being exacerbated by urbanization, economic development, population growth and rural electrification, according to the Millennium Challenge Account.

It is also noted that electricity demand has been growing consistently at 6-8% per annum.

Furthermore, inefficient production and unsustainable use of biomass energy in Malawi is contributing to environmental degradation, such as high deforestation, desertification, and soil erosion.

The use of wood, charcoal and crop residues as fuel also results in indoor air pollution which causes severe human health impacts directly to the users, especially rural women.

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DR Congo : Researchers Tout Nutritional Merits Of "Kindisa" Cassava From Kwilu

By Badylon Kawanda Bakiman

Since September 2015, the National Institute for Agronomic Studies and Research (INERA)/Kiyaka, Kwilu province in the southwest of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the «Harvest Plus» project in collaboration with IITA are in the process of popularizing cassava cuttings, variety «Kindisa» among farmers. This extension is done through the distribution of these cuttings to «farming households» that were visited last May.

«Studies and careful research by scientists have shown that this variety «Kindisa» has improved the vision of more than 60 percent of people who had consumed its flour via «luku» for months. Other people ate it in the form of fried carrots. The vision of these people has improved because this «Kindisa» cassava is rich in vitamin A,» says Ir Corneille Lebu Milolo, head of INERA/Kiyaka's research and development unit based in Kikwit.

Lebo also adds that this variety promotes very good growth in children from zero to five years old. «A few years ago, the average person noticed that children in this age group in rural areas, even in urban areas, did



Kindisa cassava field.

not grow well due to certain juvenile diseases in households. But the vitamin A contained in the cassava «Kindisa» improves the situation in these children», he underlines.

According to him, pregnant women and those who breastfeed babies can, without fear, consume this variety of cassava for more than three months. «The vitamin A that the pregnant mother consumes is easily transmitted to the child in her womb. The child that will be born will be enduring. Because vitamin A is virtuous in terms of health. Even

for the one who breastfeeds. This vitamin is transmitted when the baby is suckling and its growth is assured.

«I had a problem with my vision when I was reading. Sometimes I had to wear glasses. For four months I consumed the «fufu» prepared with «Kindisa» flour before its popularization, I noticed that my vision improved», testifies Rosette Mpongi, a farmer from Kakoy, a village located more than three kilometers away from Kikwit.

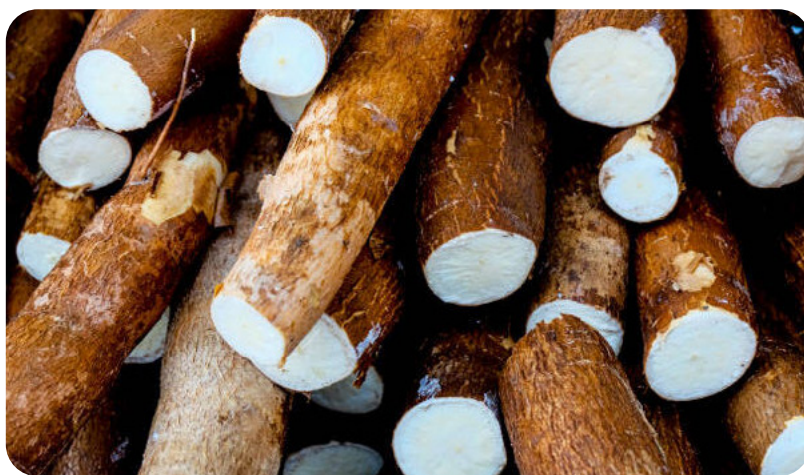
Currently, several villages in the Imbongo sector have already received cuttings of this variety thanks to the distribution operation. They are : Muvema, Mission Sacré-cœur, Kakoy, Carrefour, Kwanga-Mulungu, Kwanga-Nganzi, Nkata-Busongo, Nkata-Luwala, Nkata-Nzila, Malunga, Mubungu, Ibwati. According to the program, the following villages will also receive cuttings of «Kindisa»: Nsi-Mulungu, Luwala, Imbongo village, Musila, Danda 1, 2 and 3, Mungay,

Kimpundu-Sala, then Kimpundu-Madimbi.

«The objective of this distribution is to improve the nutritional status of our populations. But this can only be achieved if our populations have access to our varieties [Kindisa currently]. That is why we had installed multiplication fields everywhere,» say the organizers of this distribution. This operation is carried out on the basis of a technical sheet.

«Before the extension, we at INERA/Kiyaka had conducted, in 2015, a study to see if this variety «Kindisa» can adapt to the soil of Kwilu province. The results proved that «Kindisa» can grow well on this Kwilu soil. It is even resistant to climatic changes. During these studies, we also found that «Kindisa», per stem, produces several tubers (between 10 and 12) at a time under the ground unlike other varieties,» says Ir Lebu.

«This way of producing tubers can easily improve the economic situation of our farming populations,» he concludes





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Canon Announces Winners Of The 'Capture The Action' Sports Photography Competition Spotlighting The Photographers #Celebrateafrica

Competition ran from 7 July 2022 through 31st July 2022

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Aug XX, 2022/ APO Group/ --

Canon Central & North Africa, a pioneer of innovative imaging products, announced the winners of its latest sports photography competition – 'Capture the Action' #CelebrateAfrica. Run in collaboration with a leading media outlet, Pan African Visions, the competition provided a platform for up-and-coming African photographers, over the age of 18, to showcase their talent and harness the power of visual storytelling.

"Capture the action' #CelebrateAfrica is aimed to showcase the stars, their performance, and the intrepid stories behind their rise to the top. The competition celebrates Africa's contribution to sports and brings forth the stories of athletic achievement," says Amine Djouahra, Director of Sales, and Marketing, Canon Central and North Africa. "Canon as a brand has always been at the forefront of innovation and technology. This contest embodies the technological brilliance and phenomenal performance, going beyond the realm of possibility. We are thrilled to have partnered with Pan African Visions and are amazed to see the overwhelming response and submissions of incredible actions captured from the continent as we witnessed Africa hosting various international sports events in different countries. We would like to

congratulate the winners who aptly captured the vibrant spirit of African sportsmanship in their stellar images and to all the participants".

A celebration of African sports and photographic talent

Canon and Pan Africa Visions' 'Capture the Action' #CelebrateAfrica

photography contest encouraged participants to choose submissions that would showcase spectacular sporting moments, and capture athletes in action allowing viewers across social media channels to follow their journeys and user generated content through #CelebrateAfrica. It celebrated not only Africa's sports

stars, but the skilled and talented photographers covering them.

Publisher and Managing Editor of Pan African Visions, Ajong Mhapndah L, explained that the massive number of submissions was overwhelming, and the high volume of response from our community made it a huge success. The submissions came from all corners of Africa which speaks volumes on the growing passion for sports photography. It was an honour for Pan African Visions to partner with Canon for the competition. As a brand, Canon needs

no introduction, and it is our hope that there will be more initiatives of this kind to enable young Africans to showcase their talent to the rest of the world. Congratulations to the contestants, winners, jury, and again, a big thank you to Canon.»

The competition saw a total of 6749 submissions from photographers from Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Cote D'ivoire, Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, Tunisia, Uganda, Senegal, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Tanzania, Gabon, PR Congo, DR Congo.

Assessing the talent

The winners were chosen through the expertise of an exclusive jury panel which was selected especially for the competition, and who better to assess Africa's phenomenal sporting photography talent than a panel of exceptional photographers who have themselves captured the action from the side of the



Yasser Ahmed- Egypt-1st Prize.



Nelson Jeremy – Kenya- 2nd Prize.

sports field on many occasions.

Canon Ambassador Jorge Ferrari is one of the most in-demand photographers in the United Arab Emirates. With an illustrious career spanning three decades, Jorge has covered almost every event imaginable, from news and politics to commercial work and Formula 1 – and he has fired his shutter at some of the biggest sports stars on the planet. “It was very difficult to choose from many high-quality entries. As a photographer myself, I was looking at the level of skill, positioning, timing, composition, street, and message of the images. The difference was in the smallest of details, we had a look closely at the original images – without retouching – to be able to assess the level of skills, to be able to pick up the winners.”

Frank Darkwah is a 31-year-old CAF & FIFA accredited Photojournalist and sportswriter who has worked with Ghana sports online, and 442 Ghana, a sports photography hub. He covered the 2017 WAFU Championship, the 2018 Africa Women’s Cup of



Yaw Ansa-Asare – Ghana- 3rd Prize.

Nations, and the 2022 WAFU U17 Championships. Frank covered matches involving Ghana’s National teams, the Ghana Premier League matches, as well as other sporting disciplines such as athletics, rugby, and boxing amongst others. He says the ability to get your shots right is often influenced by the type of sports you are shooting, as some allow for good shots to be captured more easily than others. “When assessing I focussed on whether the

photographer was shooting from the right angle, and also whether or not the photographers got their cropping on point and the winner did that perfectly.”

The third member of the judging panel was fifty-two-year-old Kerifallah Jannah (K J) from Southern Sierra Leone. KJ started his photography career in 1991 as an apprentice to a commercial professional photographer in Freetown. A year later he was employed by the Concord

Times newspaper where he trained as a press photographer. In 2017, KJ founded the Center Photojournalism Sierra Leone where photographers and photojournalists are trained with new skills in digital photography.

Winning entries

Prizes for the competition were powered by Canon, and included a Canon EOS R5 as the 1st prize, a Canon EOS R7 as the 2nd prize, and a Canon PRO 200 Printer as the 3rd prize.

Well done to the winners of the Canon Capture the Action photography competition!

The ‘Capture the Action’ photography competition under #CelebrateAfrica has significantly helped Canon to grow our incredible African community of aspiring photographers.

Based upon its enormous success, we’ll be back soon with another exciting competition for our Canon enthusiasts!

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A Home Run For 'Capture the Action' #CelebrateAfrica.

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their talent and harness the power of visual storytelling.

The competition saw a total of 6749 submissions from photographers from Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Cote D'ivoire, Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, Tunisia, Uganda, Senegal, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Tanzania, Gabon, DR Congo and more. PAV Brings you some of the best shots that graced the competition.



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Sierra Leone: A Mission To Revolutionize Education For Mohamed Bangura

By Ishmael Koroma

Mohamed Bangura is an award-winning young Sierra Leonean app developer, Chief Executive officer of the Kingmedotech Solutions Company, a registered tech company in the country and a computer expert who has been using his expertise to change the lives of people through technology and help revolutionize the educational and administrative system in the British West African nation.

Bangura is a graduate in Information Technology from the University of Makeni and is a Masters candidate online in Information Technology at the University of East Africa (IUEA) in Uganda. Pan African Vision's correspondent in Freetown Ishmael Sallieu Koroma caught up with Mohamed Bangura for an exclusive interview about his two latest apps which he has developed to help teachers in the collation of grades. The young IT professional himself a teacher, has taught computer science to school children for almost a decade knows the real challenges and the need to use technology to make life easier in the educational sector and its administration.

PAV: Could we start with an introduction of Mohamed Bangura ?

I am Mohamed Bangura, a teacher and the CEO of Kingmedo Tech. Solutions, a software development company based and registered in Sierra Leone.

PAV: Could you shed some light on the most recent App you have out?

Mohamed: Currently, at Kingmedo Tech. we have two products (app) which are available for our customers. Our first title Automated School Management System, which we developed in (2017). This app aims to complement the efforts of teachers and school administrator in their day to day functions by lifting up the



Mohamed Bangura is committed to transforming education in Sierra Leone through technology.

paper method of handling student's records, school fees, and producing student's report cards.

This automated system did not do well in the marketing owing to the fact that it is a web based application and it requires internet connection to utilize it. The fact remains that Internet facility is still a challenge for schools in this part of the world, did not allow us to make the much anticipated sales that the app is due.

However, we decided to come up with a similar app which does not require internet and can be installed on any windows desktop or laptop and it is completely offline based.

We decided to give a new name to this app (SierraGrade), which has to do with mainly, keeping students and teachers records and provide easy and yet improved computerized report cards. The app is built to fit into the operation of any school in Sierra Leone, starting from Nursery level, Primary, Secondary and even Tertiary institution, as far as examination and result management is concerned.

We launched and made the new desktop app available for customers on April 2022, and since that time we have for schools currently utilizing the app and more are on the list for the next coming academic year.

Our second app is called HRKingmedo, which we developed to serve two purposes. We built this app with the aim of 'Killing two birds with one stone'. I will briefly explain its features because of time.

HRKingmedo will serve as a registration and verification system. For example, if a company is dealing with a group of people whose personal details need to be stored electronically and at some point the information of these people needs to be verified or updated, HRKingmedo can handle such operations.

In simple terms, NGOs can use this system in projects that have to do with beneficiaries and these beneficiaries' records need to be duplicate free and error free. This app can help the issuing out of slip with a generated QR code which is unique for each beneficiary and through this slip, the record of these beneficiaries could be verified without any misrepresentation or duplications.

This same HRKingmedo app, is also used to keep track of employees attendance in any institutions. It has three modes of accepting attendance by scanning QR codes, entering pin code or taking pictures of employees. The app is also a complete database for staff members or any group of people in any institution, since it has a detailed form for capturing full details of members in an institution, with their pictures, designation, phone numbers, to name but few. It provides a quick search for any record by simply scanning the slip of any employee in the database. It also provides daily, and monthly reports of staff attendance in a company of institution of learning.

What do you hope to achieve in this new development of the education app?

As a school teacher, with 7 years' experience, I have observed many challenges faced by colleague's teachers in preparing in collating

grades and producing student report cards. Teachers including me will definitely appreciate such a software that will save them from the burden and the time consuming in preparing report cards. And it will break down the potential of making mathematical errors to 0.00%.

Of course, we are going to monetize the app, but it is not just about making money here as a company, but as an individual who also attended school, it would be admirable moment if I choose to go to back to my ammeter (which I will) with a software that would help the teachers who taught me two decades back.

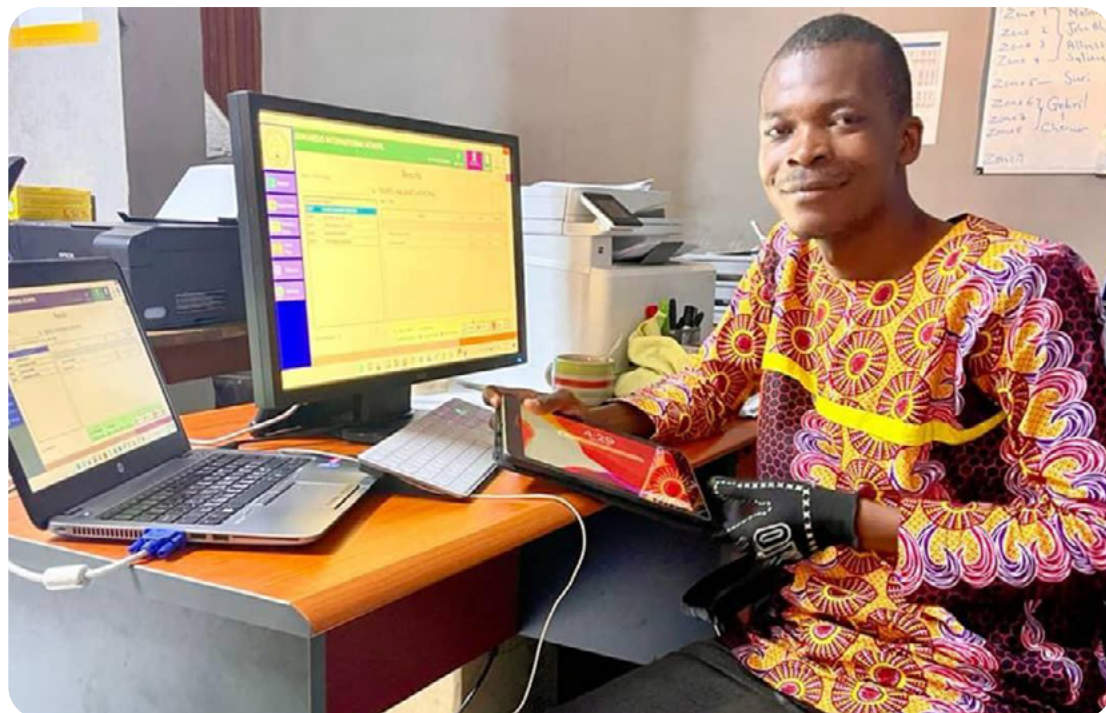
PAV: This is your second app you have developed, what's the inspiration behind such move to make education easy?

Mohamed: As mentioned before, I am a school teacher and due to the fact that I have taught in five schools in this country, I have tapped into the details about what a modern school at this computer age needed to excel and be more efficient in its operations. I have decided to use my computer expertise and experience as a teacher to help reduce some of these issues which have no place for mentioning in other developed countries.

Technology is one that is gradually sneaking into our educational system.

PAV: What's the future of technology in education in Sierra Leone?

Mohamed: Sierra Leone is still a virgin as far as the implementation of ICT or technology in education is concerned. We still have the challenge in implementing simple and yet costly technologies in our curriculum. But gradually we are moving. We have a mountain to climb compared to other countries across Africa. The future is very clear, as technology has to offer more to countries who have taken the challenge implement or embrace technology in their curriculum of teaching and learning. Yet our children are gradually becoming very much aware of technologies but the million question is that, are they using it to help them improve their



The work of Mohamed Bangura is earning him recognition beyond the shores of Sierra Leone.

learning? No, social media and other forms of technology have woefully overridden the attention of young students here and have directed them to something else which I often referred to as a complete waste of time.

We have few students who are exceptional to the above precarious issue, yet I would like to mention, technology cannot replace our teachers, technology is just a complement to aid our students and to ensure the continuity of learning beyond the four walls of a classroom. Bill Gates once said: "Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important."

PAV: As an innovator and computer programmer, it's inevitable there are challenges. What are they?

Mohamed: Yes, there are challenges in this filed, one of them is limited resources like electricity, proper internet facility and lack of sponsorship at the moment but these cannot debarred us from moving forward, God willing!

PAV: Tell us how the app works

and how you hope to market this idea to reach many Sierra Leoneans

Mohamed: For the app called SierraGrade, it has to be installed on one PC which could be controlled by a school admin. The school admin have to register all students details into the system by either filling the student registration form or by importing the student data from an excel file. When it comes to recording grades and producing report cards, the admin will export grade sheets from the system and share them via WhatsApp with all subject teachers. These subjects can use their mobile phones to enter the grades and send them again to the admin via WhatsApp or e-mail. The admin simply imports the grades to a target class section with few click. With the grade entered the system will provide the results automatically with all necessary calculations, i.e. the mean, average, rank and total grades for every student registered in the system. The system has the facility to back up the data and this backup can be stored online and could be easily could have and imported in case the computer got corrupt or damaged.

The system can also keep track of all grades entered per academic year, meaning we can always go back to

previous academic year to see the grades scored by students and print out result again, this is useful when the result of a student got missing or damaged.

To make these products reachable to people, I will be embarking on a tour to schools and other institutions 'of learning in order to conduct a demographic presentation to teachers and schools administrators.

I will also use the social media especially Facebook by posting flyers that describe our products accordingly. Potential customers can also reach us by visiting our official website @ www.kingmedotech.com or via email info@kingmedotech.com

PAV: If you're to meet the country's President what message will you have for him on technology?

Mohamed: If I got the opportunity to meet him, I would inform him about the impact of technology if fully or partly incorporated in our school curriculum and how it would help build the human capital of this nation. He might have seen this in other countries but may need to be reminded and convinced thoroughly.

PAV: How did you come to love computer programming and app development?

Mohamed: I am a holder of a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology from the University of Makeni. During my studies I came across the stories of people who brought innovation in technology, and saw how it benefited them and uplifted the lives of their people, their nation and the world at large. I became curious and tried to know more and found out that these people did not only became rich in money and possessions, but they have put their countries on the global map of recognition and I want Sierra Leone to be on the map, not with negativities but progress and innovative ideas that will help us boast our economy beyond what it is now.



Sierra Leone still has a long way to go compared to most other African countries, says Bangura.

Millions In Investments Washed Away As Ghana Continues To Grapple With Perennial Floods

By Papisdaff Abdullah Ali.

Ghana ranks highly among African countries that are most exposed to risks from multiple weather-related hazards. In the past three decades, the country has experienced seven major floods. Persons living in Accra and other parts of Ghana prone to flood, have had to find self-serving solutions or blindly accept lip service governments pay to the annual flooding problem. Painfully so, the resort to unproductive firefighting and quick fix attitude nothing close to fixing the problem. In June 2015, Ghana there was a rain, which started as any normal rainfall left in its wake a lasting scare on the memory of Ghanaians.

The devastating flood event at the Kwame Nkrumah Circle enclave led to an unfortunate loss of about 150 lives, leaving more than 50,000 others directly affected to varying degrees. As pictures of the havoc began to show on television, the entire nation was thrown into a state of shock and mourning when



The floods have become an issues of serious concern.

it emerged the flood had forced the release of fuel (petrol) onto the surface of the flood water sparking a hell of fire. Seven years down the line, it is safe to say no lesson has been learnt as Perennial flooding across the major cities in Ghana

continue to pose a significant threat to lives, property and socio-economic development.

Flooding also impacts adversely on the mental health of victims and undermines their ability to contribute meaningfully to economic growth.

Annually, people get displaced, transport links disconnected, economic activities disrupted, and livelihoods uprooted because of flooding in the West African country. The Water Resources, Works and Housing Ministry estimates



Scenes like this are familiar with the heavy rains.

that there are about 30 drainage catchment areas across the country. These facilities are no longer able to contain the water levels during rains because of the human activities around them and building on water ways and buffer zones. The economic impact of widespread flooding across the country is therefore projected to be billions of dollars over time. For its part, the World Bank further estimates that \$3.2 billion (4.45 per cent of GDP) worth of economic assets are at risk of flooding in the Greater Accra Region alone, and this figure is expected to quadruple by 2050 without urgent action (World Bank Press Release, May 29, 2019).

Causes

Poor sanitation practices including indiscriminate dumping of solid waste into drains by households, inadequate and inefficient drains, undersized culverts on major roads and uncontrolled development in flood plains, wetlands and waterways are triggers to floods. These activities contribute significantly to flooding by blocking drains, causing storm water to overflow into homes and

business premises. Again, people have normalized, encroachments, developments and buildings in waterways and buffer zones. This according to experts, block the flow of storm water and worsens the risk of flooding in the country. Developments in wetlands displace large volumes of storm water meant to be stored on those lands, thereby increasing flood risk. Floodplains and wetlands operate like natural sponges; they absorb and hold back excess water. Disruptions to such areas through development causes storm water to flow at increased velocity leading to flooding and consequent devastating effects on lives and livelihoods.

Floods

Large parts of the capital city are mostly flooded after downpours. Areas such as the Roxy bus stop, Odawna, the Central Business District, sections of the Achimota-Ofankor road, parts of Kaneshie, Madina, Teshie, East Legon and Weija among other areas all receive their fair share of the flood. This leaves people seeking shelter under buildings and at bus stops, while others are forced to vacate their

offices as water gushes through any available space to find its way. Many roads are also blocked by the flood waters, resulting in heavy vehicular traffic. Recent rains have resulted in flooding in most parts of Accra with an apparent no end in sight, at least until the end of the rainy season. The Ghana Meteorological Agency has given indications of more of such torrential rains within the season. An MDPI data shows that majority of flood disasters in the country and the biggest toll on properties and lives are recorded in Accra. The data also estimates total damage of over \$600 million, affecting more than five million lives, with many fatalities from 1900 to the first half of 2021.

This year in the Central region, heavy rains have caused havoc, claiming one life, submerging communities, including the Ankaful Camp Prison, and cutting off the bridge linking Cape Coast and Twifo Praso at Jukwa. More than 100 houses in the Komenda Edina Eguafu Abirem municipality were submerged after some rivers overflowed their banks. At Ankaful, a prison officer, Senior Chief Officer Lutterodt, drowned

when flood waters swept through the Camp Prison. Properties worth thousands of Ghana cedis were also destroyed at the prison, while about 70 prison officers and their families were displaced.

Several areas in Kumasi experienced severe and devastating flooding in June last year. This affected commercial areas such as the new Kejetia, Central and Asafo markets, as well as the Bantama High Street Market. Several shops experienced flooding, and goods worth millions of Ghana cedis were destroyed. Additionally, several homes were flooded and household items destroyed. Following my visit to the affected areas, the increasing risk of flooding associated with climate change looked clear to me, and as a nation, we need to take bold steps to tackle this challenge holistically. Similar incidents occurred in the Eastern, Western and Volta regions.

Military Operation

The Ghana Army was forced to deploy detachments of personnel to embark on a search and rescue operation dubbed "Operation

BOAFO” to help people trapped by floodwaters. The soldiers worked with civil authorities including the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) to rescue particularly the aged, women and children who had been caught up by the floods. In line with the operation, the 48 Engineer Regiment of the Ghana Army set out to various flood-prone communities in the city such as Osu, Accra Central, Kaneshie, Nungua Barrier, Circle, Odorkor among other areas prone to flood.

Economic activity

The businesses operating in the Odaw enclave, which borders the Graphic Road and its surroundings, estimate that over the past 10 years, property worth billions of Ghana cedis have been destroyed. For the automobile industry, new and old vehicles, vehicle spare parts, office equipment and accessories, and electrical appliances are destroyed by the floods each year, after just few hours of rain. The perennial disaster has forced many of the automobile companies to either close or find alternative and safer locations to keep their businesses. Aside from companies such as Vodi Technics (VW and Skoda), PHC Motors (Land Rover, Range Rover, Tata etc.) and Mechanical Lloyd (BMW etc.), which have been edged out of their main business, other giants such as Silver Star and Toyota Ghana have relocated some of their operations. That enclave also used to have GNTC



Soldiers responding to distress calls from citizens new.

Motors, RT Briscoe, Yellow Cab and SCOA, which have either folded up or metamorphosed into other businesses.

Action

The government of Ghana says it has collaborated with the World Bank

to invest more than \$200 million to address solid waste management and flood risk challenges in the Greater Accra Region alone. The project is expected to see the development and implementation of a Flood Early Warning System in collaboration with the Meteorological Agency and

the National Disaster Management Organisation. The government maintains, it will “continue to invest more resources across the country to ensure that not only is the current perennial flooding challenge comprehensively addressed, but also that the country builds resilience against future flood risk.”

At a press briefing to update Ghanaians on the key developments and achievements within the works and housing sector the Minister, Asenso-Boakye says the Greater Accra Resilient and Integrated Development (GARID) project was being implemented in collaboration with the World Bank, with the objective of mitigating flood risk and addressing the solid waste management challenges in the Odaw Drainage Basin.

The minister said over the past four years, investment in flood control measures under the 2018 and 2020 National Flood Control Programme (NFCP) had been the highest, with the government committing about GH¢450 million to deal with the menace. He said his outfit would continue to engage the Ministry of Finance to secure additional funding for the 2022 NFCP. He further announced that the construction of retention ponds in the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission area to hold large volumes of water, which would have otherwise flowed towards the city centre to cause flooding, would commence by the end of the year.

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Tanzania's Northern Circuit: The Most Famous Safari Destination In Africa

By Prosper Makene, Dar es Salaam

With a land of superlative greatest wildlife spectacle in Africa, Tanzania's Northern circuit is the most famous safari destination on the continent.

The Northern Circuit has registered a tremendous record in registering tourists' arrivals since July this year after the nation's decision to reopen its skies.

"Three national parks from the northern circuit including the Serengeti, Manyara and Kilimanjaro had the most tourist distribution since the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines landed at the Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) earlier in August this year, with more than 177 tourists who are here to enjoy Tanzania's tourist attractions," says Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) Assistant Conservation Commissioner in charge of the business development portfolio Beatrice Kessy.

Kessy underscored that the northern tourism circuit-based parks Serengeti, Manyara and Kilimanjaro have attracted 7,811, 1,987 and 1,676 tourists, respectively.

The TANAPA Assistant Conservation Commissioner pointed out that Tanzania has received more than 30,000 visitors since July, this year.



Tanzania's mount-kilimanjaro.

She further said that a total of over 8,000 tourists landed in Tanzania during the first week of August this year, an indication that the 2bn US dollars sector was slowly but surely bouncing back in the wake of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Location to Tanzania's Northern Circuit

Just an hour's drive from Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA) the country's second biggest

airport you will be in the heart of Tanzania's northern highlands. Another way to visit the northern circuit is also flying into Arusha International Airport or arriving via bus from Dar es Salaam's business capital.

Arusha is home to Mount Meru which is often trekked in preparation for the more challenging climb to Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak. You can also climb Ol Doinyo Lengai,

boasting some 350 species of birds and mammals.

Southeast of Manyara you will find the 4000 sq km of terrain comprising the Tarangire National Park and adjoining Conservation Area. Tarangire is famed for its elephant herds, ancient baobab trees and tree-climbing lions. The area also seems an annual migration of elephants, wildebeest, zebra and fringe-eared Oryx.

Ngorongoro, a UN World Heritage Site, is a multi-use conservation area covering 8,200 sq km and is also located in the Northern circuit.

In Ngorongoro, you can find Maasai communities living side-by-side with games. It is known as the 'Cradle of Mankind' because of the ancient hominid finds from Oldupai Gorge that offer clues to the origins of mankind. Descend into one of the world's largest volcanic craters to see some 30,000 large mammals. Here you find grassland, forests and swamps. Striking flocks of flamingos feed around Lake Magadi while the rare black rhino may be found in the surrounding grassland.



Tanzania's Serengeti-national-park.

Within the conservation area, there are a number of luxury lodges. Campsites, hotels and lodges at different price ranges are found nearby in the Karatu area.

Serengeti National Park

Serengeti, the 'land of endless plains' has a national park covering 14,760 sq km and is also located in the northern circuit. The area is famed for the annual wildlife migration that occurs between December and July. You can access the park by road or fly to the several airstrips in the vicinity. If your budget permits, take a dawn balloon ride to really appreciate the vastness of this stunning natural wonder of the park that is also surrounded by wildlife and striking scenery.

Northern Highlands

The Northern highlands are home to Mount Kilimanjaro which can be ascended by various routes providing you are properly prepared for the



Tourism activities at Ngorongoro Conservation Area in Tanzania.

gruelling trek. These highlands are also home to Tanzania's newest national park. Mkomazi, which covers 3,300 sq km, has witnessed a series of amazing conservation efforts. These include the re-introduction of the critically endangered black rhino and African wild dog.

Nelplast: Transforming Plastic Waste Into Low-Cost Houses In Ghana

By Beverly Ndifofo

Ghana, an East African coastal nation of over 30 million people, is a perfect destination for westerners -- especially those tracing their roots. Yet, the cost of living in Ghana is higher than most arrivals may expect. One of the main drivers for the high real estate prices is the expensive cost of building materials.

What if there was a solution that doesn't only provide affordable housing, but helps to protect the fragile environment which is already vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change?

Nelson Boateng, founder and Chief Executive Officer of NelPlast Eco Ghana Limited is a young Ghanaian entrepreneur,

a leading voice that is repurposing and diverting tons of plastic waste from landfills and oceans into



Nelson Boateng, founder and Chief Executive Officer of NelPlast Eco Ghana Limited, stands in front of some of his award-winning bricks made from recycled plastic. (Photo courtesy Nelson Boateng).

affordable building materials for the construction of low-cost houses in Ghana.

"When the collected plastics are brought to us, we scale and pay the collectors according to the weight.

The plastics are crushed, washed semi-dried and mixed with sand and sometimes, pigments to add beauty. The mixture is then fed into an extruder with 3 heating zones, which we build ourselves. Since we are using all kinds of plastic waste at their right proportion, these plastics have different melting points. As they travel through the extruder, let's say starting from 150 degrees Celsius, 180 to 220 degrees Celsius, the heating zones ensure that all kinds of plastic waste is well melted and mixed with sand. This mixer comes out as a paste, which is placed in a mold with a cooling system around it and then pressed under hydraulic press.

Between 60 to 70 seconds, we eject one product out depending on the size and shape of the product. This product would then be packed on

the palette and ready to be installed. NelPlast Echo plastic houses are 30% to 35% cheaper than the concrete buildings that we have, and most of our clients are happy with our projects.”

For the longest time, plastic has been the material of choice for different kinds of packaging due to its lightweight, affordability and ease of use. However, the long run consequences of easy packaging on the environment are far reaching. According to a recent UNDP report, Ghana generates over a million tons of plastic waste every year and only 2% to 5% of the plastic waste is being recycled, and Project Drawdown reveals that recycling could help reduce our carbon footprints by 2 gigatons come 2030. Yet, more and more concerns on the negative effects of plastic use on health, raises questions on whether there are any negative impacts of living in a house constructed from plastic waste! And how solid and resilient are these structures to natural disasters?

“NelPlast bricks are not laid with cement. They are interlocked with each other and due to that nature, they are able to contract and expand when there’s uncertainty on the earth. It can also withstand earthquakes because the walls are not rigid. They have the ability to be flexible when there is any earthquake. Also in terms of cracks, the wall with

plastics doesn’t crack so easily. The bricks are cheaper and stronger than conventional bricks. They can withstand water lock areas and also avoid dampness to the walls. They are safe in terms of fire, because the high percentage of the sand makes the product fire retardant. It’s not easy for these bricks to just get burnt. The bricks are designed in such a way that there is a groove in the middle of the brick that heat from outside to penetrate into the inner part of the room and also maintain the temperature of the inner part of the bricks.”

Reduce, reuse, and recycle! This is the recommended way of life that Boateng is actively working to promote in his home country - Ghana. NelPlast Eco Ghana Limited, born out of frustration with the disturbing amounts of plastic waste continuously buried in landfills is an initiative committed to rid the country of the gulf of plastic waste that is polluting the environment and water bodies, while securing economic opportunities for the unemployed youth in Ghana.

“We have the problem of plastic waste, the problem of school infrastructure, housing deficit and unemployment. NelPlast is trying to use the problem of plastic waste to build affordable houses and solve the



The recycled plastics come out of the manufacturing process as a paste, as shown here. (Photos courtesy Nelson Boateng).

problem of housing in Ghana. Build schools, create jobs for unemployed youth to reduce social violence and clean the environment. Currently, NelPlast employees 63 workers directly and over 300 indirect workers and 98% of this indirect workers are women who go around the landfills, drainage and beaches to collect plastic waste and sell to us - and that’s how they earn their living.”

Boateng’s drive to save the environment from plastic pollution does not go by unsupported or unnoticed.

“We won Ghana UK based achievement award as innovation and technology of the year; EMY Africa - the green corporate star award; African product and service award; Ghana property award as best echo construction product; Ghana industry award; SEED low carbon award and the business executive excellence award.”

However, his ability to scale the business is confronted by many challenges.

“Ghana has a lot of challenges and one of them is the cost of electricity. There are

no subsidies for recyclers in Ghana and that is really discouraging others to join the line. I have passion with plastics because at the age of 13 I was already working with the plastic industry. I did computer network engineering but my passion is how to deal with plastic waste. Also, because of our capacity issues we get a little bit scared of accepting more contracts. A lot of people are calling who want a house, but the problem has to do with our capacity. So because of that, this year we are handling only 15 clients, next year we can add on. If we can have subsidies from the government on electricity bills, soft loans to help us expand, I think it will go a very long way.”

A recent World Bank report projects that waste will grow from 2 billion tonnes in 2020 to nearly 3 billion tonnes by 2050, and the effects may be more adverse for developing countries, where more than 90% of trash is either dumped in the open or burned, worsening the climate crisis. As many look forward to the UN International Climate Conference - COP27 - just around the corner, Boateng is curious to know where plastic pollution fits in the conversations.

*Culled from Planet Forward @ planetforward.org



Nelson Boateng supervises the installation of NelPlast pavers. The recycled plastic can be extruded into different shapes, per a client’s request.

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State Enterprises and Parastatals Governance and the Privatization Mantra in Zimbabwe

By Alexander Maune



The provision and adequacy of hard and soft infrastructure have been viewed as critical for economic development and poverty reduction in both policy and academic realms. Modern infrastructure development and financing are indispensable components of economic growth and sustainable development in all countries (Hanushek, 2013). The major hindrance to economic development in sub-Saharan Africa is population growth without an adequate proportional increase in infrastructure investments. The region ranks at the bottom of all dimensions of infrastructure (International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa's infrastructure networks are deficient in coverage and trade logistics costs remain high in the region. The major argument for the push to increase public spending on infrastructure in the region and Zimbabwe, in particular, is the existence of a strong growth-promoting effect of infrastructure. Governments remain the most prominent financiers of infrastructure investments in sub-Saharan Africa, spending on average 6 - 12% of their gross domestic product (GDP) each year. The major portion of public infrastructure

spending and private sector financing on infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa and Zimbabwe is channelled through State Enterprises and Parastatals (SEPs). These SEPs play a significant role as they account for over 65% of all public infrastructure spending in the provision of new and maintenance of existing critical public infrastructure such as electricity, water and sanitation, information and communication technology (ICT) and transport facilities (AfDB, OECD & UNDP, 2016). In practice, a significant number of SEPs have been characterised by chronic under-performance with poor returns on government investments which led to the deterioration of the current stock of infrastructure (World Bank, 2014). The chronic under-performance of these SEPs has been attributed to bad corporate governance and a lack of corporate governance reforms.

Today, SEPs continue to play a critical role in infrastructure financing, however, the existence of poor corporate governance and lack of reforms has attracted a lot of criticism from the public given the amounts of money that are channelled through SEPs towards infrastructure development. Problems of undue political interference, corruption, nepotism, passive boards and lack of accountability and transparency

have been a cause for concern for the public. Such ills call for comprehensive corporate governance reforms on SEPs.

What are SEPs?

Stureson, McIntyre and Jones (2015) define SEPs as entities in which the government has significant control through full, majority or minority ownership and mostly are engaged in the delivery of core infrastructural services. In many developing countries, SEPs are involved in mega infrastructure projects such as transport, water and sanitation, ICTs and energy. Thirteen largest oil companies which control over 75% of global oil production are SEPs (World Bank, 2014). These SEPs are often given subsidies, debt waivers, favourable loans and protection from bankruptcy and they are expected to provide critical public goods and services to the respective citizens usually at prices below the market value (not financially profitable). According to Zhang, Fan and Wong (2013), the multiple roles of government as the owner, enforcer and regulator is the main reason which undermines the competitiveness and efficiency of SEPs. Zhang et al. (2013) further argue that the performance of SEPs has been very disappointing over the past decade as compared to

private companies, although their social service is always critical. This is explained by the institutional theory which is usually used to address the convergence/divergence debates in corporate governance, as the theory posits that the behaviour of companies is influenced by a country's institutional framework (Amran & Siti-Nabiha, 2009). The attention of many governments in developing countries specific institutional frameworks mainly targets reforms of SEPs' corporate governance structures to improve their operational efficiency.

Corporate governance reforms initiatives in SEPs

The reforms of SEPs have been the focus of both the developed and developing world, beginning in the late 1970s. According to OECD (2005), these reforms where partial or complete privatization became the key source of economic reforms were initiated by developing countries to increase the real output and efficiency of SEPs. The efficiency was not optimally achieved because privatization largely depends on political commitment to overcome bureaucratic inertia, specifying clear motives and allocating skilled human resources, however, most African countries struggle to ascertain

these conditions (OECD, 2015). Furthermore, SEPs in developing countries are not just expected to be financially profitable but are required to provide essential public goods to the citizens. Many countries are not willing to privatize important public SEPs for security reasons as the move can be fatally unpopular for governments and this could also deprive people of critical public goods. This means privatization of SEPs was not a workable solution to improve the performance of SEPs (Sturesson et al., 2015).

Most African countries are now focusing on corporate governance reforms to improve the performance of SEPs. This is done through developing a sound legal and regulatory framework, improving the state's ownership role, establishing a performance monitoring system for accountability, enhancing financial and fiscal discipline, professionalizing their boards of directors and enhancing transparency and disclosure (OECD, 2015). These practical governance reforms are yielding positive results as some SEPs are performing very well (AfDB & OECD, 2016).

There is a consensus among scholars and public policymakers that the reforms in corporate governance in SEPs are among institutional factors that could strengthen performance and improvements in public service delivery. These improvements make it possible to optimize SEPs management and shield them from political interference, thus, guaranteeing their sustainability and expanding capacity utilisation to generate economic and social value.

A 2017 scientific study by Maune used the six worldwide governance indicators (that is, Control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, regulatory quality, rule of law, and voice and accountability) to examine the impact of sound corporate governance on economic growth in Zimbabwe found that sound corporate governance had



a significant influence on economic growth.

In that study, Maune (2017) provides some critical insights regarding the importance of sound corporate governance in sustainable economic growth and development. To him, policy-makers need to appreciate the role of sound corporate governance in sustainable economic growth and development as postulated by Posner (1983) and La Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes, Shleifer & Vishny (1996). These findings were in line with those by Andrés, Guasch & Azumendi (2011). Adding to this discourse, researchers such as Tiwari (2010) argue that sound corporate governance enhances economic growth and development through two mechanisms which are, attracting financing and investment and economic system efficiency.

Zimbabwe's SEPs

According to OECD (2015), Zimbabwe inherited 20 public enterprises thinly spread across sectors at independence in 1980. Despite efforts since 1990 to privatize SEPs, Zimbabwe today has 107 SEPs, with 38 commercial SEPs that provide public services on a cost recovery or for-profit basis (Wushe, Shenje & Ndlovu, 2015 and World Bank, 2017). Given their importance to the economy, SEPs should be accountable and efficient so that they can contribute to economic growth through the provision of critical infrastructure and services. SEPs play a significant role in Zimbabwe's economy. Their contribution to GDP has, however, declined from 16.8%

in 2009 to 13.4% of GDP in 2014. Tax and dividend payments from SEPs declined over the years. The Zimbabwe Constitution (Section 195) requires state-controlled commercial entities to conduct their operations to maintain commercial viability and abide by generally accepted standards of good corporate governance. Worryingly, the financial audits show that parastatals are incurring huge losses due to weak corporate governance practices and ineffective control mechanisms.

Acts that govern SEPs in Zimbabwe

State Enterprises in Zimbabwe are generally governed by the Companies Act (Chapter 24:03), while Parastatals are governed by individual Acts of Parliament. In addition, every state enterprise or parastatal is obliged to adhere to and implement the principles of sound corporate governance policies, procedures and practices, as required by section 50 of the Public Finance Management Act (Chapter 22:19). To complement this Act, all the SEPs' financial statements are prepared using International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as provided for by the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19]. These reporting standards help SEPs in the preparation and presentation of their financial statements.

Despite the presents of the legal frameworks that govern SEPs, there is an increasing wave of highly publicised corporate scandals that have negatively affected SEPs in Zimbabwe. The Auditor General

has conceded that most of the challenges that continue to afflict Zimbabwe's public sector entities are of a corporate governance nature (Office of the Auditor-General of Zimbabwe, 2016). Most of these Acts have legal and compliance gaps that lead to a lack of accountability and disclosure. This is a signal for the country's policymakers to awaken to the realities of an ineffectual corporate governance framework and act to address the governance deficiencies that are distressing SEPS in Zimbabwe. A large number of separate and largely uncoordinated sources of corporate governance requirements is encouraging selective compliance resulting in weak corporate governance practices in SEPs. Some of the laws and regulations have become outdated as they have become static for a long time.

Corporate governance frameworks of SEPs in Zimbabwe

Observation by Zhou (2012) indicates that SEPS in Zimbabwe, over the past three decades, has gone through various phases of restructuring and each decade reflects a distinct restructuring approach. Firstly, SEPS restructurings were state-initiated and expansionary, fundamentally concerned with reconstituting public enterprises into majority-interest-driven entities. Secondly, the restructuring was done through liberalization, deregulation, commercialization and privatization. This was partly driven by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which was adopted from 1991 to 1995, where these reforms were designed to unlock value through the disposal of public entities and commercialisation. Since 1996, the government opted for the unbundling route whereby targeted parastatals were broken into smaller business-oriented units under a 100% state-owned holding company.

The state monopolies that were broken into small, business-oriented entities include the National Oil

Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM), Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and others. Despite all these efforts, the SEPs in Zimbabwe remained a sad tale of loss-making and debt-ridden entities with a voracious appetite for fiscal support due to governance issues. To speed up the reforms, the Privatization Agency of Zimbabwe (PAZ) was established by the government in 1999 to lead and manage the Privatization Programme. Again in 2004, the State Enterprises Restructuring Agency (SERA) was established to replace the PAZ. The SERA, the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), and line ministries were given the mandate to develop a Corporate Governance Framework for SEPs, however, the coordination was poor and the framework was not comprehensive (Moyo, 2011).

According to World Bank (2017), the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) announced several corporate governance reforms for SEPs through national budget statements to improve SEPs' performance. In the 2011 Budget Statement, the GoZ launched the first phase of a reform programme, targeting major enterprises such as Agribank and Air Zimbabwe. In the 2013, national budget, the GoZ noted the need to continue restructuring public enterprises and all SEPs were required to comply with the provisions of the Corporate Governance Framework for State Enterprises. The corporate governance terrain in Zimbabwe has improved with the enactment of the long-awaited Companies and Other Business Entities Act [Chapter 24:31] that came into effect in 2020 and the Public Enterprises Corporate Governance Act [Chapter 10:31] of 2021. These acts have had a positive influence on the performance of SEPs in Zimbabwe. SEPS reforms in corporate governance are critical in strengthening performance and improvements in the delivery of public services since most infrastructure investments are channelled through SEPs in Zimbabwe.



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Capital investment financing in Zimbabwe

According to World Bank (2017), Zimbabwe is lagging in terms of critical infrastructure which includes energy, water and sanitation, transport and Information and Communication Technology. Public infrastructure investment in Zimbabwe is mainly funded by Treasury through the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP). Another significant portion comes from foreign investments. These funds are mainly channelled to commercial SEPs such as Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA), National Railways of Zimbabwe, and Civil Aviation Authority (CAZ). Due to government budgetary constraints, some of the capital for infrastructure is raised by the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe (IDBZ) on behalf of the government with the funds channelled through SEPs. For example, USD260 million was availed to ZINWA for the completion of Tokwe Mukosi Dam. Furthermore, ZESA through its power generation arm Zimbabwe Power Company (ZPC) completed the Kariba South project with USD533

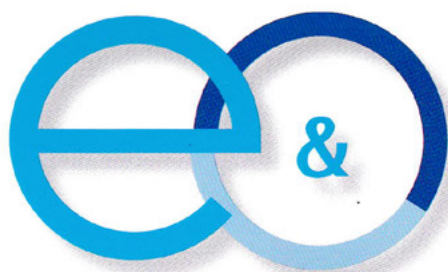
million injected. China Exim Bank also injected USD355 towards the construction of the Tokwe Mukosi Dam. In addition, the same bank approved USD1.1 billion for the Hwange Thermal Station expansion. Furthermore, Telone received some funds to the tune of USD98 million for its various projects. CAZ got a loan from China Exim Bank worth USD115 million for the expansion of Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport and finally, NRZ was recapitalised by USD400 million. All these projects and many others are financed through SEPs whose corporate governance structures are not in good shape.

Research shows that addressing Zimbabwe's infrastructure challenges requires a sustained expenditure of almost USD2 billion per year over the next decade, with a heavy emphasis on rehabilitation and more than half is needed for the power sector. Furthermore, the overall level of spending would represent 46% of GDP, which is one of the largest infrastructure burdens for any African country. Zimbabwe already spends a sizable amount (USD0.8 billion per year) to meet its infrastructure needs. Almost 83% of the total expenditure is allocated to operations and maintenance and 17%

to capital expenditures. The capital expenditure is partly covered by government budgets, SEPs resources and user fees. Non-OECD financiers account for an impressive 63% of total capital spending, the private sector accounts for another 10% and official development assistance (ODA) flows accounts for 1%.

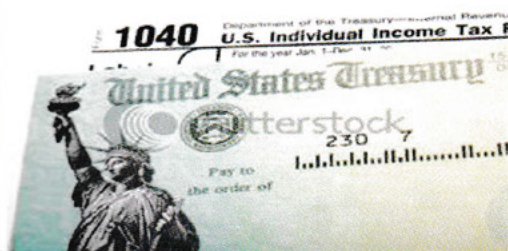
Attracting required private sector funding is a challenge. In the past, Zimbabwe has not been able to attract and retain adequate and consistent investment owing to several factors such as sanctions. Furthermore, most of the infrastructure providers are SEPs that require restructuring for the country to be able to attract private funding into the sector. Corporate governance reforms in SEPs have been long overdue as poor corporate governance has been sighted as the main cause of poor performance in many SEPs. In an article entitled, "Corporate Governance in Zimbabwe: An overview of its current state," Alexander Maune (2015) provides a more detailed analysis of the state of corporate governance in Zimbabwe. However, the potential scope of private participation in infrastructure (PPI) in Zimbabwe is highly promising, and therefore the country must take all possible measures to attract private funding. Given the size of the funding gap, clear principles for prioritization and sequencing of infrastructure investment decisions are essential. Since infrastructure is only a means to an end, it is important to define infrastructure development plans in close coordination with the national growth vision. In the recent past, the GoZ has taken positive global steps to attract private sector investment through broad growth strategies centred around foreign engagement, SEPs reforms, and ease of doing business reforms among other strategies.

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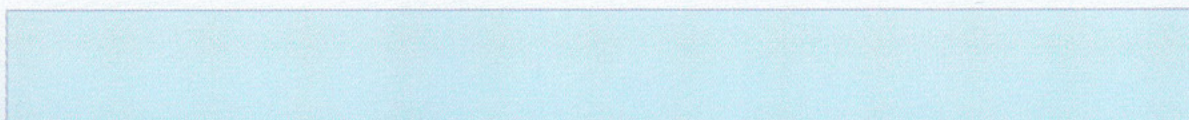
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Sports Photography Tips And Tricks From Frank Darkwah

The famous adage 'necessity is the mother of invention' rings true for writer turned sports photographer Frank Darkwah. Earlier, when writing about Ghanaian football games Frank often faced a dearth of quality pictures to elucidate his words. It happened far too often so he decided to take some photos himself and create a repository to supplement his stories. Little did he know that he was a natural at it. Since his first game, Frank has never stopped clicking and as they say, the rest is history - or more aptly in this case, his stories in pictures.

Today, Frank is a CAF (Confederation de African Football (CAF) and FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) accredited photojournalist he has covered prestigious events like the 2017 WAFU Cup of Nations Championship, the 2018 Africa Women's Cup of Nations and the 2022 WAFU U17 Championship. He was nominated as the Best Sports Photographer in Ghana and by the International Sports Press Association (AIPS). He was also among the top 10 Sports Photographers from Africa by AIPS.

Read on to know the best tips, tricks, and techniques from the master photographer himself.

Pro tip - Passion and perseverance will pave the way

Franks says, "You have to have the passion for it". Sports photography is not just about taking photos of the athletes and games, but really investing time, and effort in it and building technique and developing skills over time. It is a challenging realm and can be exhausting. You'll thrive only if you have



Kotoko pair- Justice Blay and Naby Keita Goal celebration at Accra Stadium captured by sports photographer Frank Darkwah on Canon EOD 6D.

the passion it takes. He also advises enthusiasts and upcoming sports photographers to be in it for the long run. "Anyone who is serious about sports photography must think from a long-term perspective and the benefits it can have over a period as there are no quick returns. You

must be committed to your craft. Perseverance will see you through," he asserts.

Camera always counts

Your camera and the equipment will help bring your A game. Many professionals like Frank rely on

Canon. "Using Canon EOS 6D Mark II has helped me get the best out of my best work," remarks Frank. The EOS 6D provides powerful support to artistic expression, even in the realm of moviemaking. It's a powerful yet compact and light DSLR with a 26.2megapixel image sensor, and a touch panel LCD monitor to capture stunning images and videos. For upcoming photographers Frank recommends moderate and budget-friendly cameras like the Canon EOS M50 or the EOS 1300D. He adds that a Canon EF 200mm f/2.8L II USM lens works well if you cannot get a Canon EF 300mm or 400mm lens.

Tricks to bring out your best shots

1. Watch out for the weather. It's a critical aspect of photography. Good weather will give you quality images.

2. Start with covering small games and sports that are not hugely popular. It takes off the pressure and gives you the freedom to take your time, explore and develop.

3. Be at the venue ahead of time. Get to the game much before the match starts so you have time to prepare and be ready when the action starts.

4. The action is on and off the field. Don't just focus on the action on the field and athletes, also capture the action around you like fans, their emotions, etc. Things that happen outside the pitch make great stories.

5. Get the vantage advantage. Pick your position with the best view of the field that allows you to take great shots.

6. Be unbiased in covering a game. It helps to stay



Gt. Olympics James Akaminko strong tackle on Kotoko's Samuel Frimpong captured by sports photographer Frank Darkwah on Canon EOS 6D.

neutral on the job. You are there to capture the best moments on the field and take good shots of the game irrespective of your favorite team or player. Having favorites can make the opponent team's fans irate.

7. Avoid wearing any team's jersey on the job. It gives away your affiliation and might land you in trouble with the fans during the match.

8. Take care of your equipment. Safe storage, frequent cleaning and regular maintenance add to the longevity of the equipment.

Frank sums up, "The key is having the passion and zeal if you want to succeed. Knowledge about photography and understanding of the game are crucial. Knowing about sports in general helps particularly the game you are covering. It also makes working as a sports photographer very easy". He re-iterates, "Don't think about the immediate benefits,

think about long-term benefits. Keep at it and you just might become one of the most successful photographers".

'Capture the Action' Photography Competition

Photography enthusiasts in Africa were invited to participate in 'Capture the Action' sports photography competition which Canon held in collaboration with Pan African Visions. The contest was for upcoming photographers to showcase their talent and the power of visual storytelling in sports photography. The contest was open from 7th July- 31st July to African photographers aged 18 and over. The best shots stand to win some amazing prizes and winners will be revealed soon through public voting and an exclusive jury panel that includes Frank Darwah.



Kotoko forward Frank Mbella Etouga controls a ball midair captured by sports photographer Frank Darkwah on Canon EOS 6D.

Cameroon: FECAFOOT President Samuel Eto'o Scores Major Victory In CAS Decision

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The Court of Arbitration for Sports, CAS, has passed a major decision confirming the election of Samuel Eto'o as president of the Cameroon Football Federation, FECAFOOT – a decision heralded by many as a game-changer in the battle to revolutionize Cameroon football.

FECAFOOT Interim Secretary-General Blaise Djounang, this Tuesday, August 23rd, thanked the members of the 2009 general assembly who contributed to the verdict announced this day by CAS «for the sake of appeasement and the reconstruction of Cameroonian football.».

He said: "It is the beginning of a new era for Cameroonians football which will henceforth be played in stadiums and not in courtrooms." "The chairman of FECAFOOT Samuel Eto'o applauds this historic verdict and appeals to all to UNITE and give back to Cameroonian football ITS



Samuel Eto'o, president of the Cameroon Football Federation, FECAFOOT.

GREATNESS.”

Former Indomitable Lions captain and all-time goal scorer Samuel Eto'o took the helm of his country's FA on December 11, 2021, and since then, various cases have been filed at the level of CAS not to recognize the election. After taking office, Eto'o went on a reconciliation tour as he sorts to bridge the gap with those calling for the cancellation of the election. His efforts paid off as some of the 2009 General Assembly decided to drop their case which led to his victory.

“The decision from CAS is timely. If these same persons (2009 GA) think they can be at the helm of football in the country, where are they? Thank God we have some members, 46 out of the 76 have joined Samuel Eto'o to carry Cameroon football to the next level,” Tabi Emmanuel, football journalist based in Kumba told PAV. “For now, we just have to wait and see if the reported appeal from the adversaries will hold any weight.”

“Eto'o succeeded to play a card which his two predecessors (Tombi A Roko and Seidou Mbombo Njoya) failed to do. The two never played the football politics that Eto'o did and that was the clear difference in the victory,” Jemea Teke, a sports journalist with Sports24 said.

“If you looked at how Mbombo Njoya and Tombi A Roko handled their cases, you will see that they never took into consideration diplomacy and decided to fight back and in that light spent a lot of money to hire legal minds and take the 2009 GA to appeals. Eto'o meanwhile on February 24 brought these members together and encouraged them to see football as the key indicator and not about selfish interest. This is the method that has finally won Eto'o the recognition after some 2009 GA members decided to drop their case at CAS.”

Abba Abdourama, one of Samuel Eto'o strongest adversaries has lambasted the decision from CAS as he says in the days ahead, he will be filing another petition to get the decision reversed. Football stakeholders, however, say it is time Abdouraman gets to drop all his petitions for the development of football in the country.

Jemea Teke added: “The decision and it will be difficult for it to be overturned. For many years we have been talking about the politics being played in court as opposed to the football on the pitch. Eto'o knows how football is managed as he has been a footballer himself. And I believe he has a lot to give for Cameroon



FECAFOOT President Samuel Eto'o, after the match between Burkina Faso and the Indomitable Lions for the third place of the Africa Cup of Nations (CAN) 2021,

football.”

Samuel Eto'o, revolutionizing Cameroon football

“This is the time to bring in change. Eto'o has been a great player on the pitch and he has to use that greatness off the pitch this time. So many people are looking up to him. And to whom much is given, much is expected,” Etienne Mainimo, a sports journalist in Cameroon said after Eto'o won the election.

Since taking the helm of Cameroon football back in December 2021, Samuel Eto'o has looked to

revolutionize Cameroon football from every aspect. The slogan in the Cameroonian circles has been «football is constantly being played in the offices and not on pitches» is gradually fading out. From the organization to the Elite championships, increasing subventions to clubs and the handling of finances have all had a facelift. In his manifesto, Eto'o talked about envisaging having a monthly detailed expenditure per month. The label FECAFOOT is also going to be used to attract more sponsors, and then have an annual audit of the FECAFOOT accounts as well as that of those coordinating the different national teams.

Another of Samuel Eto'o's plans of action has been to focus on the development of football at all levels. At the youth level, a youth championship has been organised in the national territory. Relaunch of the partnership convention between FECAFOOT and the FENASCO A and B to promote sports education and also reorganise the agreement modalities between the football federation and football academies.

The more football pitches are made available; the more talents will be discovered. Going by the plan of Eto'o, by 2030 40 municipal stadiums will be constructed (four per region). Terminating the FECAFOOT building and also refurbishing those regional leagues is a necessity. _____



Cameroon is amongst five African countries looking to excel at the 2022 FIFA Qatar World Cup.



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