



CBC-AfricaRecruit 18 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5LU United Kingdom

T +44(0)20 7024 8239 F +44(0)20 7930 3944

info @africarecruit.com www.africarecruit.com www.findajobinafrica.com www.cbglobal.org



"To build sustainable Human Resource capacity in Africa"



The Global Skills for Africa Seminar/Career Fair Report

12-13th March -2003



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Front row from left H.E Dr Christopher Kolade Nigerian High Commissioner, Monica Nashandi High Commissioner for the Republic of Namibia, Nick Hales General Manager BAT Nigeria, Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu- chairman New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) steering committee, Ziyanda Danana- Group Executive Human Resources Transnet, H.E Lindiwe Mabuza South African High Commissioner. In the back row behind Professor Nkuhlu is Mr James Bevan, the Africa Director to the Foreign Commonwealth Office

Introduction

Commonwealth Business Council Africa Recruit (CBC AfricaRecruit) is a product of the Commonwealth Business Council. It consists of AfricaRecruit (www.africarecruit.com), FindaJobinAfrica.com (www.findajobinafrica.com) and a network of recruitment associates inside and outside Africa committed to building robust and enduring productive human resource capacity throughout the continent. The Commonwealth heads of government at their 1997 Edinburgh summit established the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC). It is an independent private sector organisation with 150 corporate and 4,000 associate member companies throughout the Commonwealth (see website www.cbglobal.org) CBCAfricarecruit's vision is to build, retain and sustain high quality skills in Africa.

Background

Shortage of skills is a critical constraint that is holding back investment, job creation and improved public services for Africa. Although exact figures are difficult to obtain, probably 40% of African professionals are now living outside the continent, meaning upwards of 5 million doctors, teachers, engineers, technicians. The continent spends over \$4bn in technical assistance each year in sectors such as health, education and the environment, as well as public management.

Developing the vital critical skills and retaining them in Africa is an uphill task. Tens of thousands of doctors and nurses are leaving their native countries to work abroad, primarily in the UK and United States, leaving Africa's hospitals desperately short-staffed. "Out of 6,000 doctors trained in Kenya, our public hospitals had only about 600" Kenya's Health Minister Charity Ngilu"

Health ministers from throughout Africa are met in Switzerland in an effort to stop the continued drain of top health professionals from the continent- BBC News Monday, 19 May 2003

The private sector has already identified lack of skills as one of the main causes contributing to poor investment.

CBCAfricarecruit Objectives:

- To develop a global data base of skilled African professionals/technocrats in and outside Africa
- To develop a global database of expatriates with an interest in Africa
- To attract skills to Africa
- To build and retain skills within Africa
- To create a platform to engage citizens of African in the formation of human resources policy

Scope

This report sets to outline the aspect of the project that focuses on attracting the skills in the Diaspora to Africa. This by no means excludes our vision to retain and build on the skills within Africa but rather to begin to reverse some of the "haemorrhaging" of Africa's best talent as a short-term measure to begin the process of building human capacity in Africa. The medium term strategy is to ensure the skills attracted to Africa and those developed within Africa are retained. Long-term strategy is to address the development of the talents and careers and ensure that policies in place address the working force for the 21st Century.

Diaspora

We are losing our best and brightest from a region desperately in need of those very talents. And where are they going? To the countries that are already the most advantaged countries in the world. In many ways, it could be counted as Africa's foreign assistance to the developed world! NEPAD is the continent's own strategy to reinvigorate the social, political and economic life of the continent for the betterment of its peoples. One of its aims is to find ways turn the historic phenomenon of the "brain drain" into a "brain gain" – utilising the experience and knowledge of the Diaspora in the revitalisation of Africa. These professionals are some of Africa's greatest but least recognised resources. The strong ties between

professionals within the Diaspora and Africa cannot be severed and only through the initiation of dialogue and ongoing collaboration and elimination of false perceptions that genuine development can be achieved.

These communities retain strong ties back home, and their skills and talents are vital ingredients of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Africans in Diaspora already account for 85% of structured Foreign Direct Investment in Africa. In some constituent republics of the African Union remittance account for half of the Nations GDP. African immigrants to the United States boast some of the highest educational attainments of any immigrant group and there are now more than 250,000 scientists and physicians of African descent in the United States.

It is estimated that Africa receives approximately \$3 billion in remittance from Africans in the Diaspora each year through the official or formal channels. This accounts for no more than 50% as much more goes through the informal channels such as person to person

CBC established AfricaRecruit in September 2002 as a contribution to tackling this problem, and provides a platform for debate with the African Diaspora on how to contribute to an Africa-wide skills strategy, and ensure that governments and employers work together to make skill transfer easier. The African Union (AU) has expressed its appreciation for the initiative, which reflects the AU's premium on the role and contribution of the Diaspora. The project has been developed in close collaboration with NEPAD, and the Chairman of the NEPAD Implementation Committee, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria (see appendix for details)

AFRICARECRUIT LAUNCH – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CBCAfricarecruit was launched in London United Kingdom on the 12/13th March 2003 (see appendix for details)

The career/seminar/fair formed part of the two-day AfricaRecruit launch, at which 40companies exhibited and over 3500 African professionals attended on both the days (see appendix for client testimonials, the sample questionnaire survey and results by breakdown of candidates nationality, experience and industry).

The seminar was attended by:

- 392 companies and their human resources personnel
- 31 African high commissioners and ambassadors
- 46 Media houses (see appendix for details)
- Diaspora organisations and over 100 members of the Diaspora based in Europe and North America

The Seminar/Career Fair, which was opened by the Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee, Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu made

clear that skills underpin all of NEPAD's objectives. Good governance, more investment, better services all requires excellent technical, professional and management skills. Africa does not have enough time – not can it afford to rely on expatriate expertise - to fill these gaps from within the continent.

This event has demonstrated that if there is such demand, there is certainly an abundant potential supply – but the two are not yet well matched. The enthusiasm among members of the Diaspora and their organisations to respond to NEPAD and Africa's development needs to be matched by practical mechanisms to put together the employers and professionals in the Diaspora.

Individuals and organisations attended the event from North America and Europe, and we witnessed the passion and enthusiasm that is felt. Most of this enthusiasm is not yet tapped. Better results will be achieved if efforts are made between Embassies and High Commissions, the communities themselves and the private sector to discuss and debate NEPAD. Africa Recruit can help to facilitate a coming together of many diverse initiatives by providing platform for people to work together. Progress in recruitment will also bring many benefits of trade, investment and capacity building that come from the two-way flows of skills.

Summary of the presentations and discussions (for agenda of the seminar and complete speeches kindly see appendix)

Challenges	Opportunities	Ideas	Action
Developing Skills for Africa			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are the skills located in the Diaspora or even within Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To located skills wherever located To more effectively use the skills that are already accessible in the Diaspora "encourage those who want" to return To build a global database of skills for Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge the gaps in human resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global careers fairs Global sourcing of talents Create a stable and secure environment to retain skills in Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make local jobs accessible to those in the Diaspora as well a those in Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring jobs closer to people wherever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise the awareness of job opportunities and present Africa as a viable option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies to accommodate-local indigenes, repatriate and expatriate Career development in universities and secondary schools and continuous professional development Global recruitment and employment strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrants are not Samaritans 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guided by a development approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap the know-how acquired in the host country, for the benefit of the country of origin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilising the Diaspora 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific incentives to encourage African nationals abroad to mobilise their savings for local development projects
Skill Needs - Labour Market Problems a Private Sector Perspective			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior to top levels demand greater than supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Africans who have reached the "glass ceilings" in their current companies, or people who have the requisite skills gained from working abroad and wish to accelerate their career advancement by returning to more senior roles in Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bringing into the country qualified and competent overseas African Nationals as well as Non-Nationals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Legislation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National or Non -Nationals experience some resistance and hostility. Nationals face a big culture shock on coming back 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiters and employers, as well as other interested stakeholders should embark on a concerted, carefully articulated joint effort, which could be interpreted, into programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embarking on comprehensive Induction Programmes which will ensure that the psychological and other frameworks of African Recruits are addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would local employers ever get the Return on their Investment? Recruitment agencies and executive search agencies are relatively underdeveloped Talent pool is small 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Companies or organisations must see employees as an asset Collective resourcing and training 	

Challenges	Opportunities	Ideas	Action
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Diaspora Perspectives: Perceptions and Perspectives of Professionals in the Diaspora

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment forums place a lot of focus on multinational companies as the employers in Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many African graduates would like NGOs and large African based companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see more government parastatals, Civil Service opportunities and other growing local African companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All organisations/companies to invest in human capital using a global form
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible and credible structures with which Africans in the Diaspora can identify capable of delivering results In the short term, few Africans in the Diaspora will pack their bags and head home permanently. But they will engage in more flexible ways Individual African governments limit themselves by only addressing their own nationals abroad. Africans in the Diaspora hardly know what NEPAD stands for, let alone why they should be involved Reversal of entrenched perceptions through a candid and comprehensive examination of existing policies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise and respect the ways that people organise and to reach out to existing networks as well as to encourage the formation of new ones where the need arises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internships in Africa for African students abroad in the course of their studies with the African Diaspora collectively More creative outreach strategies from the African Union, NEPAD Secretariat, African governments and other institutions potential Continuous dialogue aimed at reversing ill perceived perceptions and reservations Ongoing training programmes needs to be set up so that skills are continually updated with the African needs in mind An educational strategy needs to be revisited so that ongoing reciprocal arrangements are in place

The Role of Governments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Push' and 'pull' factors 'Push' being those influences in African countries that are so negative to its existing and potential work force that they feel constrained to leave the country 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political stability Sound economic policies Good governance Human rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Pull' being those influences in the recipient country 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach initiatives to the Diaspora e.g. career fairs Dual citizenship Regional integration Earmark mid-level professional government jobs for those returning from the Diaspora in key policy and program areas, universities, ministries, etc Create joint programs with funding countries Negotiate with developed countries to "stop the poaching"

Examples of previous successes to build on:

A lot of South Africans came back home and ploughed their skills into the country (post 1994 elections). One good example would be the turn around and transformation of the South African Broadcasting Corporation by Mr Sisulu, transformation that still has its roots today.

Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN) The programme enabled almost 2000 professionals to return home to 11 African countries to take up key positions of employment. Although the programme enjoyed much success, with almost 85% of highly qualified African nationals remaining in Africa after

2 years on, it must be said that this option had its limitations, especially for individuals who did not have a desire to return definitely. Based on its long experience in the Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN) Programme, IOM has launched a new programme called



the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) Programme.

Outcome of the career fair:

- Recruitment of African's in the Diaspora-
- Increased awareness of job opportunities by Africans in the Diaspora
- Opportunities for Africans who have left their countries of origin to meet with new employers in Africa
- Platform for the issues, obstacles and challenges to be expressed by both recruiters and jobseekers
- Direct engagement of the Diaspora with African governments
- Partnership with various Diaspora organisations in Europe and North America
- Providing employers with a larger talent pool
- Increased awareness by employers and governments of Africans in the Diaspora with an interest in contributing to the development of Africa
- Africa seen as a viable option
- Actions points to take forward

Action

Action	How	Who	Proposed date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase the job opportunities available to Africans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase the profile and awareness of www.findajobinafrica.com to both recruiters and jobseekers using career fairs and human consultancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBCAfricarecruit and its various networks; others who wish to 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Global careers fairs Global sourcing of talents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct career fairs at different global locations with a large African diasporas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBCAfricarecruit in partnership with Non-governmental organisations; private and public sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ October 2003 (Washington DC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continuous dialogue aimed at reversing ill perceived perceptions and reservations Specific incentives to encourage African nationals abroad to mobilise their savings for local development projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creative outreach strategies and initiatives to the Diaspora from the NEPAD Secretariat, African governments and other institutions potential ■ Forums and networking events for African governments and developmental organisations to engage with the Diaspora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBCAfricarecruit to lead and Diaspora organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ At every Africa Career fair and smaller forums
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tap the know-how acquired in the host country, for the benefit of the country of origin ■ Internships in Africa for African students abroad in the course of their studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build a global database of African skills to be made available to developmental partners at no cost ■ Graduate road shows at various universities in the Diaspora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBCAfricarecruit and international organisation for migration (IOM) ■ CBCAfricarecruit and employers to create openings for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ As programmes are developed e.g. World Health Organisation/IOM initiative, MIDA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Earmark mid-level professional government jobs for those returning from the Diaspora in key policy and program areas, universities, ministries ■ Embarking on comprehensive Induction Programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discussion and negotiations with African governments, institutions and developmental partners on job openings ■ Formation of Human resource policy group – establish human resource policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CBCAfricarecruit/ NEPAD/Developmental partners ■ CBCAfricarecruit to lead with recruitment bodies and employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ During the university calendar year



Goodwill Message to the Commonwealth Business Council on its AfricaRecruit Initiative

I was very pleased to learn about the initiative that the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) is taking to bring back home for the benefit of our continent, the skills and techniques acquired by our people over the years, courtesy of AfricaRecruit programme. This is a very laudable scheme that should contribute in a meaningful way to mobilising the human resources that are in short supply in the continent and yet so critical to its development.

The AfricaRecruit programme is for many reasons, a very welcome project. First, it gives practical vent to the call for partnership that lies at the core of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as can be seen from the close cooperation between the CBC and the NEPAD Secretariat as well as the active participation of the private sector in promoting the scheme. It also shows increasing awareness that NEPAD is a collaborative effort not only between Africans, but also with our development partners.

One of the major constraints facing Africa is a lack of capacity arising from inadequacy of trained personnel. The dearth of such essential manpower is partly due to poor and insufficient educational facilities but also sadly ascribable to the massive emigration of skilled people from the continent.

Indeed, at the inception of my Administration in 1999, one of the new units I created in my office, under the supervision of one of my assistants, was charged with a mandate similar to the AfricaRecruit project. With the benefit of my trips across the world over the years, I came to appreciate the sheer quantum and quality of Nigerians resident abroad and working as professionals and academics, whose expertise, in my view could be positively harnessed for national development.

The plan to encourage African professionals to bring their skills home is therefore a noble attempt to reverse this trend and therefore deserves every support. It is also in accord with one of the key themes of NEPAD, which is to increase the trained manpower available to support the development of the continent.

In particular, AfricaRecruit provides an opportunity for dialogue among relevant stakeholders on issues of concern to Africans living outside the continent. The planned forum is also a good chance for Governments to appreciate the difficulties that African professionals face in trying to return home while at the same time giving them an opening to explain the various reforms being put in place to restore the continent to the path of growth and prosperity, a process in which they are stakeholders. On their part, in addition to learning more about available job opportunities in different Parts of Africa, participants at the event should be able to put across their perspectives on on-going continental initiatives like NEPAD and AfricaRecruit itself.

I see AfricaRecruit as an important and practical contribution to mobilising the professional skills required to make the New Partnership for Africa work. I am delighted to express my support for this initiative and urge Africans in the Diaspora as well as leaders of the private and public sector to do all they can to support it. I am particularly pleased to note in this regard that the Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation (NIDO), which has some similar objectives to AfricaRecruit, has been collaborating actively with the CBC in this scheme.

I commend the Commonwealth Business Council and the NEPAD Secretariat for taking the initiative to organise this very important event and extend my best wishes for the success of the inaugural occasion scheduled to take place on 12th to 13th March 2003 in London.

OLUSEGUN OBASANJO
February 4, 2003





Professor Wiseman Nkulu

Among Africa's greatest but least recognised resources is the vast number of Africans living and working outside the continent. These communities retain strong ties back home, and their skills and talents are vital ingredients of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

NEPAD is the continent's own strategy to reinvigorate the social, political and economic life of the continent for the betterment of its peoples. One of its aims is to find ways turn the historic phenomenon of the "brain drain" into a "brain gain" – utilising the experience and knowledge of the Diaspora in the revitalisation of Africa. This is a goal which every institution and company operating in Africa knows to be important.

The Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) has launched AfricaRecruit as a practical initiative dedicated to working within the Diaspora, and with Africa's employers, to attract skilled African professionals back into the labour market in Africa. It has already attracted over 20,000 African professionals who live in Europe and North America onto its database.

NEPAD is pleased to be a sponsor of this initiative and to support the inaugural event in London on 12th/13th March 2003. We look

forward to seeing the stronger practical mechanisms for recruitment for private and public sector employers in Africa that will result. Africa Recruit is also important as a vehicle for dialogue between Africans living in and outside the continents, which can create a dialogue with professionals in the Diaspora, and look at ways in which African governments can help foster the flow of skills back to Africa.

I urge all who recognise the potential role of the Diaspora in building the capacity of the private and public sector in Africa to support this initiative.

Yours sincerely

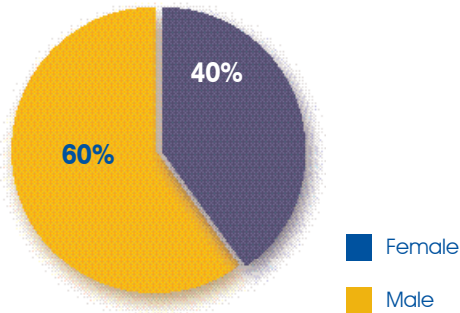
PROFESSOR WISEMAN L NKUHLU
CHAIRPERSON OF THE NEPAD
STEERING COMMITTEE



ANALYSIS OF 3,636 CANDIDATE REGISTRATION FORMS

Breakdown by sex

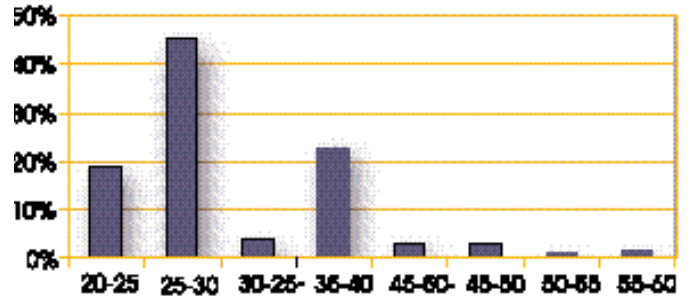
Sex Distribution



Over half of the jobseekers that attended the fair were men reflecting the working population

Breakdown by age

Age Distribution

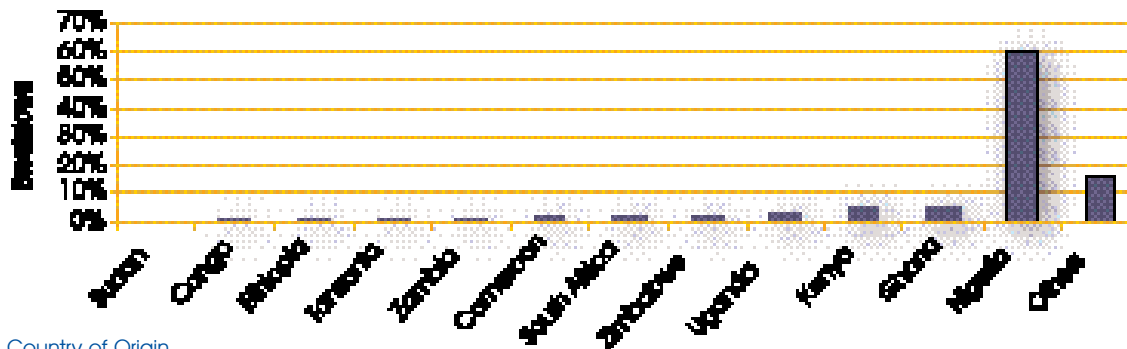


Age Range

Majority of the jobseekers that attended the career fair were under 30 years of age confirming the assumptions that older jobseekers do not traditionally attend career fairs.

Breakdown by Nationality

Nationality breakdown

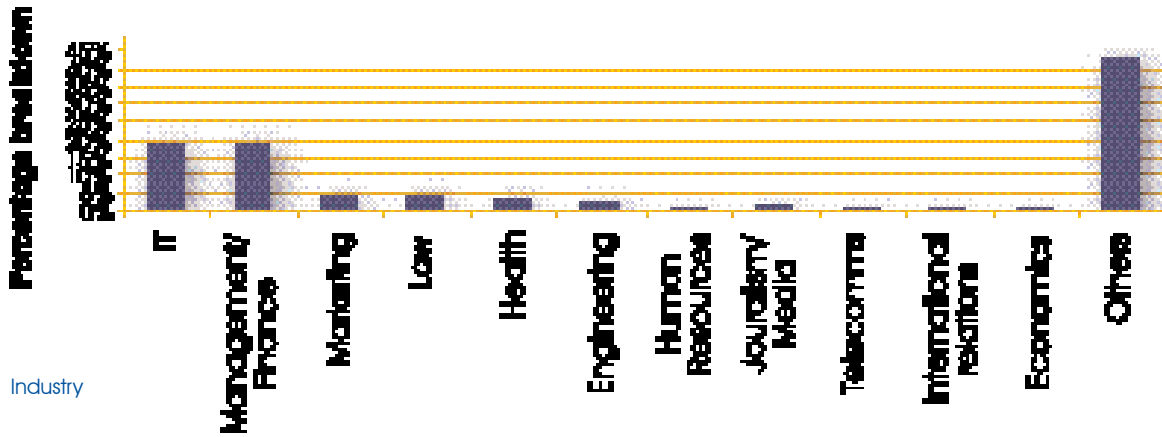


Country of Origin

Over half of the jobseekers that attended the career fair were from Nigeria all other African nationalities had representation including nationals from Francophone Africa. Non-African

nationals from countries such as Japan, India, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Britain and North America also attended the fair.

Industry breakdown

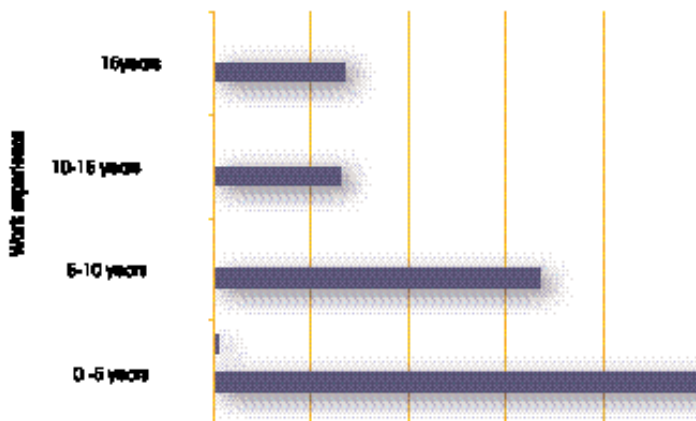


There was a widespread representation from all industries the majority of the jobseekers being from information technology and management/finance industry. Under others industries such as public sector, research, tourism, education, transportation, urban

development and many others were represented

Breakdown by work experience

Nationality breakdown



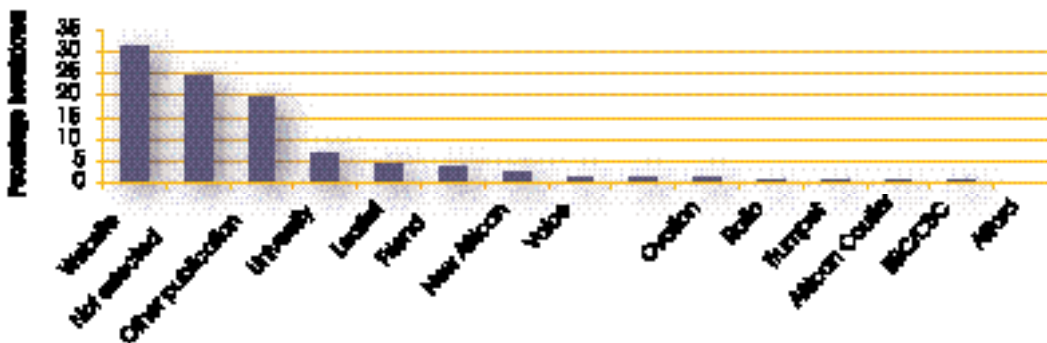
Break down

Years of work experience	Percentage breakdown
0-5	68
5-10	18
10-15	7
15 plus	7

Over 60% of the jobseekers had 0-5 years work experience and 17% with 15plus years experience

How did you hear about us ?

Marketing



How

The various links with online websites is very effective and should be enhanced particularly with African countries underrepresented

Some of the comments made by jobseekers

- The whole idea of recruitment is brilliant
- It is a brilliant initiative
- Congratulations
- I am looking forward to this exciting project
- Excellent organisation
- Great opportunity for graduates
- I have always wanted recruitment to be done from home and abroad
- This is a very good initiative
- "Thank you a lot for the idea. I had no idea that there is something like this on the web. I am Mr XX from Kenya and I came to United States 20 years back to study. I have my Bachelors in Business and a Masters MBA in Finance among other smaller degree in Economics, Banking and Real Estate. I have been working here in Minnesota for all those years and always wished I could transfer the experience back to Africa but no opportunities. I am really impressed with this. Thank you again for the idea and your time"
- I am a Civil Engineer and I would like to carry on in the same profession. I am willing to work anywhere in Africa as a consultant or on a contract basis.

TESTIMONIALS FROM SOME OF OUR CLIENTS

We are delighted to have taken part in the launch AfricaRecruit. During the two-day period of the launch, Nigerian Bottling Company (authorised Bottler of Coca Cola beverage in Nigeria) was able to meet, interact and interview highly skilled individuals who have both skills and the experience we required to fill. A variety of positions we have in our operations. The event was well organised and we believe was excellent value for money.

As the largest employer in non-oil private sector hi Nigeria, we are constantly looking for the best candidates for our growing operations and we believe AfricaRecruit is one of the avenues we can use to successfully recruit.

We congratulate you on the initiative and look forward to future collaboration.

Yours Faithfully,

For: Coca-Cola NBC PLC
GBEMIGA OWOLABI
MANPOWER PLANNING. & DEV. MANAGER"

IGI would like to congratulate AfricaRecruit on its successful launch. We participated in the fair and we are pleased to have been able to interview several individuals for our insurance operations. Interviews to fill other posts that have arisen in both our operations are ongoing. Initial contact with the well-qualified and experienced candidates we are interviewing was made at the inaugural fair. We look forward to participating in AfricaRecruit's future initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

FOR: INDUSTRY AND GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY
Mr Remi Olowude,
Executive Vice Chairman

Barclays Africa has operations in eleven countries in Africa so this recruitment fair was highly relevant to us particularly its focus on the experienced senior manager thinking of returning to Africa. We have a strong brand in Africa and are seen by many as an Employer of Choice. The Recruitment event provided us with access to hundreds of interested applicants with whom we are now in active dialogue.

Thank you FindajobinAfrica

FOR: BARCLAYS AFRICA
Steve Price, HR Policy and Planning

Press Coverage

BEN SKY TV- channel 238, BBC London News Television, BBC Scotland Radio, London News Radio, BBC Online, BBC World Television, CNN Inside Africa Television, BBC World Service Radio, BBC Africa Network Radio, GFM radio, Belgian radio, all africa.com, Africaguide.com, Other publications: Financial Times United Kingdom, New African magazine, The Voice Newspaper - United Kingdom, The Trumpet Newspaper -UK, African Courier- International Magazine Published in Germany, Business in Africa, Jeune Afrique, Newswatch Nigeria Startech a supplement, that appears in The Star newspaper South Africa, Financial Standard East African Edition April 1st - 7th 2003, Sowetan South Africa Newspaper 10th April 03, DSTV, Nation - Kenya, Guardian - Nigeria



2,000 CVs were doing the rounds

The turning tide of Africa's brain drain

By Briony Hale
BBC News Online business reporter
Friday, 14 March, 2003, 08:09 GMT

2,000 CVs were doing the rounds "To this day we continue to lose the best among ourselves because the lights in the developed world shine brighter," Nelson Mandela said recently.

The so-called "brain drain" has seen more than 40% of African high-level managers and professionals desert their home country for opportunities elsewhere.

Now there are the first signs that the tide may be on the turn.

Several hundred African ex-pats gathered in London this week with a common goal: finding a job that will allow them to return home.

The Commonwealth Business Council (CBC), organisers of the African job fair, did so with the worthy goal of reinvigorating Africa's economy through the repatriation of skilled workers.

But many of the Africans present had other reasons for returning home.

Stress Out

Afolabi is already packing his bags to leave for Nigeria after 13 years of living in Essex and working as an IT contractor.

Coca-Cola: The sky is the limit when Nigerians return home

"The taxes here are killing me, life's too stressful and the standard of life in Nigeria is improving fast," Mr Afolabi explained.

"For one month's rent in Essex I can get a mighty mansion for a year in Lagos," he said.

There may also be more disturbing reasons for having had enough of life in the UK.

"There is a perceived glass ceiling against Nigerians here in the UK," said Yemi Ade John, head of human resources at Coca-Cola Nigeria.

"But if they come back to Nigeria - with all its problems - then the sky is the limit," he said.



Coca-Cola: The sky is the limit when Nigerians return home

In demand

Indeed, Mr Afolabi is supremely confident of finding a job on his return.

MTN: Africa's skills pool lacks telecoms expertise "I've got the qualifications and I've been exposed to Western technology - that's what firms want," he says.

A recruiter from Africa's mobile phone giant MTN confirmed that this is what his firm is after, and offered Mr Afolabi an interview.

"Most top managers and those in critical positions in our firm have all been recruited as re-pats," said MTN's Mutari Wada.

"Although the skills base within Nigeria is building, the skills pool within Africa is lacking specific telecoms experience," he explains.

"We know there are many people who want to come home and we can build our skills base more quickly by recruiting from overseas."

Permit trouble

But not all the job-hunters were quite so optimistic about their chances.

Not everyone found the hunt for jobs easy Kenya's Cecilia Nanfuka has just finished four years of studying in the UK, gaining a degree in economics and a masters in computing.

But she is finding that few firms offer graduate training schemes in Africa and want people to return already trained and with several years of work experience.

And Dalmar Jama, originally from Somalia before graduating in Canada as an engineer and completing an MBA in finance, says it is tougher for the East Africans.

Most of the job opportunities are in Nigeria or South Africa where it is almost impossible for non-nationals to obtain a work permit, he explains.

Steve Price from Barclays Africa confirms the difficulty of securing work permits, and is at the jobs fair to hunt out Botswanans and Zambians able to fill staff shortages in those countries.

Nepad role

The experiences of these job-seekers underlines the other, trickier side of the CBC's work: liaising with African governments to ensure that such obstacles are overcome.

Mohan Kaul: It's a question of trust Dr Mohan Kaul, director general of the CBC, told BBC News Online that a more significant flow of Africans returning home is dependent on greater trust.

Africans need to feel confident that their jobs are safe, that there is the proper legal framework and correct administration in place, he says.

"Bureaucracy needs to be reduced and the governments need to create more attractive job packages," he says.

The question of salary differences also needs to be addressed, although the contrast in the cost of living often balances this out, he adds.

Despite the difficulties, Mr Kaul is confident that African governments will respond to the challenges as part of Nepad, their new commitment to home-grown economic development.

"Nepad is based on good governance, on cutting bureaucracy and on attracting more investment into Africa," he explains.





Mohan Kaul: It's a question of trust

"And for all this to happen - and to be African owned - you need skills, people, professionals."

"I welcome the readiness of the members of the Commonwealth Business Council to support NEPAD and thank them for engaging African leaders and businessmen in a spirit of partnership with a view to making the new vision for Africa's renewal come true."

HE Mr Abdelaziz Bouteflika
President of the People's Republic
of Algeria

"Africa Recruit is an innovative service delivery vehicle with its focus on Africa's Human capital resource requirements, critical skills redirection and transfers required to build robust and enduring productive capacity throughout the continent. I commend the initiative to the private sector as a veritable tool to explore for its benefits."

Mr Oba Otudeko
Chairman of Honeywell Group

"I call on all Kenyans to work with my government to realise the enormous potential of this country. We invite all those who have been hounded out of our shores. to come back home and join us in nation-building. Kenya needs the genius of its citizens wherever they are. It is time for healing, and we need every hand on deck"

H.E. Mwai Kibaki,
President of Kenya

"To this day we continue to lose the best among ourselves because the lights in the developed world shine brighter"

Nelson Mandela

Sample of CBC AfricaRecruit-SKILLS FOR AFRICA GLOBAL SEMINAR Programme

Wednesday 12th March 2003

07.30-9.00	Registration
9.00	<p>Opening of Career Fair</p> <p>Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Steering Committee Baroness Valerie Amos, Personal Representative of the Prime Minister on Africa and Minister of State for Africa, UK Government Dr Mohan Kaul, Director General, Commonwealth Business Council (CBC)</p> <p>Opening Ceremony with Corporate Sponsors</p>
09.15- 09.45	<p>Keynote Addresses: The Diaspora and Skills - Building Linkages for NEPAD</p> <p>Chair: Dr Mohan Kaul Mr James Bevan, Africa Director, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu- Chairperson of NEPAD Steering Committee</p>
09.45 – 10.45	<p>Developing Skills for Africa – An Overview</p> <p>Issue: What skills exist in the diaspora, what are the current trends and key constraints on returning? Chair: H. E. Lindiwe Mabuza, South African High Commissioner Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General, International Organisation for Migration Dr. Titi Banjoko, Chair, Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation UK-South (Findajobinafrica.com)</p>
10.45-11.15	Coffee
11.15-12.30	<p>Skills Needs – Labour Market Problems a Private Sector Perspective</p> <p>Issue: What are the problems identified by the private sector? How can these be addressed? Chair: H.E. Dr Christopher Kolade, Nigerian High Commissioner Ms Ziyanda Danana- Group Executive Human Resources of Transnet Nick Hales, General Manager, BAT Nigeria Foluso Phillips – Group CEO of the Phillips Consulting group</p>
12.30-14.00	Lunch: Sponsor's Address
14.00-15.15	<p>Diaspora Perspectives: Perceptions and Perspectives of Professionals in the Diaspora</p> <p>Issue: How do professionals in the diaspora communities see working in Africa? Chair: H.E Monica Nashandi High Commissioner for the Republic of Namibia Ms Stella Kariuki President Africa Students Union University of Oxford Mr Chukwu-Emeka Chikezie, Executive Director, African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) Mr John Erian: Director of Surgery and Gynaecology; The Princess Royal University Hospital</p>
15.15-15.45	Tea
15.45-16.45	<p>The Role of Governments</p> <p>Issue: What can Governments do to encourage inward skills flow? Chair: Mrs Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat Ms Thokozile Ruzvidzo Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Commission for Africa Mr Abderahmane Merouane, Head, Human Resource Development, NEPAD</p>
16.45-17.15	<p>Closure and Inauguration Private Sector/NEPAD Skills Project</p> <p>Chair: The Rt Hon the Earl Cairns, CVO, CBE, Board Member of CBC, Chairman of CDC Capital Partners Dr Mohan Kaul, Director General CBC Prof Wiseman Nkhulu, Chairman, NEPAD Steering Committee Ms Ziyanda Danana- Group Executive Human Resources of Transnet Mr Gary Johnson- Human Resources Manager of MTN Mr Nick Hales General Manager BAT Nigeria</p>

Seminar Address And Presentations – Opening Statements

Dr Mohan Kaul
Director General
Commonwealth Business Council

I am delighted to welcome you to this inaugural seminar for AfricaRecruit and to say a few words of about the background to the CBC AfricaRecruit initiative.

CBC, as a body set up by the Commonwealth private sector, has been a supporter of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) since it was launched in October 2001. We believe that NEPAD has set the stage for action to revitalise the social and economic development of Africa by its leaders and peoples. As part of our work over the past year with NEPAD, CBC turned to the critical issue of skills for Africa. Our member companies – many of which are here today - told us that the lack of available managerial, technical and professional skills is a very practical constraint on investment and growth. Without the right skills, the jobs, wealth and improved social services envisaged by NEPAD cannot be created.

Thus the huge number of Africa's professionals are now living outside the continent naturally make an engagement with the diaspora a key NEPAD objective. Meeting this challenge points to the need for new ideas, and a new relationship between diaspora communities, employers and governments.

Accordingly CBC established Africa Recruit in September 2002, as a contribution from the private sector to tackling the problem. You may have visited the two websites of the initiative www.africarrecruit.com and www.findajobinafrica.com which we have established. The initiative has a number of inter-related objectives:

To enable private and public sector African employers, and global companies with footprint in Africa, to work together to boost skills inflow into key managerial and technical areas.

To create the largest interactive data base of job seekers and job opportunities for Africa as a resource for companies and governments. Already more than 20,000 job seekers have registered, and over 15,000 people visit the new website every day.

To foster debate in Africa and internationally with the African diaspora on how to contribute to an Africa-wide skills strategy - to change attitudes and perspectives, and to ensure that governments and employers work together to make skill transfer easier including opportunities to self employed Africans

To build a strategic partnership on development of skills strategy between NEPAD and private sector to innovate and improve capacity.

Alongside this seminar room is the AfricaRecruit career exhibition – some 40 employers are exhibiting there during today and tomorrow – and I hope that you will take the opportunity to visit and meet some of the employers and over 2000 candidates who are expected. We have also invited those attending the fair to observe this seminar and we welcome you all.

The career exhibition is the most visible part of AfricaRecruit. Behind this public event is the electronic recruitment system which links tens of thousands of interested professionals to thousands of job vacancies. This is provided by CBC as a service to our members, the private and public sector in support of Africa's development.

I should like to say something specific at this point to representatives from the diaspora. NEPAD rightly regards the diaspora as a critical partner in its efforts. It is possible to talk about numbers of African professional, in the many millions, who live outside their country of birth. But each number is of course a person, with a family, in a community - and there are of course many diaspora communities not one. Numbers are huge and it would be wrong to try to simplify how people can become involved, what we need to do is create more opportunities, flexibility and practical ways to engage. Skills is one area. Investment is another. Creating partnership business development is another. Networks between countries is a further one. CBC hopes that the initiative we have taken will open up these possibilities and contribute to reversing the flow of skills out of Africa. We know that the diaspora communities are a very important to African development, but that we need to listen to how best to access this resource, and provide practical ways in which people can contribute. AfricaRecruit is as much for the diaspora as for Africa, and we would welcome your suggestions and ideas about how to develop it.

The London Career Fair and Skills for Africa Seminar are the first fruit of the AfricaRecruit initiative. We are delighted that such a broad cross section of governments, the private sector, the media and Africans in the diaspora have welcomed the initiative and are involved in the launch. This event is a first step, and its ability to succeed will depend on how far new and practical cooperative relationships can be built. We plan to organise similar initiatives in Europe and North America.

I would like before formally handing over to Prof Nkuhlu to recognise the sponsors of today's seminar and Mr James Bevan whom is representing Baroness Amos. Firstly we are most grateful to NEPAD for co-sponsoring this event, and for the strong support for it which we have received from the Chairman of the NEPAD Heads of State Implementation Committee, President Olesegun Obasanjo, and from Prof Nkuhlu himself. Secondly, we are grateful for the support of the private sector - BAT, Transnet, MTN, and PCL Europe – and to the African Business Roundtable (ABR), which has sponsored the lunch. We are most grateful to the speakers who have travelled from Africa and elsewhere and to the Chairs, which are primarily drawn from the diplomatic representatives

of Africa in London. Finally, we would like to thank the Foreign and Commonwealth office for its financial support for today's seminar and to Baroness Amos for her personal support for this initiative. Thank you to my Colleagues whom worked on this project Mr Steve Godfrey, Dr Titi Banjoko, Mr Funto Akinkugbe, Michelle Hakata and other staff.

I would like on behalf of CBC to welcome you to the London launch of AfricaRecruit, and invite you to contribute your ideas and suggestions on how we can move forward together.

Thank you.

Address by Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu Chairman, NEPAD Steering Committee

I am very delighted to be a participant at this historic seminar, entitled "Bringing African Skills Home – Mobilising African Professionals in the Diaspora". It could not have happened at a better time or in a better place. London is the home of many African professionals in the Diaspora and it continues to attract even more. It is therefore correct that this very important initiative be launched here, before it is taken to other capitals of the world.

I thank the Commonwealth Business Council most sincerely for initiating the project. I am also grateful for the opportunity to participate in the launch as Chairperson of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Steering Committee. I join the Commonwealth Business Council in welcoming you all, in particular our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora, Baroness Valerie Amos and other representatives of the United Kingdom, African High Commissioners and Ambassadors to the United Kingdom, High Commissioners and Ambassadors of other countries here present, business leaders and all the Friends of Africa. On behalf of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee I thank you for your interest and support.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the leaders of NEPAD are saying that the time has come for Africa to redefine herself and to launch a comprehensive renewal programme that will end the conflicts, restore and entrench peace, democracy and good political and economic governance, as well as place African countries both individually and collectively on a path of sustainable socio-economic development and growth.

It is this vision that is energising a number of African leaders to work harder on resolving the political conflicts that have been raging in the continent for decades and to engage each other on democracy, political and economic governance. It is also this vision that is inspiring them to engage the leaders of developed countries and multilateral organisations on the important issue of an equitable international order.

The champions of the programme believe that the NEPAD principles, values and priorities constitute a common policy framework that must inform and drive a comprehensive transformation process in every African country and region. They believe that this is crucial in consolidating democracy and good governance. It is also to the benefit of the countries that have democratised and adopted good political, economic and corporate governance policies and practices. Consolidation of the process in more African countries will reduce the risk of contagion arising from bad policies of neighbouring countries. It will also improve the image of the continent as a whole, as well as make it more attractive to domestic and international investors.

Crucial to the success of the African renewal initiative is the availability of highly skilled person power. Africa has a serious shortage of skilled person power in virtually all key areas. This is not a problem only in least developed countries, but also in countries like Botswana and South Africa.

African countries need nurses and medical doctors to extend access to health services for the poor. Well trained educators to ensure that the Millennium

Development Goals on primary education are met and to ensure that skilled person power is continuously replenished. Agricultural extension officers and scientists to address hunger and food insecurity. Technicians and engineers in key areas such as energy, water and sanitation, transport and ICT. Skilled person power is also required to meet the needs of the private sector. Entrepreneurs are required to ensure job creation. Above all, we need skilled person power to strengthen the capacity of government institutions to deliver public goods.

It is against this background that we say that the Africa Recruit initiative could not have been launched at a better time. Africa is embarking on a massive reconstruction programme that requires skilled human capacity in many fields. The programme will not succeed unless skills are mobilised quickly. The question is where are the skills going to come from? Given the fact that it will take decades to develop new skills and build capacity, it could be said that the only option is to recruit skills from abroad in the short term. Is this the way to go, as the result will be to add to the over one hundred thousand foreign experts who already work in Africa? The answer is no.

The most sensible thing to do is to encourage African professionals in the Diaspora to return to Africa. It is estimated that over 40% of skilled African professionals live in the Diaspora. In the NEPAD vision and policy framework, the need to reverse the brain drain is highlighted as one of the priority concerns of NEPAD. This initiative is a practical action in pursuit of this important NEPAD priority. It is for this reason that we welcome and support it.

We will be giving increased attention to the matter in the near future. Africa needs not only to recruit African experts to return to Africa, but also to take steps to ensure that they remain in Africa. The key is to provide an attractive working environment and to support those who want to return and those who want to start their own businesses. We will be listening carefully to these deliberations, as well as collecting as much information as we can.

For the initiative to succeed, we need an overarching agreement or code of conduct with developed countries, as well as a partnership with the private sector. African countries must facilitate the return of African professionals who wish to do so, as well as design appropriate and effective recruitment strategies. At the same time, there must be a code of conduct for the recruitment of African professionals by the developed countries. Some developed countries

actively recruit nurses, doctors and teachers etc. from Africa. Of course, this creates a huge problem for African countries for obvious reasons.

The private sector has a major role to play in many ways, as evidenced in this Exhibition. As NEPAD, we look forward to working with the private sector in the further development of the initiative. Finally, we welcome the opportunity to work with our development partners and the private sector in this project. The UK Government is one of the strongest supporters of NEPAD and a true friend of Africa, as shown by Prime Minister Blair's immediate support for

NEPAD and public championing of the initiative when NEPAD was first unveiled. The Commonwealth Business Council has extensive operations in Africa and it convenes major investor conferences in Africa every year. This year's conference will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa from 7-9 April 2003.

In conclusion, let us join together in recognition of the importance of the NEPAD initiative to all of us and in recognition of the fact that we have a golden opportunity to make a difference to Africa and all her people. Together, as Africans and supporters of Africa we will succeed in securing a new dawn for our beloved continent.

Thank You

Notes from Dr Titi Banjoko Director - Africa Recruit/ Findajobinafrica.com

Findajobinafrica Africa's one stop "Human Resource Portal"

0.97 million hits in 2001 achieved without a marketing and awareness campaign. In the year 2002 the hits increased by 25% with limited marketing.

Demand

- Half a Million page impressions in the last 6 months
- Average time spent per visitor-8 Minutes
- 20,000 CV's on the database
- 70,000 on the mailing list
- 502, 737 visits in the month in January 2003

Who and Where are the jobseekers ?

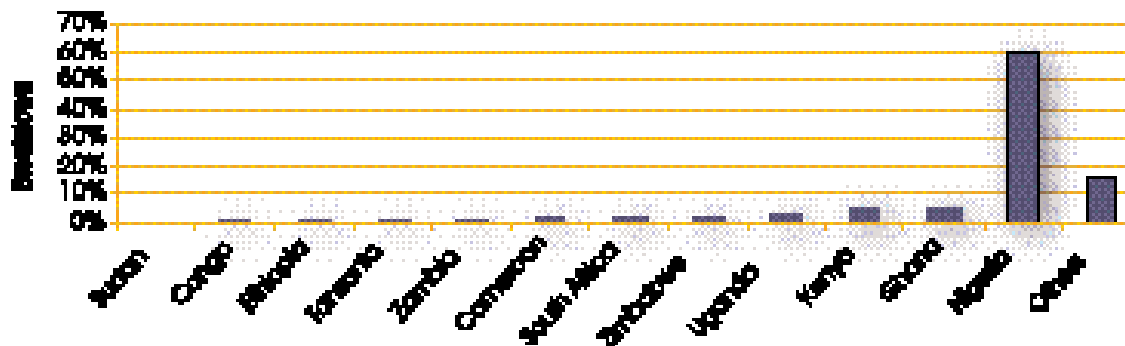
- Over half of the hits are from North America and Europe

Samples of skills in the Diaspora

- **Cameroonian based in Australia**
Qualifications- LLB, LLM, MBA, PhD (corporate finance law) 3-5 years experience
- **Cameroonian based in North America**
Qualifications – B.Sc MBA Finance
Experience 5-10 years
- **Egyptian- USA**
Qualifications- MSc Electrical engineering (Germany; MBA Finance (Wharton)
Experience under 10 years in France, Germany and USA
- **Congolese**
Qualification-B.Sc, M.Sc, Ph.D. in Public Administration
Qualification- 5 - 10 Years
- **Ghanaian - USA**
Qualifications-MA, MBA
5 years experience (including JP Morgan)
- **Nigerian - UK**
Qualifications- B.Sc MBA
Experience- 5 years investment market (London Stock exchange)
- **Ethiopian - USA**
Qualifications- B.A Finance MBA
Experience 3 years Merrill Lynch
(AWARDS: Merrill Lynch Achievement Award)
- **Senegalese in Germany**
Qualification- BA
Experience- 10 years Rural Planning
Expert Consultant
- **Ugandan in North America**
Qualification- B.A MPS
Experience in ICT 3 years
- **Ghanaian –UK**
Qualification- BSc,MSc in Finance
Imperial College Management School
- **Senegalese in UK**
Qualification- General Practitioner, Diploma in Family Planning & Reproductive Health Care
MRCGP, DFFP
Experience- over 8 years experience
- **East African- USA**
Experience-15 years experience in the health field.currently working in the USA as a Program Director.
- **Kenyan- USA**
Qualifications-PhD medical physiology
Experience- Research

Breakdown of CV's on database by Industry

Nationality breakdown



Current trends

- Increasing number of Africans returning back to Africa
- There is an increasing awareness by Africans in the Diaspora to contribute towards the development of Africa. As demonstrated by the increasing number of affiliate groups and association set up to direct resources towards their native country e.g. Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation, African Diaspora foundation, Afronets, African foundation for Development and many others all over the world

Constraints

- Lack of knowledge or information on the current employment market – particularly those who have been out of the country for 5-10 years+
- Fragmented employment market place
- Job vacancies not on a global platform
- Packages not commensurate with skills and experience
- Laws and policies do not address the current employment market e.g. Restrictions to country of origin only
- Environmental factors e.g. political, social and economic etc

Solution

- Build robust and enduring productive human capacity throughout the continent. Thereby bridging and closing the gaps in Africa's human capital base.

How

- Focus on human capital requirements, critical skills redirection and transfers
- Use updated means of technology and communication
- Short, medium and long term at both strategic (policy) and operational level

Way Forward

- Free online job search engine www.findajobinafrica.com for both employers and jobseekers bridging the geographical divide and facilitating the environment for jobseekers to connect with employers on a global platform. Hence small African organisations can compete with big on a global platform.

Way Forward

- Career fairs in various geographical locations in and outside Africa creating an increased awareness of jobseekers available to employers and the various types of employers in Africa to jobseekers.

Way Forward

- Bespoke recruitment events on industry, organisational or regional or country basis. To ensure that any massive recruitment needs are tailored to needs

Way Forward

- Build productive, relevant and sustainable human capital using career development in universities and secondary schools and continuous professional development
- Create a stable environment for human capital to flourish in Africa

Way Forward

- Policy to create flexible employment laws to accommodate:
 - The Repatriate
 - The Expatriate
 - The Local Indigene

Address by Dianne Grammer Deputy Director General International Organisation for Migration

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) would first like to sincerely thank the Commonwealth Business Council for inviting us to take part in this event. Although Ms Ndioro NDIAYE is unable to be here today, as a woman and an African, she was extremely happy that IOM could participate in an initiative of this kind.

IOM is particularly motivated by the strong interest of the British Government in the mobilisation to help Africa.

IOM is also gratified by the presence of Professor Wiseman NKUHLU, Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee. His presence here sends a powerful signal to all those concerned by the development of the African continent.

The large-scale attendance by representatives of private companies active in vastly different areas gives us hope that, as President OBASANJO said in April 2002 at the Dakar Conference on the Financing of NEPAD, Africa will no longer scare off investors.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests

As the leading international organisation for migration, the IOM is especially concerned by the mobilisation of the diasporas. Thousands of African medical doctors, nurses, accountants, engineers, managers, and teachers leave Africa each year. The resulting brain drain heightens the dependency of African economies by compelling them to resort to costly foreign expertise in many areas, which in turn creates a widening vicious circle.

More than lament over the unavoidable brain drain, it is the mobility of skills between the host country and country of origin that constitutes an appropriate answer to the steady outflow of resources from developing countries. The latter are unable to retain their best human resources for lack of a suitable environment in terms of working conditions and wages. Migrants are not Samaritans and they do wish to safeguard their personal interests in any move to assist in development. There is nothing reproachable or unhealthy about this.

Between 1983 and 1999, with support from the European Union, the IOM implemented a programme called the Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN). The programme enabled almost 2000 professionals to return home to 11 African countries to take up key positions of employment. Although the programme enjoyed much success, with almost 85% of highly qualified African nationals remaining in Africa after 2 years, it must be said that this option had its limitations, especially for individuals who did not have a desire to return definitely. Based on its long experience in the Return of Qualified African Nationals (RQAN) Programme, IOM has

launched a new programme called the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) Programme.

What is so new about this programme?

It is without doubt the notion of mobility. MIDA is proposing to qualified migrants that they participate in developing their country of origin without renouncing the status they have acquired in the host country where they are integrated. Through this programme, African professionals are therefore being invited to place their expertise at the service of their country of origin through repeated visits ranging from one to six months or by transferring their skills by means of information technologies. In effect, the MIDA programme provides African nationals with the opportunity to contribute to the development of their countries of origin by transferring their skills gained abroad, as well as financial and other resources. For their countries, African nationals in the diaspora represent an extraordinary pool of skills in the most varied sectors of the economy and administration.

Moreover, specific incentives are being created to encourage African nationals abroad to mobilise their savings for local development projects rather than using it, as is often the case, only to benefit their family or relatives who have remained behind. Firm guarantees and ease of investments are crucial to migrants in making up their minds to assist in this way.

Since November 2001, a MIDA programme has been operating in the Great Lakes Region. This programme makes it possible for professionals who reside in Belgium to return to their home countries to offer short-term assistance in highly technical fields ranging from agriculture, banking, engineering, economics, environmental protection and social and educational sciences. From this programme, several meaningful observations can be made:

- 1 The number of migrants applying is so great that the available funding is insufficient at this stage to take advantage of all the skills available from African nationals abroad;
- 2 The African governments, as the beneficiaries, highlight the immediate usefulness of their nationals, thanks to their excellent knowledge of the country and of the ways in which the local society operates;
- 3 Within the fields of education, health care and the private sector, many emergencies have been dealt with through the MIDA programme;
- 4 The migrants are satisfied at being able to share the expertise acquired abroad by using their skills to serve their country of origin;
- 5 It is clear that both sides develop a more positive perception.

Many African countries have confirmed their interest in the MIDA programme by making it one of their national priorities and have sought funding from development partners such as the European

Union, European and North American bilateral cooperation programmes, development banks, and public or private foundations.

Furthermore, Belgium, Holland and Italy have already agreed to finance projects under the MIDA programme.

It is indispensable for African States to provide migrants with investment incentives. In many countries on the continent, money remittance are higher than total public development aid and foreign direct investment. Nigeria and Cape Verde are two of the most striking examples of this.

I believe that one option with great potential for mobilisation is the creation of micro-enterprises or SMEs involving partnerships between migrants and nationals who have remained in the country. But this requires that proper information is made available and that there are adequate guarantees of the safety of investments and the possibility to transfer some part of the profits.

Similarly, creating a MIDA-type database showing the skills and availability of members of the diaspora who are willing to join in a skills mobilisation programme would lead to the hiring of a much greater number of African professionals under attractive conditions.

Today, the main obstacle undoubtedly arises from the laws of the countries in the North, not all of which provide the required flexibility for the movement of people between one living space and another.

Moreover, I do not at all share the view of some influential members of the Commission of the European Union that efforts should be focused only on fundamental activities in the social sectors and in infrastructure development, ruling out the use of the diaspora as a workforce.

The history of development cooperation is marked throughout by failures and hesitations, undertakings that were successful and others that were less so. The fact remains, however, that apart from the TOKTEN programme in the education sector and now the cross-sectoral MIDA programme, no serious attempt has been made to draw on high-level experts originally from the countries receiving the aid, without forcing them to make a definitive choice.

Tackling the root causes is of course an absolute priority. However, mobilising the diaspora for this purpose is useful, not as an end in itself, but by way of facilitation. This would be guided by a development approach which, for once, would tap the know-how acquired in the host country, for the benefit of the country of origin. All the partners stand to gain from this, as does the migrant, based on respect for his dual loyalty.

Thank you.

Address by Ziyanda Danana Group Executive Human Resources Transnet, Johannesburg, South Africa

Issue: What are the problems identified by the private sector? How can these be addressed?

Even though we are looking at "problems" that have been identified by the private sector, my approach would be to look at these as challenges. I will make examples about my own country (South Africa) as I believe that we have a myriad of issues that can go towards a long way to contribute to this debate. I also have to mention that even though we will be talking about problems and how to overcome these, there has been a measure of great success in my country after a lot of South Africans came back home and ploughed their skills into the country (post 1994 elections). One good example would be the turn around and transformation of the South African Broadcasting Corporation by Mr Sisulu, transformation that still has its roots today.

An issue that immediately comes to my mind is labour legislation, which can be identified from the supply side. After the South African 1994 elections, various pieces of Labour Legislation were introduced. One of them is the Employment Equity Act of 1998. This act strongly prohibits unfair discrimination and seeks to ensure that structural rigidities and inequalities inherited from the Apartheid era are abolished (the apartheid era is where one sector of the population (White) was given everything in abundance (by statute) at the expense of others (Blacks and Women). The Act therefore consists of procedures that are meant to level the playing fields in so far as the previously disadvantaged groups are concerned (Blacks and Women).

Amongst other issues, this necessitates that these previously disadvantaged groups are represented across all levels in the workplace, specifically senior to top levels. The problem that has been identified is that the demand for highly qualified blacks, specifically women, exceeds the supply. Bringing into the country qualified and competent overseas African Nationals as well as Non-Nationals, will go a long way towards addressing this problem.

This problem is further exacerbated by Research from the Labour Market Analysis (1998-2003), where it was predicted that the South Africa's business sector (which revolves around the fast growing information technology industry, mining professionals, chartered accountants, investment professionals etc) would show a growth rate of 32% within 5 years. In South Africa, this is obviously still the case and which is the more reason why competent and qualified Africans should return and plough their skills into Africa.

Having said so, the above issues present a separate set of problems with respect to local staff/employees. Currently, there is evidence of Xenophobia in South Africa where people feel that their jobs are being taken by "exiles" i.e. people who fled the country during South Africa's oppressive political turmoil. In addition to this, there are non-South Africans who come to work in South Africa from other African countries

like Nigeria, Congo, Kenya, Zimbabwe etc. These bring to the boil, a Xenophobic mentality to South Africans that can become very hostile to the point of labelling the non-nationals by derogatory names e.g. "Amakwirikwiri" meaning "Outsiders – and people who speak an incomprehensible language".

This therefore means that some National or Non - Nationals who come back, might experience some resistance and hostility that could pose a challenge. Another problem is that some of the people who have been away for so long, specifically if they have "foreign" spouses and children born outside their country, could face a big culture shock on coming back as life is not static. This would again present a challenge to the individual and his/her family.

The big challenge for the local employers is whether they would ever get the Return on their Investment? The question arises when the employers have to pay huge relocation expenses to move Africans residing overseas to African countries. This does not stop there but employers have to pay for costly induction programmes related to type of industry, company culture, external environment inclusive of customer culture.

To me, it becomes apparent that one party alone cannot resolve these challenges, but the recruiters and employers, as well as other interested stakeholders should embark on a concerted, carefully articulated joint effort, which could be interpreted, into programmes including the following:

- Presentation of Rationale and Imperative to current employees for recruiting Overseas Nationals and Non-Nationals into Africa.

These could consist of the following:

- Political: Support of Nepad objectives by supplying high quality skills which are more responsive to societal and economic needs
- Technological: Increase in Africa's technological pool
- Social: Africans to return "home" - specifically for those who left under duress!
- Embarking on comprehensive Induction Programmes which will ensure that the psychological and other frameworks of African Recruits are addressed
- Companies to identify and define business needs from the onset:
- Companies should define their exact needs in the context of a broader framework i.e. strategy/business plan. This will ensure a worthwhile Return on Investment e.g. improving demographic profiles, bringing higher levels of competencies to better achieve company objectives, transforming the labour force from a low skills base to high quality skills one through coaching and mentoring.

Overall, overcoming challenges will encourage integration of local and global competencies where measurable contribution to the achievement of companies', countries' and Africa's objectives will be underpinned, thus leading to Africa's growth.

Thank you.

Skills Needs: Labour Market Problems – A Private Sector Prospective

Address by
Nick Hales –
Managing Director British
American Tobacco (Nigeria) Ltd.

British American Tobacco through British American Tobacco (Nigeria) Ltd has embarked on a US\$150 million investment for the creation of a world class ultra modern factory in Nigeria. The creation of our Nigerian company, the manufacturing project and our agronomy operations has necessitated the recruitment of over 1000 direct employees from all disciplines over the last 14 months.

I would like to share with you some of the experiences we have had over this period.

1/ Recruitment challenges

As a result in the decline in government expenditure in the educational sector during successive military regimes in Nigeria, the quality of tertiary education has declined. By extension the qualifications from these colleges and universities have been devalued.

When recruiting this results in uncertainty of an applicant's true level of education. To address this issue we have identified colleges, polytechnics and universities, which after research, show that they have maintained an acceptable degree of integrity in course content and teaching quality.

This allows us to target graduates from these identified establishments with some certainty of their level of education.

At the start of the company we believed we could, and would find the right people for the right positions. Recruitment agencies and executive search agencies are relatively underdeveloped in Nigeria. As a result of this we were not able to satisfactorily outsource all or part of the recruitment process and consequently managed it ourselves.

The process we adopted is as follows. Candidates are shortlisted from initial applications. The shortlisted candidates are then given written tests to ascertain theoretical knowledge. If successful they then attend assessment centres, where if successful, an offer is made after a final interview.

We have seen on average 203 applicants per recruitment made. Whilst this has been costly it has been necessary to ensure that we have recruited the right people. At no time have we made compromises on the quality of our people. In fact we have preferred to be under compliment than to recruit inferior staff.

In all recruitments the right "attitude" and integrity have been paramount. If either of these has not been apparent, even if a candidate satisfied all other requirements, an offer has not been made.

The talent pool in Nigeria is relatively small. To address this issue we have created a system of accelerated development amongst employees who perform well. Once an employee who consistently exceeds performance objectives is identified, an

accelerated development program is developed. If the program is successfully completed the employee would ordinarily receive a promotion.

In addition to this we have created an internship program for university students. 1st, 2nd and 3rd year top students are invited from selected universities and colleges to spend their long vacation gaining work experience with our company.

Over three long vacations the program covers all aspects of our business, from working in the fields, to assisting in finance, to selling our products in the markets and much more. Performance is monitored and non-performers are generally not invited back to the next program. For a student who successfully completes three programs, employment would be offered on completion of their studies.

2/ Are skill deficits a block to investment ?

Frequently investors or potential investors believe that a skills deficit may be a block to investment. From our experience in Nigeria we have found that this is not necessarily the case.

We had a requirement for engineers and technicians who would operate the state of the art manufacturing and packing machinery. The new technology had not been seen in Nigeria, and consequently the requisite skills were not available.

Ordinarily a company faced with this situation would "import" the required skills through employing expatriates, who over a period of time would transfer these skills to local employees, typically during 2-4 years.

British American Tobacco (Nigeria) Ltd adopted a different approach to transferring skills. Having found candidates with the right attitude and integrity, we then sent them abroad for comprehensive training to acquire the required skills.

We have sent so far 120 young Nigerians abroad to be trained. As of two months ago these young technicians are operating, maintaining and managing the new technology with excellent results, comparable to anywhere in the world.

This approach whilst having immediate benefits also has longer term benefits. The skills pipeline has started to be filled as these young

men and women have already started to appear in our succession plans for more senior roles in the short to mid-term.

3/ Recruiting from the Diaspora.

In addition to transferring skills through training abroad, we have recruited from the Diaspora.

The return to democracy of Nigeria, and an improving economy has helped to attract expatriated Nigerians home. However as a company we needed to be clear what we could offer potential returnees in addition to the socio-political improvements in the country.

As a start up, the company had, and still has, requirements for senior and middle management with track records and proven leadership skills.

This was an ideal opportunity for people who perhaps have reached "glass ceilings" in their current companies, or people who have the requisite skills gained from working abroad and wish to accelerate their career advancement by returning to more senior roles in Nigeria.

The company is a true multi-national company. A company that has a culture which encourages diversity, risk taking, embraces change, is challenging, caring, exciting and fun. A company that has international best practices and common platforms in all disciplines. A company that has cutting edge technology. A company that manages peoples careers with personal development plans, local and international training and possible transfers to other countries. In summary a company that looks good on a CV.

We also looked at some of the softer issues we believed were necessary to facilitate people returning home.

Assistance in relocation is made available, personal effects are shipped by the company, temporary accommodation is made available for a period and assistance in finding permanent accommodation is provided.

Cultural awareness training/ language training is made available for those who desire it. Other than assistance with relocation and cultural/ language training we have no other unique benefits for people returning to Nigeria to work in the company. This has been a conscious decision to ensure that there is no conflict between employees recruited from within Nigeria and people returning from abroad.

Conclusion

In conclusion the talent pool currently in Nigeria is small, when compared to the population of the country. This provides excellent opportunities for those Nigerians who currently work in the Diaspora, who already have the skill sets being sought by multi-nationals. If investment in the private sectors increases then the demand for skilled experienced employees will grow.

Companies will with innovation eventually overcome the problem of small talent pools, however if the talent already exists, is not more logical to find a way of matching the talent with the requirement so that everybody concerned is a winner?

Stella Kariuku President Africa students Union University of Oxford

“What can be done to assist young graduates return and work in Africa”

I will start by saying that young graduates who have studied and lived in developed countries have been exposed to a different way of life and they are therefore able to critically compare various aspects of life in Africa with life in the West.

This exposure results in an increased awareness of our worth as graduates and the opportunities available to us. We therefore develop higher expectations in terms of careers, living standards, and our rights as residents or citizens of a country.

Now if you speak to African graduates living for example in the U.K. You will find that majority of them love their home countries, and would actually much rather be back home than here, but the question on their minds is always, “what are my career opportunities if I go back?”

So already it is a big step forward that there now exists organisations like Africa Recruit, Africa Managers, and Careers in Africa that provide a platform that puts the African Diaspora in contact with prospective employers in Africa.

However these recruitment forums place a lot of focus on multinational companies as THE employers in Africa. There happen to be many African graduates who would like to pursue a career that makes a real difference and is directly beneficial to their country’s development. Africa Recruit has made an effort to include NGOs and large African based companies. It would be good to see more government parastatals, Civil Service opportunities and other growing local African companies brought on board.

There are also graduates who are willing to work in other African countries that are not necessarily their home country. How can this be made possible? Similarly there are those of us who would like to return to our home countries, but with a career that continues to give us international exposure, which could be within Africa.

Young graduates would like to take on jobs in Africa that are challenging and with prospects for growth. We would like to work in companies or organisations that value and view their employees as an asset. How can we identify these employers?

It would also help to facilitate internships in Africa for African students abroad in the course of their studies. This would enable students to identify opportunities in their home countries or elsewhere in Africa earlier on and hence create incentives for the students to return after their studies.

Then there is the financial standpoint, which we must agree is a major influencing factor. Having received a costly education, and knowing what other graduates earn in developed countries, young African graduates would only be attracted to jobs that will pay relatively well. Now it would be unreasonable to expect a £27,000 per year salary in Africa, but we would like to receive a salary that enables us to maintain if not improve our current standards of living. This could be made possible by offering benefits like a re-location allowance, housing allowance, car loans and medical cover among others.

And lastly but most importantly, it remains the responsibility of our governments to spearhead the growth of our economies, improve infrastructure and ensure a safe environment in terms of political stability and elimination of crime in order to reverse brain drain.

Chukwu-Emeka Chikezie Executive Director African Foundation for Development (AFFORD).

The African Diaspora and Africa's development: the power of identity

The New Partnership for Africa's Development's (NEPAD) significance lies in the fact that it heralds the first major attempt since the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) by Africans to put forward an African agenda aiming to shift the continent out of its current crisis and onto a path of sustainable development.

It is part stirring call on the African people to rise to the challenges of the 21st century, part accurate analysis of Africa's predicament, part accommodation with the global forces that both constrain and shape the pace of Africa's development, and part shopping list of all the desired projects that have been floating around for years

Understanding the African Diaspora

But how does the African Diaspora organise itself? In the UK, primarily on the basis of identity – ethnic, alma mater, region, etc. But these apparently small, fragmented and parochial organisations often capture the passion of highly educated, skilled, and resourceful sons and daughters of the soil making them quite powerful agents of resource mobilisation and social change in their regions of origin. And because of their distrust and wariness of African state structures, most Diaspora input into Africa is direct and private and on the whole bypasses state structures.

A topology of African Diaspora organisations would include hometown associations, ethnic associations, alumni associations, religious associations, professional associations; development NGOs; investment groups/business groups; political groups; welfare/refugee groups; supplementary schools; virtual organisations; research/think tanks; arts/cultural groups; women's groups; development education/awareness groups.

How, then, can an ostensibly pan-African structure such as NEPAD engage meaningfully with and tap into the resources of an African Diaspora that is diverse, diffuse and organises primarily around more narrow definitions of identity?

The first thing to stress is that pan-Africanism and a quite localised sense of identity are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Many people combine a commitment to the village in which their father was born, say, and a wider commitment to Africa.

Indeed, one of the most vibrant and lively virtual networks that AFFORD facilitates, Africans Without Borders, operates on this very premise: the need to connect the local, national, regional, continental, and the global for Africa's benefit.

Flexible structures with which Africans in the diaspora can identify, that are credible, legitimate and capable of delivering results are likely to be key to harnessing the commitment, obligations, interest and passion that they have for Africa. We must recognise that in the short term, few Africans in the diaspora will pack their bags and head home permanently. But they will engage in more flexible ways. For instance, it is quite possible that legal reform in Kenya, say, will benefit obviously from the input of Kenyans in the country but also possibly a range of African legal experts in the diaspora. Similarly, trade negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva might benefit from tapping into scarce technical and legal expertise from across the African diaspora. This could all happen at precisely the same time that all the doctors who hail from Akyem Abuakwa State in Ghana pool their resources to improve healthcare in the region.

The key is to recognise and respect the ways that people organise and to reach out to existing networks as well as to encourage the formation of new ones where the need arises. At times individual African governments limit themselves by only addressing their own nationals abroad. In the context of NEPAD, for instance, would it not make sense for groups of countries to engage with the African Diaspora collectively in putting forward a case for their involvement? At present, Africans in the Diaspora hardly know what NEPAD stands for, let alone why they should be involved.

More creative outreach strategies are what we need to see from the NEPAD Secretariat, African governments and other institutions with an interest in harnessing the African Diaspora's enormous developmental potential. Partnerships between authorities in Africa and African Diaspora civil society groups such as AFFORD that can help facilitate links and act as catalysts among Diaspora groups to work diligently in the service of Africa would be one way forward.

John Erian, MB, BCh, FRCOG
Consultant Gynaecologist &
Minimal Access Surgeon
Director of Surgery
The Princess Royal University Hospital

Diaspora Perspectives

The Africa Recruit Launch is an innovative, practical and welcome approach aimed at encouraging the retention and recruitment of professional skills within the African Continent. This challenging and pragmatic approach necessitates an in depth review of existing policies and infrastructure, addressing entrenched attitudes and perceptions on both sides, governments and the Diaspora communities. Concerns and inherent difficulties should be discussed in a constructive manner to remove obstacles and facilitate progress and development. Flexibility, equal opportunities, active participation and the creation of robust policies are only a few of the many ingredients essential for the success of the initiative. The strong ties between professionals within the Diaspora and Africa cannot be severed and only through the initiation of dialogue and ongoing collaboration and elimination of false perceptions that genuine development can be achieved.

Working in Africa a Diaspora perspective

To encourage recruitment and retention of professionals requires reversal of entrenched perceptions through a candid and comprehensive examination of existing policies and through the development of a flexible infrastructure that is monitored with active involvement of the Diaspora. Continuous dialogue aimed at reversing ill perceived perceptions and reservations is fundamental to the success of the initiative.

Concerns

Working in Africa is fraught with perceptions of an uphill struggle of a rigid unaccommodating infrastructure that is somewhat despotic. Policies change to suit an individual rather than a wider

goal stifling development and growth. Added to which are the lack of resources, which are partly due to financial constraints and partly due to meagre investment, and lack of accountability. Insecurity and lack of trust are important ingredients that prevail within the Diaspora community. Constraints within the system pose inherent difficulties that often hinder the implementation of innovative ideas. Recognition and support of excellence is sadly lacking. Equal opportunities are also grounds for concern.

Returning Home

Members of the Diaspora yearn to return home or positively contribute to the development of their mother countries. They crave for recognition and given the chance they would willingly help. Political and economic stability are pivotal to enticing them back. Financial reward, security, promotional prospects and professional opportunities are crucial elements that should not be dismissed. We should reflect as to why members of the Diaspora choose to leave their countries. Within the UK system many of us have progressed and attained recognition within our chosen careers that perhaps would not have been the case in our beloved countries. If we are to stop the 'brain drain' then we should start from the premise that we are 'Africans' rather than Christians, Moslems, Jews, Buddhists etc . Nepotism, favouritism, preferential treatments, bias, prejudice and unfairness should be eliminated. Growth and prosperity of our African Communities should be the only prevailing theme.

Addressing Needs

Collaboration and active participation between the Diaspora and governments, private sector, educational establishments needs urgent appraisal. Ongoing training programmes needs to be set up so that skills are continually updated with the African needs in mind. An educational strategy needs to be revisited so that ongoing reciprocal arrangements are in place. A dialogue channel should be opened so that issues of concern are vented and tackled. A system of regular invitations to meetings, symposia, conferences and being an integral part of the educational strategy is to be encouraged. Innovation is the basis of progress and this should be an essential component within any development strategy.

Address by Thokozile Ruzvidzo- Senior Economic Affairs Officer UN Economic Commission for Africa

How Can African Governments Stem and Reverse the Brain Drain?

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am very pleased to join you today in an effort to better understand and mitigate the problem of the brain drain in Africa – the loss of our talented brothers and sisters from the continent. As a Zimbabwean national and someone who has worked throughout the region for the UN's Economic Commission for Africa for more than a year, I well understand the effects of the skills attrition. We are losing our best and brightest from a region desperately in need of those very talents. And where are they going? To the countries that are already the most advantaged in the world. In many ways, it could be counted as Africa's foreign assistance to the developed world! As a good friend of mine says of his 35 year old son who is a NASA space engineer, 'He is Uganda's gift to America.' But, ladies and gentlemen, Africa cannot afford this loss of talent. We must act to retain and reclaim the skilled professionals who can move us forward in meeting our many development challenges.

The economic and social consequences of our diminishing human resource base are daunting. Not only are we losing the best-qualified professionals in health, business, education, engineering, economics, the social sciences, but also increasingly we are losing the high tech skills that we desperately need to move the continent into the electronic world of high-speed information exchange. To compound the problem, we are using our financial resources to meet our needs with personnel from elsewhere. According to Philip Emeagwali who was recently interviewed on the television program Africa Journal, the continent as a whole spends 4 billion dollars annually to employ some 100,000 expatriates.

Many of you have outlined the constraints to bringing back the Diaspora to the continent. However, I think that it is worthwhile to review those factors before addressing what can be done to reverse the problems. I have divided them into what I call 'push' and 'pull' factors – 'push' being those influences in African countries that are so negative to its existing and potential work force that they feel constrained to leave the country; and the 'pull' being those influences in the recipient country that are so compellingly attractive that large numbers of talented persons are drawn from African countries. Keep in mind that the bulk of these deterrents are interrelated and not new to the African scene, but rather have been contributing to the brain drain for the past 20 to 30 years. Here then, is the list in order of negative importance:

Push factors

- Economic destruction or stagnation
- War and civil unrest
- Political turmoil, repression and uncertainty
- Economic insecurity due to changing policies
- Low salaries and minimal benefits relative to international scales
- Lack of career opportunities and fear of being out of the professional mainstream
- Perception of workplace being an unfriendly environment for professionals trained abroad
- Hiring and promotion on bases other than merit

Notice that I did not include difficult living circumstances and other developing country conditions — I do not believe that these are major factors that deter people from "coming home".

And what about the **PULL FACTORS?** They are relatively few, but very powerful, especially when they are in sharp contrast to one's home country.

- Personal and family safety and security
- Career opportunities and development of potential
- Better wages and standard of living

In light of these push and pull factors depleting our workforce, what chance do we have of reversing this trend? What do we have "going for us"? First and foremost, we know that the great proportion of those in the Diaspora have a genuine desire to be of service in fostering African development – an obligation if you will. Secondly, many of us have a need to "go home" to live in Africa – to once again enjoy a comfort zone where we are in our own culture, speaking our own language, and very importantly, are in close proximity to our families. Thirdly, we are motivated to tackle the many development challenges that we know could be alleviated by our efforts; and closely related to this understanding is the opportunity to have a major impact in our own country. And perhaps last, but not least, is the desire to raise our children in Africa, helping them to have the understanding of our continent and its people that gives rise to pride and confidence in themselves.

We can and must move immediately to stem the exodus of skilled professionals. In this effort, governments are pivotal and must lead the initiatives, but it will require the assistance of partners – the private sector, cooperating governments and civil society both in the region and outside. With determination and political will, at least some of the following remedies can be implemented and we can slowly but surely begin to attract and reclaim our human resources. As with the problems, I will provide possible solutions in the categories of 'push' and 'pull': (Let me say these are not necessarily new – their importance can not be minimised.

Solutions to the push problems may include

According to Prof. Narciso Mato, Secretary General of the Association of African Universities, one of the two most important solutions to the flight of qualified personnel is political stability (especially with the situation as it is Africa) – not an easy matter to achieve and maintain, but an absolutely necessary underpinning for attracting and retaining a qualified workforce.

Next in importance, according to Prof. Mato is its correlate, sound and unwavering economic policies leading to a viable private sector. Key in this effort is the removal of trade barriers, the lifting of exchange controls, and the institution of a fair and friendly regulatory environment.

Work to establish standards of good governance including protection of property rights, the establishment and enforcement of the rule of law

through a reputable judiciary, and the creation of a civil service that is competitive, merit-based and properly compensated.

Ensure human rights as well as freedom of speech and publication

Enhancing the 'pull' back to Africa

- Initiate outreach initiatives to the Diaspora – this career fair is an example –also offering incentives such as competitive salaries, relocation subsidies, housing, duty free privileges, cash bonuses, and access to international health services (some of these are short term or one off and something like competitive salary is long term).
- Consider allowing dual citizenship with the realisation that these individuals, rather than being viewed as disloyal and unpatriotic, instead should be valued for creating bridges between Africa,

Europe and North America - bridges that bring mutual benefits in areas such as trade, information exchange, and tourism

- Encourage ease of travel and work among African countries – in this regard, NEPAD's regional integration efforts could be pivotal.
- Earmark mid-level professional government jobs for those returning from the Diaspora in key policy and program areas, universities, ministries, etc. and ensure a receptive and change-oriented workplace.
- Establish affordable means of communication – Internet, telephones, satellite television, videoconferencing
- Create joint programs with funding countries to give scholarships for promising students' higher education in relevant areas of development, but with strict measures to ensure return to the home countries for summer internships as well as a minimum number of years of work following award of degrees.
- Negotiate with developed countries to "stop the poaching" of graduating students and make sure that they facilitate graduates going back home after completing their studies.

Of course, not all of this can be done in days or even years, but we must move forward. If we can begin to show progress, I believe that our Diaspora will be willing to take that leap of faith and return home to help in building strong and healthy African states.

Rt Honourable Earl Cairns Chairman of CDC Capital Partners

It is a great pleasure to Chair this final session of what seems to have been a remarkably successful day. Before coming in here, I was lucky enough to have a chance to spend a few minutes talking to representatives of the companies who have set up shop here. The level of enthusiasm is clear for all to see and the challenge is to turn this enthusiasm into practical results, whereby skilled Africans can return to Africa and employ the skills and experience that they have learnt in the developed world, to solve a shortage of those attributes in some of the poorest countries.

My congratulations to Professor Nkuhlu and his NEPAD team. My congratulations to those at the CBC and AfricaRecruit who have taken a chance on an initiative which so many people have embraced.

As I think back to my experiences as part of the team of the CBC over these past five years. In particular, as we have sought to bring the international investment community to Africa, local business people have urgently sought extra international investment that undoubtedly can help. I have, however, challenged them with the uncomfortable fact that estimates abound that as much as 40% of the private wealth of Africans is held overseas. While I can understand about diversifying risk, if Africans themselves, who know much more of both the opportunities and the problems of investing in African economies, have decided to opt for safe havens, it is quite difficult for the international investment community to feel confident from a lower level of experience that they should do the opposite. The challenge to local businessmen goes further – it is the challenge for them to engage with their governments to help create the conditions where they, the local businessmen, become keener to develop domestically. And thereby encourage others to follow suit.

The parallel I draw is the estimate that 40% of the professionally qualified indigenous Africans now work outside of Africa. It seems to me equally important that the African businesses and African governments should create conditions which encourage the badly needed professional, skilled Africans to return and make their contribution to creating value in Africa. The challenge to governments is to create conditions whereby successful professional Africans can

enjoy the fruits of their success on a comparable basis to the standards that these people can enjoy by remaining outside. The challenge to business is to provide the platform from which skilled Africans can employ their skills to the benefit of the companies, the individuals and society at large.

This initiative between NEPAD and CBC, the Friends of Africa Business Group and AfricaRecruit is undoubtedly an outstanding first step in this process. It will mean, however, nothing unless there is follow through. It needs a continuing commitment on behalf of all concerned to work through from the heady success of a single event into the details of successful postings, following up of opportunities touched on today with effective and sustained purpose; and perhaps further events organised in the light of the lessons and experiences of this current event.

Let me thank all the companies who have provided sponsorship and have been prepared to share in our vision for this experiment. I hope they will find that their efforts bear direct fruits to themselves, quite apart from its contribution under the heading of social responsibility. Above all, great thanks are due to Professor Nkuhlu, whose presence shows his personal support at a time when there are so many calls on his diary, particularly given his great standing as the leader of the NEPAD initiative. Professor, we are most grateful to you and before I ask some of our sponsors to give their thoughts on today's events, I know that everyone would like to hear, Professor, of your reflections on how we can build on what seems to me a most successful beginning.