



WorldLink

Linking people management professionals around the globe

HR Leads the Way for an **Economically Stronger Africa**



By Areff Salauroo

When we talk about the African continent, there is good news and not-so-good news. The good news is that long-term economic fundamentals remain strong and there are substantial market and investment opportunities.

The not-so-good news is that Africa's overall gross domestic product (GDP) growth has seen a decrease during the past five years. In fact, the overall GDP growth from 2000 to 2015 is 3.3 percent. This is considerably weak when compared to the 4.9 percent a year that occurred between 2000 and 2008. However, the reports about Africa's economy are optimistic, and the International Monetary Fund foresees that Africa will be the world's second-fastest growing economy by 2020.

Human resource professionals have a crucial role to play in leading the way for an economically stronger Africa. The biggest challenges of the continent continue to be productivity and growth. To meet these two major challenges, the continent will have to focus on a few priorities:

- Mobilizing more domestic resources.
- Aggressively diversifying economies.
- Developing infrastructures.
- Intensifying regional cooperation.
- Investing in talent development.
- Planning healthy urbanization.
- Promoting good governance.

When we have a look at the list of these priorities, which is not exhaustive, it is obvious that HR has a crucial role to play to help the continent realize its potential.

Whatever Africa will achieve, it will achieve through its people. It is people who will make the difference. It is people who will enable this remarkable capacity to drive far-reaching reforms in leadership

and governance. HR has an immense responsibility to assist in the realization of this beautiful vision of sustainable results. HR professionals are well-aware of the expectations of business leaders. To this end, talent development and management are high on the agenda of African HR leaders.

Productivity is another top concern. There is already a willingness to observe and test management tools and techniques that have been effective elsewhere, and there is a focus on coming up with innovative ideas to boost productivity.

Assuredly, there are lessons to be learned from the top 100 African companies. It is a good thing to see what they have done to become successful. HR professionals, as strategic partners, can inspire their business organizations to forge success by securing a strong position in their home market and geographically diversifying their activities later. However, the most important element is the need for strategies to develop and retain talent—which companies need to combine with a genuine human resources management approach in the way they invest in and manage their people.

The top 100 African companies have built their success through their people and can demonstrate that their quality human resource management practices have had an immense positive impact.

This is indeed an exciting time for Africa, African business leaders,

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African HR professionals and international investors, as well as multinational corporations. The continent is presently home to more than 700 companies with an annual revenue of more than \$500 million, including some 400 companies with an annual revenue of more than \$1 billion. And the way it is shaping up we will see more midsize and small companies, rather than larger ones.

The continent needs more local and international companies. The political turmoil in a few Arab countries on the continent and

the decline in oil prices have already had an impact on Africa and will hopefully not have a further effect. Now is the time for Africa to strengthen its muscles and realize the true potential of the continent's economies. HR, as always, is prepared to fully participate in this worthy mission.

Areff Salaaroo is president of the African Human Resource Confederation and president of the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius.

70 years of People Management in Africa

By Areff Salaaroo

The history of people management in Africa goes back as far as 1946. In fact, the Institute of People Management (IPM) of South Africa was set up in 1945 and celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2015.

IPM South Africa is a professional membership body representing human resource and people management fraternity, providing knowledge and tools for strategic and operational people management and development. It has played a key role in professionalizing and credentialing HR in South Africa and throughout the continent.

IPM South Africa may be considered one of the first national HR associations. The World Federation of People Management Associations (WFPMA) recently celebrated its 40th anniversary at the Lord's Cricket Ground in London. The Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius, which was created in 1976, also commemorated its 40th anniversary last December. Each country in Africa also has its own national association.

In 2014, WFPMA ensured the successful merger of the African Federation of Human Resources Management Associations

(AFHRMA)—the Anglophone countries—and the Association des Formateurs et Directeurs du Personnel—the Francophone countries—to form the African Human Resources Confederation. IPM South Africa played a pivotal role in the founding of AFHRMA and in the merger. Africa definitely has a long history of people management.



Areff Salaaroo is president of the African Human Resource Confederation and president of the Association of Human Resource Professionals of Mauritius.

The Impact of Donald Trump's Presidency on Liberia and African Job Creation

By Jonah Soe Kotee

In January 2006, after the swearing-in of Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf—the first woman elected to be president of any African country—the hope of many Liberians after years of civil turmoil was anchored to her education; experience; international leverages; and political, economic and social ability.

Liberians thought President Sirleaf could help create tons of jobs and business opportunities for generations of workers, from Baby Boomers to Millennials. But many Liberians are still waiting to experience what it means to be employed, earn their own money and live a decent life while contributing to the growth of their country.

Dozens of companies invested in Liberia and made agreements through a Mineral Development Agreement to create a lot of jobs. However, Liberia remains among the poorest countries in the world. A

global financial crisis affected many of these companies' operations in Liberia, leading to downsizing and restructuring measures.

With this in mind, what will U.S. President Donald Trump's administration and its policies bring to Africa and Liberia? Liberia is an aid-dependent country. A good portion of the national budget is supported by foreign assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other international partners that support global peace, assist security and development efforts, and provide humanitarian relief during times of crisis.

For fiscal year 2017, USAID has a total worldwide budget of \$34 billion. Liberia could easily spend a large portion of this budget through direct and indirect foreign assistance. If direct or indirect foreign aid is reduced under the Trump administration, it will affect all sectors of the Liberian economy, making it difficult for the government, which is dependent on foreign aid to survive and create jobs for its citizenry.

Impact of Donald Trump's Presidency continued on page 3



The national budget for Liberia for fiscal year 2016–2017 is estimated at US\$600.2 million and will be generated from five main revenue sources: core revenue of US\$524.97 million; grants of US\$30.26 million; contingent revenue of US\$5 million; borrowing of US\$38 million; and money carried forward of US\$2 million. USAID and other international organizations contribute significantly to direct and indirect support of Liberia; any reduction in assistance from USAID and other international NGOs under the Trump administration will have an adverse effect on the economy.

If the direct supplements by international organizations, including USAID, are not raised to support the national budget for fiscal year 2016–2017, the Legislature has the right by law to impose taxes on goods and services to balance the budget. The Liberian government has already begun implementing this measure, increasing taxes even though this increases the cost of living for Liberians and increases business operation costs in the

country. There have already been strikes by business owners protesting a tax increase on all commodities, including phone calls and Internet data.

When Trump won the U.S. presidential election, President Sirleaf said she was concerned that he would not engage with Africa to the same degree as previous U.S. presidents have. Previous U.S. administrations have supported Africa in numerous projects that created jobs. The George W. Bush administration instigated the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, it is one of the world's biggest health projects aimed at fighting the global AIDS epidemic by providing antiretroviral treatment for people who are HIV-positive.

President Barack Obama held the first-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit in 2014, convening 50 African presidents to Washington, D.C., for talks, and propelled a \$7 billion investment in 2013 to help provide electricity in sub-Saharan Africa. Obama also provided significant support to West African countries, including Liberia, in dealing with the outbreak of the Ebola virus.

President Trump's determination that he will renegotiate trade deals could also influence long-standing regulations such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act, a preferential trade agreement between selected African countries and the U.S. that was renewed by Congress in 2015.

The United States is the mainstay of global health aid, contributing billions of dollars annually—more than any other country—to combat disease in the poorest countries of the world. But as the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases hangs in the equilibrium, health experts, regime officials and activists for the poor say they have no idea what policies Trump will implement. He has rarely talked about global health issues. For now, many of the leadership posts dominant to the global health mission, such as in USAID and the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention, are still in the hands of Obama administration appointees. (USAID oversees the money to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and vaccine-preventable diseases.)

As of now, all U.S. assistance is based on grants as an alternative to loans. African governments have had more and more of a significant voice in developing these programs. For example, the Young African Leaders Initiative attracted 2,000 of Africa's best and brightest to the U.S. for leadership training and meetings with Obama and senior officials. The Young African Leaders Initiative has an online network of 300,000 young professionals and showcases the type of cooperation the U.S. has forged in recent years.

It is uncertain whether this commitment will be sustained by President Trump, even though it would be in U.S. interest to do so. In fact, Africans were speculating after his election whether Trump would carry out a ban on Muslims. In January, a travel ban was instituted against seven Muslim-majority countries, including Libya, Sudan and Somalia. Africans are also speculating on whether the Trump administration will expel large numbers of African immigrants. Will the U.S. continue to be the bearer of optimism, forger of alliances and proponent of prosperity that it has conventionally been to many countries on the continent?

Furthermore, the reinstatement of the global “gag rule”—which forbids foreign groups that receive U.S. family-planning money to perform, counsel or refer women for abortion services—is a hardship for women. This rule goes a step further: It does not allow foreign groups to take money from private resources for services related to abortion either. This will have an enormous influence on funding for NGOs, employment services and basic social services in Liberia.

What will U.S. President Donald Trump's administration and its policies bring to Africa and Liberia? Liberia is an aid-dependent country. A good portion of the national budget is supported by foreign assistance from the United States Agency for International Development and other international partners.

The next four years promise to be a test for Liberian and African leaders to demonstrate their leadership ability and commitment to their people. They need to stand up against corruption, which will send a strong signal that it is safe to invest U.S. taxpayer monies—and that “crooked” African leaders won't pilfer such money. African leaders also need to create more internal trade agreements and promote political stability.

Jonah Soe Kotee is the president of the Association of Liberian Human Resource Professionals and director of human resources at Partners In Health/Liberia, a Harvard-affiliated international NGO that has partnered with the government of Liberia to strengthen health systems since 2014.



Liberian President
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

12 Insightful Quotes from African Representatives at Davos 2017

By Peter Pedroncelli

Davos 2017 was the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, a nonprofit foundation established in 1971 that brings together political, business and other leaders to shape world agendas.

Davos 2017 took place in January in Switzerland, with the annual week-long World Economic Forum meeting bringing together the world's economic elite to discuss global issues and solutions to challenges that face the world at large. Africa plays a key part in these discussions, so politicians, business people and others with an interest in Africa's economic future made their way to the gathering in order to contribute to various discussions. Here are 12 insightful quotes from African representatives who were present at Davos 2017.

"Africapitalism is the realisation that the private sector, especially in Africa, has a key role to play in developing our continent, and this can be done, even though we are not in government, through investment. The power we have is the power to make investment decisions that can help us to catalyse the African economy, create economic prosperity and create social benefits for everyone."

—**Tony Elumelu**, Nigerian economist, banker and investor

"Now you can only be seen as a growth market if you are part of the globalized world, and we would be saying that all of us need to embrace globalisation with all the challenges and difficulties it gives rise to. It's a big, wide ocean and all of us have got to learn to swim in that ocean."

—**Cyril Ramaphosa**, South Africa deputy president

"Africa is home to seven of the 10 fastest-growing economies in the world, and despite the preconceived ideas of a continent forever plagued by disease, war and turmoil, it is rapidly becoming one of the most desirable investment destinations."

—**Mohammed Dewji**, president and CEO of the Tanzanian company MeTL Group

"There is no doubt that 2017 will be better than 2016, as the global economy is stronger than last year. There is also a sense that the efforts that we put together as a country last year are beginning to yield fruit, and this has at the very least taken care of the negative sentiment."

—**Lesetja Kganyago**, South African Reserve Bank governor

"In terms of the size of the economy, I think Nigeria remains possibly the largest country in Africa. We have developed a national economic recovery and growth plan, which is to be launched shortly, and that comes with the 2017 budget."

—**Yemi Osinbajo**, Nigerian vice president

"We have to accept the fact that the private sector holds huge resources that could be deployed together with the government for the benefit of infrastructure, whether it is energy, transport, IT, telecoms

and so forth. But government has to make sure we put in place policies that work to encourage investments and partnerships to happen."

—**Paul Kagame**, president of Rwanda

"Intra-African trade is still at a dismally low percentage. And for that to increase, I'm afraid there's going to be a choice on how much sovereignty a certain state wants to retain and to what extent they have a vision of making things more, more and more borderless."

—**Phuthuma Nhleko**, executive chairman of MTN Group, a South Africa-based mobile telecommunications company

"South Africa, interestingly, is in a much better place than others in that the country doesn't experience the same degree of geopolitical risk. The rand at the current level has been good. It has brought in millions more tourists into South Africa and has to some extent also helped exports."

—**Pravin Gordhan**, South African finance minister

"Creating more jobs by modernising the agriculture sector is the first focus area. The discussion with companies that are desirous to engage in the agriculture sector was concluded with agreement to support agricultural transformation in [Ethiopia]."

—**Hailemariam Desalegn**, Ethiopian prime minister

"There's more positivity towards South Africa and a lot of confidence that things are turning for the better, so we believe that, as Team SA, our message that South Africa is open for business is resonating very well."

—**Jeff Radebe**, South African minister in the presidency

"I believe in entrepreneurship and what I see in the faces of the young Africans who I interact with is these are energetic people, highly enterprising, very brilliant people and people who don't want to take no for an answer, and people who want to succeed."

—**Tony Elumelu**, Nigerian economist, banker and investor

"The important thing is that the basic foundations of our country—which are the Constitution and the institutions that support our democracy—remain in place, and they are going to make sure that they absorb the shocks and they keep the country on an even keel. This country is not going to slide left or right, it's going to keep on the straight and narrow until it delivers the progress that our people want to see."

—**Cyril Ramaphosa**, South Africa deputy president



World Economic Forum / Benedikt von Loebeil

Peter Pedroncelli is a South African freelance journalist. This article appears courtesy of AFK Insider (<http://afkinsider.com>).

Thousands of Young Africans Learn Critical Skills During **Africa Code Week**

By Melanie Padgett Powers

In just its second year, Africa Code Week far exceeded its target of teaching 150,000 students to code. In fact, 427,000 young people participated in the event last fall, held across 30 African countries. The goal of the event is to improve students' digital literacy and provide easier access to coding training.

Africa Code Week, which was held Oct. 15–23, was organized by software company SAP and more than 100 partners. SAP has set a goal of equipping 5 million young Africans with basic coding skills and training 200,000 teachers by 2025. According to SAP, over the next 25 years, Africa's working-age population will double to 1 billion. That's higher than China or India.

Girls were heavily involved in the event. Overall, girls made up 48.6 percent of participants. For 11 countries, more than half of their participants were girls.

Since the end of Africa Code Week, more than 6,000 teachers, now trained in coding, are continuing to offer coding lessons to students across the continent.

"The only way to achieve the digital transformation everyone is talking about is to invest in our people, preparing the digital natives for the much bigger role they are expected to play in this transformation," said Hon. Jean Philbert Nsengimana, Rwanda's minister of youth and

information and communication technology, in a statement on the SAP website. "Africa Code Week is an unprecedented opportunity to learn the basic literacy of coding from a very tender age, and I would like to thank SAP for taking the lead."

For more information, visit <http://africacodeweek.org>.



Students in Mozambique pose for a group selfie at an Africa Code Week event.

[Melanie Padgett Powers is managing editor of *WorldLink*.]

8 Ways to Support **Training and Entrepreneurship**

By Kirstin Kelley

Some African economies are in danger of stalling or still haven't recovered after colonialism. Many nations lack the diversified industries and educational infrastructure that characterize the world's strongest economies. However, according to a new report, changing technology offers hope for developing Africa's economic prospects. A 2016 report from the African Management Initiative (AMI), "Training Talent: Best Practice in Workplace Learning And Management Development in Africa," identified eight key considerations that could dramatically change the continent's future economic prospects.

1. EFFECTIVE MANAGERS AND ENTREPRENEURS HOLD THE KEY TO AFRICA'S PROSPERITY.

According to the AMI report, Gallup estimates that good management can give companies a 147 percent edge over their competition. Unfortunately, only 1.4 percent of accredited business schools are in Africa, leading to brain drain for nations throughout Africa as young people travel abroad for education. Importantly, 53 percent of South Africans living abroad say they want to return home—a trend that seems to hold in other strong African economies—bringing the education and management skills acquired abroad back home. Still, sending young people off the continent to develop their skills is not a sustainable long-term solution.

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2. THE DEMAND FOR TRAINING IS GREATEST FOR JOB ENTRANTS, ENTREPRENEURS, AND JUNIOR TO MIDDLE MANAGERS.

Research shows that in the youth labor market of 36 different African nations, "there is a 54 percent mismatch between job seekers and employers' requirements," according to the AMI report. In response, some governments such as South Africa have mandated companies spend a percentage of their payroll on skills development. Companies echo this need to build stronger skills among employees—only 5.5 percent of respondents to the AMI report felt they were spending too much on training.

3. WHAT THESE MANAGERS AND ENTREPRENEURS NEED MOST ARE SOFT SKILLS, OR WHAT ARE CALLED "PERSONAL HABITS."

Managers are responsible for executing policies and for building a culture that allows employees—and by extension the company—to succeed. But studies show that more training does not necessarily translate into better results. A survey of Kenyan HR professionals showed that to help staff grow in their positions, HR managers wanted to provide more training in soft skills, rather than the technical and

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functional aspects of the job. High ratings were given to the following areas: become more committed to the organization's mission, take more initiative, own responsibility for their job and handle stress.

4. EMBEDDING EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES INTO THE ROUTINE OF THE COMPANY HAS MORE IMPACT THAN FOCUSING ON INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCIES.

Companies have been experimenting with effective ways to ensure that training has long-term positive effects on their bottom lines.

There are a wide variety of types of learning that companies may want to try.

5. TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR, WE NEED LEARNING METHODOLOGIES THAT INCORPORATE EXPERIENCE, PRACTICE, FEEDBACK AND ACCOUNTABILITY, NOT JUST CONTENT AND THEORY.

Research shows that social and collaborative learning leads to long-term retention. Companies with robust mentorship programs and plans to improve informal and social learning have long-term positive results. Rather than try to police employees by blocking social media and other tools, the most effective companies leverage social learning to continue to grow employee skill sets.

6. RAPID DEVELOPMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT THESE METHODS THROUGH VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES, ENGAGING CONTENT AND DATA TO INDIVIDUALIZE LEARNING.

While, historically, improving educational infrastructure—even informal

education—is expensive, rapidly changing technology is making it more affordable and more accessible, promising drastic improvements for African economies, if only companies and managers take advantage of it. Virtual learning environments offer collaborative classroom-like experiences similar to those found in more traditional learning environments. Blended learning, which uses a mix of online and in-person learning, similarly offers a collaborative experience, but for a much lower cost than traditional models. Digital learning is still in its early development, but as more companies look to it as a cost-conscious and more seamless alternative to formal classroom education offsite, it will surely become increasingly user-friendly and effective.

7. THE PREFERRED SOLUTION IS BLENDED LEARNING.

Blended learning is when the economy, scale and convenience of online learning is managed through the intensity, practice and shared insight of face-to-face interactions. Data show that a blended model that uses both traditional in-person learning and online resources to enhance the experience promises the best outcomes. AMI used this method in a project with the Young African Leaders Initiative Regional Leadership Center East Africa. AMI aimed to deliver the online portion of the initiative's leadership program for 400+ young African leaders. To do so, it created the Learning Academy, which can now boast that 95 percent of participants describe themselves as competent or expert in the program's core skills compared to 55 percent before they completed the program.

8. AMI DATA SHOW THAT PERFORMANCE CAN BE TRANSFORMED.

The highest-performing companies are tying management and leadership programs to clear business results. They are embracing new training methods and creating “curated banks” of easily accessible resources. “Most importantly,” the report says, “they are focusing on changing their own management practices by moving beyond courses to provide more social learning opportunities, including mentoring and coaching from senior management, access to open discussions, walls, communities, and user-generated (and rated) content.”

[Kirstin Kelley is a freelance writer based in Vermont.]

What Does the Future Hold for You and Your Organization?

By Rre Elijah Litheko

Research is conducted to uncover new knowledge, confirm and/or validate facts or to make predictions. Research results help organizations, governments and companies to organize themselves in such a manner that they will continue providing services and products that will satisfy the needs of their customers. There are a number of organizations and institutions that produce useful research on a regular basis.

At the 2016 Institute of People Management (IPM) Annual Convention and Exhibition the 2016 Deloitte Human Capital Trends were presented, and the top five trends—both locally and globally—were:

- Organizational design.
- Culture.
- Employee engagement.
- Leadership.
- Learning.

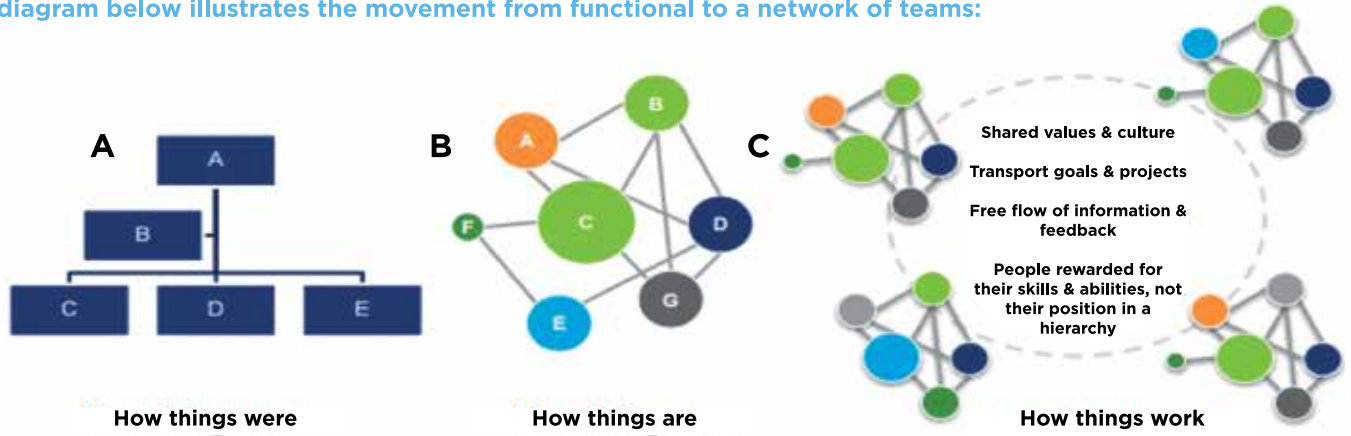
These trends also feature prominently in the research report on predictions for 2017 released by Deloitte. In this article, I will briefly highlight the impact that the report predicts organizational design will have on HR and talent within the context of digital transformation.

The report argues that for more than a century, organizations have been set up to deliver on “scalable efficiency.” This involves building functional teams—i.e., product design, engineering, manufacturing, sales, marketing, HR, finance—designed to create silo mentality and turf protection, “all with a focus on scale—more products, more sales, increased revenue, etc.

In today's digital environment and rapidly changing markets, the research reveals that the concept of “scale and efficiency” is no longer applicable. This change has largely been influenced by the cloud, the Internet and crowdsourcing, contributing to the lowering of barriers to entry.

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The diagram below illustrates the movement from functional to a network of teams:



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Uber, trivago and similar innovative approaches to business are typical examples of this emerging economic order. The disruptions that these new entrants have caused in their industries are immense, demonstrating that market developments will challenge and make irrelevant organizations that have been set up for scalable efficiency.

Uber, trivago and similar innovative approaches to business are typical examples of this emerging economic order. The disruptions that these new entrants have caused in their industries are immense.

In order for organizations to avoid becoming irrelevant in the digital economy and to keep abreast of technological developments, the report recommends:

- Breaking up functional groups into smaller and flatter teams that are empowered. The focus of these teams should be on product releases, customers, markets or geographies.
- Leaders focus on hands-on leadership and not “leadership from behind the desk.”
- Radically reducing the number of job levels to incentivize employees to strive for results and continuous learning as opposed to waiting for promotion.

- Changing reward systems to reward team success, not just individual success.
- Retraining managers to enable them to manage projects, not people.
- Creating an environment of “always-on learning” and a culture of exploration and discussion to enable continuous invention.
- Providing career coaches and sponsors, instead of managers, to help employees to grow.
- Sponsoring hackathons and other collaborative development programs to let employees at all levels contribute.
- Implementing information systems that deliver real-time dashboards and reports so that all the teams can operate with the same insights and perspectives.
- Moving away from a top-down hierarchical model to one of a network of teams.

Does your organization align with this way of thinking? What does the future hold for you and your organization?

The Institute of People Management, with our strategic partners, will be offering a diverse range of programs and events with the specific aim of equipping our members to face the digital transformation that the future holds. If you would like to know more about how we are supporting you each step of the way, please visit our website at www.ipm.co.za.

[Rre Elijah Litheko is the CEO of the Institute of People Management, Johannesburg, South Africa.]

Small Businesses in Egypt Can Benefit More from E-Commerce

Just one in 10 micro and small handicraft enterprises—defined as those with 10 workers or fewer—use the Internet in Egypt, according to the first-ever survey conducted jointly by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Egyptian government as part of a project to develop a National E-Commerce Strategy. It was also the first-ever official national survey of micro enterprises carried out in Egypt.

Among those that do use the Internet to market their products, social media is by far the most popular channel, with only 2 percent using an online marketplace.

More than 1,000 micro enterprises within 20 handicraft sectors in all of Egypt’s 26 governorates responded to the survey in the first quarter of 2016. “These firms have the potential to be strong beneficiaries from

e-commerce and to become stronger competitors in the domestic and global market through e-commerce,” the director of UNCTAD’s Division on Technology and Logistics, Shamika Sirimanne, said. “The survey will help the government to formulate relevant measures to enable more micro and small enterprises to unlock the potential of e-commerce.”

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As in many developing countries, micro and small enterprises in Egypt account for about 80 percent of livelihoods and employment and are important contributors to GDP growth.

Yet just 3 percent of the micro and small enterprises that used the Internet had made online purchases, while only 5 percent had received orders online for their products.

Furniture topped the products that are sold online, mentioned by 40 percent of micro and small enterprises that had made online sales. The next most common products included clothing (28 percent) and

Just 3 percent of the micro and small enterprises that used the Internet had made online purchases, while only 5 percent had received orders online for their products.

fabricated metal (17 percent). More than 90 percent of the micro and small enterprises that had made online sales were paid through cash on delivery. In terms of alternative payment methods, mobile payment (9 percent), bank transfers (6.5 percent) and credit cards (3.5 percent) were mentioned.

The survey also found that as many as 96 percent of all business owners were male. Most micro enterprises (57 percent) had only 1–2 employees, 29 percent had 3–5 employees and 13 percent had 6–10 employees.

The survey was designed and conducted through cooperation between UNCTAD's ICT Policy Review Programme and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology with the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.

More detailed results will be presented in the National E-Commerce Strategy for Egypt report, which is scheduled to be published in early 2017.

The strategy will establish short, medium and long-term targets and provide specific policy recommendations for its implementation.

The strategy has been developed on the basis of an integrated framework of policy areas of strategic importance to e-commerce development, first presented in the UNCTAD Information Economy Report 2015. It covers information and telecommunications technology infrastructure and services, logistics and trade facilitation, the legal and regulatory environment, payment solutions, and skills development and e-procurement.



This article appears courtesy of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It was published online on January 24, 2017: <http://bit.ly/2jn7r6S>.

Rise in South Africans with Jobs Not Keeping Up with Population Increase

By Melanie Padgett Powers.

The number of hours people work in South Africa declined slightly over six years. In 2015, workers worked on average 43 hours a week, compared with 44 hours in 2009. Men tended to work longer hours than women, but hours declined for both groups, from 46 to 45 hours for men and from 42 to 41 hours for women.

These are some of the findings in the report "Labour Market Dynamics in South Africa, 2015" released by Statistics South Africa in October 2016.

The report also showed that between 2009 and 2015 employment increased from 14.2 million to 15.7 million, but that rise did not keep up with the increase in the number of people who are working age.

Between 2009 and 2015, the number of people in South Africa

who are of working age increased from 32.4 million to 36.0 million. In 2015, the unemployment rate in South Africa was 25 percent.

People had been staying longer at their jobs, although that decreased slightly in 2015: The median job tenure increased to 47 months each year between 2011 and 2013 but then decreased to 44 months in 2015.

The findings show that the number of employees who receive paid sick leave increased by less than 1 percentage point to 68.3 percent. Participation in trade unions declined, from 29 percent in 2011 to 27 percent in 2015. Access to medical aid benefits dropped 1 percentage point over the time period, from 30.5 percent of employees in 2009 to 29.5 percent in 2015.

Read more findings at www.statssa.gov.za/?p=8615.

Melanie Padgett Powers is managing editor of *WorldLink*.



Botswana



Licensing casinos

The Botswana Gambling Authority was established in 2016 to oversee new gambling regulations that require licenses for all types of betting establishments. The government created the new licensing body to stop illegal gambling and to protect licensed operators. The new regulations include encouraging owners to create sustainable employment and to implement regular staff training programs. The new authority took over regulation of the eight existing casinos and plans to issue at least six more casino licenses this year.

Egypt



Empowering women

The African Development Bank's (AfDB's) Egypt Office co-organized a roundtable discussion in December about economic empowerment for women in Africa. The session was held during the Arab Women Organization conference in Cairo. Leila Mokaddem, resident representative of AfDB in Egypt, said that although women represent half the population in Africa, they do not have as many empowerment opportunities. She said this is a lost opportunity for Africa, particularly in the areas of new jobs, economic growth and improving standards of living. The AfDB created a gender strategy that supports its member countries in promoting gender equality and adopting best practices for women's economic empowerment. AfDB's study "Promoting North African Women's Employment Through SMEs [small-to-medium enterprises]" showed that the number of female-owned and -managed large companies in North Africa is greater than in other regions, but not as many women own small- to medium-size companies. This is important because female-owned or -managed companies often employ more women than companies owned by men.

Ethiopia



Protecting female employees

Ethiopia is lacking in laws that protect women in the workplace, according to a new study. The Ethiopian Trade Unions examined the conditions of working women in flower-grower, textile and leather-hide-processing companies. The 2016 study of 400 women and 100 men showed that women work long hours for lower wages. They are exposed to health hazards and lack the basics, such as clean water. They are directed toward certain types of jobs because of gender discrimination, and they face discrimination based on pregnancy and marital status. For example, employers are said to prefer younger female employees and women without children. Approximately 89 percent of the study respondents had never been promoted, and 59 percent had never received any training.

Kenya



Digital training

Kenya aims to help 1 million young people obtain online freelance work—taking part in what is known as the gig economy—this year as part of a new digital skills training program. According to the World Bank, Kenya has the highest rate of joblessness in East Africa at 17 percent. The program is called Ajira, or "employment" in Swahili. As part of the program, the government will send mentors to train young people and provide them with free Wi-Fi. Kenya's new initiative follows a partnership it created with Google, which is training millions of young Africans on digital skills and aiming to create 1 million web-based jobs.

Mauritania



Helping farm workers

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has awarded Mauritania a grant that will help 285,600 farmers improve their incomes, nutrition and food security. IFAD will contribute US\$21 million to the US\$45.2 million project known as Inclusive Value Chain Development Project, or PRODEFI. Private companies, the government and the participants themselves will cover the remaining costs. Currently, Mauritania imports 60 percent of its food. The first phase of the project will focus on programs in horticulture, poultry farming, goat milk production and development of nontimber forest products. In the second phase, new income-generating crops and activities will be considered and started. The farmers will receive training and advice on their new ventures.

Nigeria



Pension funds

Only 11 percent of Nigerian employees are registered under the country's pension program, according to a new report from Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics. The report points out that the country's labor force is mostly informal, with about 50 percent of workers working in farming or informal trading. About 14 percent of men are registered, while only 6 percent of women are. The highest number of registered workers were between the ages of 30 and 39.

South Africa



Law firms expanding

South Africa has become a booming hub for global law firms in recent years, according to an article in *The American Lawyer*. South Africa is becoming the base for huge firms looking to counsel clients across the continent. This is leading well-established domestic law firms to adapt so they can compete for new international business, the article stated. A few years ago, several large global firms signed alliances with established South African firms. But in recent months, global firms are going it alone in the country.

Zambia



Monthly day off for women

A debate has arisen in Zambia over a policy known as Mother's Day, which allows any woman to take one day off a month for her menstrual cycle without having to provide a doctor's note or ask for the time off ahead of time. The law was created in 2015. "Mother's Day is a very progressive law," said Madube Siyauya, of the Non-Governmental Organisations' Co-ordinating Council, an umbrella body of Zambian action groups, in a news24.com article. "It's a very important day that allows women to attend to their biological needs and continue their work without being susceptible to discrimination." However, others argue that 12 extra days off a year for female workers is unproductive for Zambia's economy.

Sources: AllAfrica.com, *The American Lawyer*, news24.com, Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, Reuters, Voice of America, WeekendPost (Botswana).

HR Calendar

March 2017

6th Bangladesh Society for Human Resources Management
International HR Conference

Bangladesh

Website: www.bshrmbd.com/bshrm/conference.php

June 18–21, 2017

SHRM Annual Conference & Exposition

New Orleans, La., USA

Website: annual.shrm.org

August 21–23, 2017

AHRI National Convention & Exhibition

Sydney International Convention Center

Sydney, Australia

Website: www.ahri.com.au/national-convention

September 6–7, 2017

AMEDIRH Annual Conference

Centro Banamex

Mexico City, Mexico

Website: www.amedirh.com.mx

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WORLDLINK

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

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of *WorldLink* will be published in May 2017 and will feature the Asia Pacific Federation of HRM and HR news from Asia Pacific.

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