

MEMORANDUM

N°172/2016 | 05/09/2016

The Memorandum is issued daily, with the sole purpose to provide updated basic business and economic information on Africa, to more than 4,000 European Companies, as well as their business parties in Africa.

More than 1,556 Memoranda issued from 2006 to end of 2015. More than 18,350 pages of Business Clips issued covering all African, European Institutions and African Union, as well as the Breton Woods Institutions. The subscription is free of charge, and sponsored by various Development Organisations and Corporations.

Should a reader require a copy of the Memoranda, please address the request to fernando.matos.rosa@sapo or fernando.matos.rosa@skynet.be.

2006 – 2015, 9 Years devoted to reinforce Europe – Africa Business and Development

Most important african business press clips, daily!

SUMMARY

Beninese leader waives entry visas for Africans	Page 2
Angola takes on loan to pay for third Boeing 777	Page 2
Web4Africa announces West Africa's First Mirror Project	Page 2
Government of Mozambique complies with IMF recommendations	Page 3
Chinese firm secures over \$1.8m light rail contract in Nigeria	Page 3
WorldRemit welcomes restoration of money transfers to Nigeria	Page 4
Bank of Mozambique should take measures to secure foreign reserves, President says	Page 4
Uganda best African country for expats - survey	Page 5
Seacom Launches Direct-to-Corporate Services in Kenya	Page 5
EPA opens EU market to 500m SADC firms	Page 7
Gilat Satcom Expands Fiber Operations in Ghana	Page 7
SADC payment system transactions rise to \$80b	Page 8
Près de 1 000 emplois vont être supprimés à Tunisair	Page 8
Nigeria lists benefits of Tokyo conference in Nairobi	Page 9
Sun Med Festival: new technologies to improve energy efficiency in buildings in the Mediterranean	Page 10
US funds project to strengthen S/Leone women farmers	Page 10
Top USAID contractors for 2015	Page 11
Nigeria, UK sign MoU on return of stolen assets	Page 14

BENINESE LEADER WAIVES ENTRY VISAS FOR AFRICANS



The President of Benin, Patrice Talon has removed entry visa requirement for all Africans wanting to visit his country, official sources informed APA.

President Talon claimed his move was inspired by Rwanda to promote African tourism and south-south cooperation.

“Inspired by the experience of Rwanda, I decided that Benin will no longer require visas to Africans. South-South cooperation can have a real meaning. My hope is that cooperation between Rwanda and Benin can be an example” the Rwandan presidency tweeted quoting President Talon.

In March 2016, the two countries signed an aviation cooperation agreement establishing a RwandAir route to Cotonou and Kigali from September 2.

The Beninese leader is on a two-day state visit to Rwanda since Monday.(APA 30-08-2016)

ANGOLA TAKES ON LOAN TO PAY FOR THIRD BOEING 777

Angola has taken on a loan of US\$153.6 million to ensure delivery of the third Boeing 777-300 ER ordered by flagship air carrier TAAG, under a presidential order.

The order, granting a State guarantee for the operation, said it is a “bridging loan” granted by Boeing Capital Corporation (BCC), justified by the “need” for “timely delivery by the manufacturer, scheduled for August this year.”

The Angolan government had to approve the bridging loan, as the financing provided by the US Export Import Bank for this acquisition is not yet available, according to Portuguese news agency Lusa.

Boeing’s delivery of the aircraft, the last of an order of three, was previously announced for last June by the airline’s chief executive.

The contract for the acquisition of the three B777s was signed between TAAG and Boeing on 27 March, 2012, and the first aircraft went into service in 2014.

The third aircraft had been due to arrive in Luanda last June, after completing the financing process to ensure links from Angola to South America from July. (02-09-2016)

WEB4AFRICA ANNOUNCES WEST AFRICA’S FIRST MIRROR PROJECT

Lagos, Nigeria. Mobile operators are said to be under pressure from NATCOMS to compensate subscribers because of alleged poor quality of service.

Web4Africa, a leading web hosting company, announces the launch of The Nigerian Mirror Project, a first of its type in the West African sub-region. The Nigerian Mirror Project, which is physically hosted in Nigeria and reachable at mirror.ng, aims to drastically improve the download and availability of free & open source software in Nigeria. Access to bandwidth in Nigeria is expensive compared to most parts of the world and a major contributing factor is the high cost of international transit. This is due in part to the fact that most of the content consumed by Nigerian Internet users is generated outside the country making most bandwidth access essentially international.

Web4Africa's aim is to reduce the high cost by bringing free and open-source content closer to end-users in Nigeria. Another benefit of this project is low latency. By bringing the content closer to the user, as we are doing in the case of the Nigerian Mirror project, the user experience is greatly enhanced with faster downloads. Developers using open-source programming languages and users of Linux Operating Systems in Nigeria are among the direct beneficiaries of this project, provided their Internet Service Provider peers openly at the Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN). The mirror is presently hosting the full repositories of Ubuntu and CentOS (both Linux Operating Systems), as well as Python Package Index (a programming language), in Nigeria. The project has official recognition from CentOS and Ubuntu respectively as it has already been integrated into their official distribution network. Suggestions regarding which other Operating Systems and open-source software to mirror in Nigeria are currently being taken via email to admin (at) mirror (dot) ng "We, at IXPN, are delighted by this initiative from Web4Africa to localize popular open-source content. It is the first of its kind in Nigeria. We commend them in their effort toward local Internet data hosting, which is the best way to drop the cost of Internet access while improving user experience. IXPN totally aligns with the Nigeria Mirror Project and we call on other organizations to emulate this kind of project, so as to build a better Internet ecosystem for our country," says the Managing Director, Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN), Mr. Muhammed Rudman. "This project, in addition to the immense benefits it brings to the Internet ecosystem in Nigeria, is one of our ways to give back to the local Internet community and is only a first step," says Oluniyi Ajao, Managing Director of Web4Africa. (IT News Africa 02-09-2016)

GOVERNMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE COMPLIES WITH IMF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Minister of Economy and Finance of Mozambique on Thursday restated the government's commitment to comply with the recommendations and the timetable set out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last April, Mozambican newspaper Noticias reported.

Minister Adriano Maleiane, who was speaking during a visit by President of the Republic to the Maputo International Fair, said the government has maintained contacts with the IMF, which is due to send a mission to Mozambique this month.

Maleiane said the Mozambican government is working actively to clarify so-called hidden debts – debts taken on by public companies with a State guarantee – and said that the IMF mission will carry out the "assessment required of it."

The minister pointed out the adoption last July of a revised state budget, with a package of austerity measures, such as compliance with the recommendations of an IMF mission, which visited the country in June.

The disclosure of loans that were taken on between 2013 and 2014 without consulting Parliament, international financial institutions and donors, has led the IMF and major donors to suspend financial aid to the country. (02-09-2016)

CHINESE FIRM SECURES OVER \$1.8M LIGHT RAIL CONTRACT IN NIGERIA

Nigeria's Kano State Government has awarded a \$1.8 million contract for the construction of the Kano metropolitan light rail to the China Railway Construction Corporation.

According to This day newspaper report on Tuesday, the Kano State Commissioner for Works, Housing and Transport, Alhaji Shehu Haruna Lambu, disclosed on Monday that the project would be executed through foreign investors of which 85 percent of the total cost would be sourced from the foreign investors, while 15 percent of the amount would be sourced locally.

He explained that the proposed light rail would spread across the metropolis and connect Janguza

Barracks to Bata and Jogana to Bata.

According to the commissioner, the project which is expected to be completed within 24 months, will provide commuters in the metropolis a better and hitch-free access to transportation and enhance economic activities in the state.

The report said that the Managing Director of the Chinese firm, China Railway Construction Corporation, Mr. Wei Guo Qin, commended the Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abduallahi Umar Ganduje for his people-oriented programmes.

He promised to comply with the specific guidelines of the contract, including the timely completion of the project.

WORLDREMIT WELCOMES RESTORATION OF MONEY TRANSFERS TO NIGERIA



WorldRemit, a digital remittance service, has commended the restoration of money transfers to Nigeria, following the decision of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to approve WorldRemit and other international money transfer operators (IMTOs).

At the beginning of August 2016, hundreds of IMTOs suspended their operations, leaving the Nigerian diaspora to rely on Western Union, MoneyGram and Ria.

Now WorldRemit has received a letter of approval from the CBN enabling its digital money transfer services to Nigeria to be resumed.

WorldRemit launched its service to Nigeria in 2011 when it pioneered low-cost instant deposits to all bank accounts. The service provided the Nigerian diaspora with an easy, fast and secure way to send money home as well as bringing much-needed foreign exchange into the local economy.

Ismail Ahmed, founder and CEO of WorldRemit, comments: "We commend the CBN for reaffirming the country's commitment to building an enabling environment and level-playing field for international money transfer services to Nigeria. The new environment will help to bring the estimated 50% of remittances to Nigeria that currently go through unregulated, informal networks into the formal channels.

"We're grateful to the many Nigerians both at home and in the diaspora that supported our call for money transfers to be restored. A competitive remittance market provides Nigerians with greater convenience and better pricing." (BD 02-09-2016)

BANK OF MOZAMBIQUE SHOULD TAKE MEASURES TO SECURE FOREIGN RESERVES, PRESIDENT SAYS

The Bank of Mozambique should adopt a set of innovative measures to secure reserves to pay for imports, debt servicing and ensure exchange rate stability, said on Thursday in Maputo the President of Mozambique.

Filipe Nyusi, instating the new governor of the Bank of Mozambique, Rogerio Zandamela, said the central bank's activity should promote economic adjustment capacity, taking into account an economy like Mozambique that is greatly affected by external shocks.

The Mozambican President, quoted by Mozambican news agency AIM, said the country still had major macroeconomic challenges, such as control of the money supply, international reserves and interest rates and also the expansion of financial services.

The President also said that the current economic situation of the country, characterised by general price increases and high depreciation of the national currency, the metical against the major currencies, brings great challenges to exchange rate policy management to ensure the stability of the financial system.

Rogério Zandamela, replacing Ernesto Gove, was previously an official of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since 1988, and was the IMF's resident representative in Brazil and head of IMF missions to several countries. (02-09-2016)

UGANDA BEST AFRICAN COUNTRY FOR EXPATS - SURVEY

Uganda has been described by a recent survey of expats as the best country in Africa to live and work as an expatriate taking into account the uncomplicated ease with which to settle in the country among other motivating factors.

Carried on its website on Tuesday, the survey by the so-called Expat Insider for 2016 said the East African nation ranks first in Africa, 25th worldwide, followed in second place by Kenya (ranked 46 globally).

According to the survey Nigeria occupies last given these indexes coupled with the quality of life and the cost of living.

The rankings for the best and worst places to live as an expatriate also considers other factors such as family life, the ease of learning local languages and connecting with the people of the host country.

Expat Insider is one of the largest entities conducting surveys on the subject covering the everyday aspects of life for expatriates in over 60 countries.

According to the Insider expat website, over 14,000 respondents spread across 174 nationalities and 191 countries took part in the survey which looked into the nature of their lives, living and working abroad. (APA 30-08-2016)

SEACOM LAUNCHES DIRECT-TO-CORPORATE SERVICES IN KENYA

Pan-African telecoms enabler SEACOM extends its corporate market offering, under its SEACOM Business initiative, to the East African region by providing Internet connectivity and cloud services directly to corporates in Kenya.

SEACOM is moving into this segment to provide corporate organisations in East Africa with reliable data connectivity, cloud services and consistent service quality by leveraging SEACOM's existing high-speed fibre based network infrastructure.

The new product offerings include high-speed, dedicated Fibre Internet Access with options ranging from 10 Mbps up to 1 Gbps which will allow businesses in East Africa to unlock their true potential in today's online and digital age.

Following the launch of its SEACOM Business offering in South Africa a year ago, the division in East Africa has already signed up almost 50 business customers, adding more each month. It has also recently appointed several corporate partners to support its drive into the SME market, and expects to speed up its total corporate customer acquisitions going forward.

"SEACOM initially focused on bringing low-cost data transmission infrastructure to other service providers in Africa. However, we were not seeing the optimal take-up of our international data

capabilities to the end-user market, and the associated benefits that this can bring,” said SEACOM CEO Byron Clatterbuck.

“SEACOM is now offering its data and other services directly to companies in East Africa, with a focus on our regional and international footprint that other providers lack. We own and operate our own network end-to-end at the fibre level, allowing us to offer seamless and cost-effective network solutions regionally, as well as into Europe and Asia,” added Clatterbuck.

Last mile access will play a crucial role in the delivery of these services as SEACOM intends to boost uptake through key partnerships with local and regional fibre providers. Says Clatterbuck, “We have already built out 8 metro points of presence around Nairobi, and this gives us a solid base from which to extend further with our partners. By having our own metro PoPs, we can better manage service quality and network scalability to our growing customer base.”

SEACOM Business Sales Lead Patrick Ndegwa said that the company aims to provide corporate customers high-speed connectivity and quality bandwidth at an affordable cost, on a selective basis in the corporate data connectivity space.

“The time is right for us to diversify our business into the corporate market with focused data offerings bundled with last-mile fibre,” says Ndegwa. “We believe the uptake will be tremendous as customers get a taste of our service offering, which we have already seen in South Africa.”

The company is leveraging its abundant and scalable capacity on its undersea cable system and continent-wide IP-MPLS network, as well as the capabilities of its Cloud services, to enable corporates in South Africa and East Africa to smoothly transition to the Cloud.

SEACOM launched the first broadband submarine cable system along the East African coastline in 2009 linking South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya and Mozambique with major Internet connection hubs in Europe and Asia.

Today, it offers a redundant connectivity ring around Africa’s east and west coasts, optimal traffic routing, and resiliency through multiple tier-1 upstream partners in Europe and Asia. It also offers direct connectivity to African routes and content. It delivers these services over last-mile access through leading connectivity partnerships in various regions.

Last-mile fibre is a major focus for SEACOM in the corporate market. Initially, the company aimed to bring standard fibre to corporate customers in Kenya and South Africa.

SEACOM’s business offering includes the following:

- Internet Access provides customers with reliable, dedicated, high-speed access to the Internet through multiple global tier 1 networks, a mesh of subsea and terrestrial routes as well as low-latency routing to many key content delivery networks (CDNs) hosted on its network and on the African continent.
- Virtual Private Network (VPN) services offer dedicated, transparent, layer-2 or layer-3 VPN connectivity across SEACOM’s network and onwards through our international partner networks.
- Private Line Services give clients secure, dedicated, low-latency transmission connectivity across multiple cable systems connecting Africa, Europe and Asia, as well as regionally to key interconnection points in Africa.
- Cloud services – hosted mail, online backup, end-point protection, virtual hosting and other Cloud services provide customers with the ability to leverage the Cloud to improve business processes and reduce costs. SEACOM also recently entered into partnerships with Microsoft to offer ExpressRoute services to enhance the experience of customers looking to access Azure and Office 365 services across SEACOM’s network.

“We have only had positive feedback from our South African clients after we launched the service in 2015 and as a result have been signing up a growing number of corporate customers. This experience helps us showcase our product portfolio customer satisfaction to the East African market,” said Clatterbuck. (IT News Africa 02-09-2016)

EPA OPENS EU MARKET TO 500M SADC FIRMS

About half a billion firms from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have an opportunity to export their goods through the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), APA reports here on Tuesday.

Five SADC countries Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland concluded negotiations for the agreement that enables trade-free of quotas and duties in 2014.

For Swaziland, this means a large market for sugar while for Botswana it means an increased market for beef, commodities which are major exports for the two countries to Europe.

The EPA, according to SADC Secretariat, promotes expansion of trade which boosts development by creating employment and generating income.

An important added benefit for SADC consumers is that they get access to a wider range of quality EU products at lower prices as more quality European products are already appearing in the shopping malls at affordable prices, says a statement made by the Secretariat.

When the EPA negotiations started in 2013, countries like Swaziland, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola, Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa encountered challenges which were fought through a special support mechanism, the Regional Economic Support (REIS) Programme.

REIS is a four-year programme funded by the EU.(APA 30-08-2016)

GILAT SATCOM EXPANDS FIBER OPERATIONS IN GHANA



Gilat Satcom, a leading provider of satellite and fiber-based connectivity services in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, announced today that it is expanding its operations in Ghana to meet the growing demand for fast, reliable and secure broadband services from existing and prospective customers.

Gilat Satcom has been operational in Africa including Ghana for more than 15 years, providing both domestic and international satellite and fiber capacity to major operators and ISPs.

Gilat Satcom has upgraded its point-of-presence (PoP) located in the Rack Center Data Center in the capital of Accra and is now using redundant, terrestrial metro fiber to provide a 1-10Gbps service to existing and new customers. In addition, the company offers to its customers value added services such as Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) protection and traffic management.

Gilat Satcom's Ghanaian POP is directly connected to the West Africa Cable System (WACS) which has a landing station in Ghana and provides a reliable route for international traffic. Gilat Satcom is a shareholder in WIOCC, owners of WACS.

Dan Zjicek, Gilat Satcom's CEO stated "We are investing heavily in both our fiber and satellite operations throughout Africa. We are known for providing fully redundant, extremely stable broadband networks with excellent quality of service and compelling pricing. This upgrade of our infrastructure in Ghana will increase both capacity and service uptime".(IT News Africa 02-09-2016)

SADC PAYMENT SYSTEM TRANSACTIONS RISE TO \$80B

Transactions that are made through improved payment systems within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have risen from \$680 million to \$80 billion in two years, APA reports here on Tuesday.

A test version of the SADC Integrated Regional Electronic Settlement System (SIRESS) which was launched in July 2013 in the four countries of the Common Monetary Area has yielded the anticipated results, according to Executive Secretary of the SADC Banking Association.

The first four countries that were part of SIRESS are Swaziland, South Africa, Namibia and Lesotho, but now they have been joined by Malawi, Tanzania, Mauritius and Zimbabwe.

“Modernisation of the payment and clearance systems leads to simplified processing of payment transactions, leading to safe, secure and cost-effective way of payments, both domestically and across borders within SADC,” reads a report on the evolution of the SADC payments systems.

The increase of the transactions from \$680 million in the first month of operations has been described as proof that the initiative works.

SIRESS has not only grown in terms of membership, but it also has 73 banks settling its transactions.

The main aim of SIRESS is to improve efficiency and reduce costs because previously the transactions would go through a correspondent bank. (APA 30-08-2016)

PRES DE 1 000 EMPLOIS VONT ETRE SUPPRIMES A TUNISAIR



Fin juin 2016, Tunisair disposait d'une flotte de 29 avions.

Selon Anis Guedira, le ministre tunisien des Transports, cité par l'agence "Reuters", environ 1 000 emplois vont être supprimés dans les effectifs de la compagnie nationale Tunisair. Environ 400 départs volontaires sont prévus bientôt, ce qui marquerait enfin le début d'application du plan de redressement du transporteur public, approuvé il y a déjà près de trois ans.

Dans une interview accordée à l'agence de presse *Reuters*, le ministre tunisien des Transports **Anis Guedira** – en poste depuis janvier 2016 et reconduit ce mois-ci dans [le nouveau gouvernement de Youssef Chahed](#) – a annoncé la mise en application d'un vaste plan de suppression d'emplois à Tunisair.

Selon Anis Guedira environ 1 000 suppression de postes sont prévues, dont **400 départs volontaires** attendus prochainement, ce qui signalerait (enfin) le début de la mise en oeuvre du plan de redressement de la compagnie aérienne, approuvé dès 2013 mais plusieurs fois repoussé.

Reuters indique que la compagnie publique versera environ 50 millions de dollars en compensation pour les 1 000 employés affectés.

Explosion des effectifs

Tunisair, détenu à près de 75 % par le secteur public, [a vu ses effectifs exploser](#) dans la foulée de la révolution de janvier 2011, avec notamment l'intégration de plus de 3 000 salariés de ses filiales (handling, catering, maintenance...) dans les effectifs de la maison-mère, qui ont grimpé à près de 8 500, soit 230 employés par avion à l'époque, contre 170 employés en moyenne dans les autres compagnies.

Le plan de redressement approuvé en 2013 prévoyait le départ à la retraite anticipée, réparti sur deux années, de 1 700 agents pour un coût estimé à 75 millions de dinars (33 millions d'euros au 31 décembre 2013), pris en charge en partie par l'État à hauteur de 52 millions de dinars, déboursés en deux tranches, le reliquat venant du fonds social de la compagnie aérienne.

Le plan social de Tunisair a été ramené à 1 000 employés par [Sarrah Rejeb, nommée PDG de Tunisair en 2015](#), mais son coût est plus élevé qu'anticipé, de l'ordre de 95 millions de dinars, à la charge de l'État.

Selon Anis Guedira, ces départs ont été planifiées depuis plusieurs mois en accord avec les principaux syndicats de Tunisair, afin de réduire les coûts de la compagnie et améliorer sa compétitivité.

Résultats

Au premier semestre 2016, Tunisair a transporté 1,35 million de passagers, en légère hausse (+3,9 %) par rapport au premier semestre 2015. Ses revenus ont atteint 414,4 millions de dinars (+9,15 % sur un an). Son endettement atteignait 1,03 milliard de dinars à la fin juin 2016. (JA 30-08-2016)

NIGERIA LISTS BENEFITS OF TOKYO CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI

The Presidency has listed the gains of Nigeria's participation in the just concluded Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) to include the billions of dollar to be injected into African economies by Japan.

A statement issued in Abuja on Tuesday by Malam Garba Shehu, the Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to the president, said the Japanese Government had pledged to expend 40 billion dollars to boost the African economies in the next four years.

He gave the breakdown of the amount as 10 billion dollars to be injected in the next 12 months, while the remaining 30 billion dollars would be expended over a three-year period on areas key to African economies, targeting infrastructures such as roads, energy, ports, hospitals and training institutions.

According to him, the TICAD seeks a win-win partnership between Japan and Africa.

He added that a key objective of the conference was to build up African ownership of its own vision of growth and development.

``In furtherance of this, Japan seeks to differ with the other players on the continent by placing emphasis on high quality infrastructure that do more than job creation by transferring technology through the training of youth and women," he said.

According to Shehu, for Nigeria in particular, the conference's milestones include the important meeting between President Buhari and Prime Minister Abe, at which event problems militating against the inflow of Japanese investment into Nigeria were discussed and agreed upon.

He said, ``Japanese companies had done a lot by way of investment in the past in Nigeria but there has noticeably been a drop in the last decade or two. Chiefly to blame is the problem of security, disguised in official discussions as `business environment."

He stated that President Buhari used the meeting effectively in giving assurances that the problem was being addressed. (APA 30-08-2016)

SUN MED FESTIVAL: PROMOTING NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN BUILDINGS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION



The **Sun Med Festival**, the first Solar Energy festival, organised by the ‘Small scale thermal solar district units for Mediterranean communities’ (STS-Med) project, funded by the EU under the CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme, will be hosted by the city of Palermo from 26 September to 2 October 2016.

The aim of this event is to highlight the role of the Sun in the evolution of the Mediterranean civilizations and the opportunities it offers for an eco-friendly future in this area. It will feature more than 50 events including: meetings, workshops, hackathon, games, concerts and alternating workshops, talks and exhibits with some of the economy and innovation leaders.

The event will mark the end of the [STS-Med project](#) which was implemented to promote the adoption of new technologies to improve energy efficiency in public and private buildings of the Mediterranean area. The project implemented **four demonstration plants** based on solar concentration in **Italy, Cyprus, Jordan and Egypt**. The plan constructed inside the University Campus of Palermo will be inaugurated during the course of the Festival.

The **ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2007/2013** is a multilateral cross-border cooperation programme funded by the European Union under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. It aims at reinforcing cooperation between the EU and partner countries' regions located along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. (STS-MED 31-08-2016)

US FUNDS PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN S/LEONE WOMEN FARMERS



A United States-funded project aimed at enhancing women’s role in farming has been launched in Sierra Leone, the American embassy in Freetown announced on Tuesday. The “Network for Nutrition and Gender Integration and Strengthening” was designed to build capacity for increased family nutrition and it is being implemented jointly by the University of Njala and its US counterpart, University of Illinois, the embassy said in a statement.

The Network, it added, is supported by the US government through its Feed the Future Initiative under the ‘INGENEAS’ [Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agriculture Extension Services) project.

INGENEAS is implemented in several other countries.

In Sierra Leone, the opportunity offers Njala University and its US-partner university a chance to build up

on their 50-year partnership through this network, the statement noted.

It went on to say that the Network aimed to develop the capacities of participating organizations to strengthen their extension approaches to better engage farmers and promote gender equitable production methods for improved nutrition in the community.

The project comes as Sierra Leone intensifies its national nutrition campaign. (APA 30-08-2016)

TOP USAID CONTRACTORS FOR 2015

The [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) obligated contract funding for fiscal 2015 reached \$4.8 billion — a \$1 billion increase from its total in [2014](#). This 26 percent budget surge marks the first upward movement in USAID's contract spending in the last three years.

Despite USAID's focus on channeling more foreign aid to local organizations — most notably through the [USAID Forward](#) initiative — the agency continues to award the bulk of its contracts to American firms. In 2015, the top 20 recipients of USAID funding were all U.S.-based organizations. Combined, these transactions account for 70 percent of the total USAID spending for obligated contracts for the year, up slightly from 67 percent in 2014.

The consortium Partnerships for Supply Chain Management received the most USAID contract funding, while international development consulting firm Chemonics was second. In 2015, Chemonics [secured an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity agreement](#), or IDIQ, with USAID to the tune of \$9.5 billion — the largest USAID award to date which could lift the firm into the top place next year.

Meanwhile, four organizations managed to break into the top 20 in fiscal 2015. Checchi and Co. more than doubled its contract funding with \$44 million compared to just \$19 million in 2014. The consulting firm Dexis, formerly a small business, received \$48 million in 2015 versus \$22 million for the previous year. Morganti, meanwhile, significantly increased its winnings from just over \$4 million in 2014 to \$56 million in 2015 and PAE entered the top 20 list receiving \$75 million in USAID contract funding. USAID also channeled \$101 million to an undisclosed domestic contractor.

Below is the complete list of USAID's top contractors for 2015 based on data from USASpending.gov.

1. [Partnership for Supply Chain Management](#)

Founded: 2005

Headquarters: Arlington, Virginia, United States

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$777,635,321

Partnership for Supply Chain Management is a conglomerate of 13 organizations established by [Management Sciences for Health](#) and JSI Research and Training Institute, the nonprofit arm of [John Snow, Inc.](#) Its major programs include a supply chain management system project funded by the [President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief](#) as well as a pooled procurement mechanism program under the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria](#). Four member organizations also won multiple contracts with USAID during fiscal 2015, namely [Booz Allen Hamilton Holding Corporation](#) (\$2,272,836), [Crown Agents Limited](#) (\$8,800,680), [Management Sciences for Health, Inc.](#) (\$36,881,708) and [The Manoff Group, Inc.](#) (\$2,519,817).

2. [Chemonics International, Inc.](#)

Founded: 1975

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States

President and CEO: Susanna Mudge

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$520,333,009

Chemonics is an employee-owned for-profit consulting agency with experience implementing projects in over 150 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe and Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. Its services cover program design, implementation and management, capacity building for local institutions, performance management and evaluation, knowledge management and communication, and corporate social responsibility. Chemonics works in a broad range of sectors

including agriculture, conflict and crisis, democracy and governance, economic development, education and youth, environment, gender and social inclusion, health, supply chain solutions, water, energy and sustainability.

3. John Snow Incorporated

Founded: 1978

Headquarters: Boston, Massachusetts, United States

President: Joel Lamstein

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$415,715,554

John Snow Incorporated is a consultancy firm specializing in public health management. With eight offices in the U.S. and 60 international offices, JSI has implemented projects in over 100 countries. Its range of services include health service planning and delivery, support for health care providers, health services research and evaluation, training and technical assistance, health information technology, health communication, as well as conference and event planning.

4. Tetra Tech, Inc.

Founded: 1966

Headquarters: Pasadena, California, United States

Chairman, CEO, and President: Dan L. Batrack

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$359,240,310

Tetra Tech's programs for international development cover a wide range of areas including agriculture, environment and sustainability, water, energy, governance and the rule of law, security and infrastructure. With 400 offices worldwide and a staff size reaching 16,000, Tetra Tech mainly provides practical research and technical services, as well as design, implementation and management services for programs and construction activities. The company currently has 13 subsidiaries including [Management Systems International](#), which won USAID contracts amounting to \$126,874,406 in fiscal 2015.

5. DAI

Founded: 1970

Headquarters: Bethesda, Maryland, United States

President and CEO: James Boomgard

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$272,429,308

A global consultancy, DAI implements projects across several regions including Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. With a staff size of almost 3,000, DAI's work focuses on economic development, environment and sustainability, governance, ICT, global health, stability and business development. In late 2013, DAI [took ownership](#) of HTSPE, a global consultancy firm based in the U.K.

6. AECOM

Founded: 1990

Headquarters: Los Angeles, California, United States

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer: Michael S. Burke

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$150,059,632

With a staff size of 2,000, AECOM carries out its international development initiatives in over 100 countries. Its areas of expertise include infrastructure development, agriculture and economic development, democracy, human rights and governance, social development, and disaster and crisis management. In late 2014, AECOM acquired URS Corp., an engineering firm based in San Francisco that focuses its development work in Asia and the Pacific region.

7. Abt Associates

Founded: 1965

Headquarters: Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States

President and CEO: Kathleen L. Flanagan

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$143,578,474

Abt Associates currently works in nearly 50 countries doing research and program implementation. Its focus areas include education, environment and climate change, food security and agriculture, health, community development, income security and workforce development. Its subsidiaries include [Abt JTA](#), a consulting firm focusing on health and social development in Australia and Asia-Pacific, and Abt SRBI, a research and strategy organization that delivers policy and opinion surveys in various sectors including health, education and workforce development, finance, transportation and utilities.

8. [RTI International](#)

Founded: 1958

Headquarters: Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, United States

President and CEO: E. Wayne Holden

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$106,177,372

RTI International is a nonprofit, independent research institute working in over 75 countries with a staff size reaching 4,000. In international development, RTI uses its research capabilities to design programs and provide advisory and training services in areas of global health, education, governance, and workforce and economic development.

9. [IRG, an Engility Company](#)

Founded: 1978

Headquarters: Alexandria, Virginia, United States

Chief Executive Officer: Lynn A. Dugle

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$82,466,915

With 38 years of development experience, IRG, an Engility Company focuses on delivering innovative solutions in key development sectors including agriculture and food security, biodiversity conservation, climate change resiliency, disaster preparedness and stabilization, economic growth, energy, integrated learning solutions, and water, sanitation and hygiene. IRG has managed more than 850 international development contracts in 140 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. These contracts include small, focused tasks as well as large, multi-county projects and regional projects.

10. [PAE](#)

Founded: 1955

Headquarters: Arlington, Virginia, United States

Chief Executive Officer: John Heller

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$75,147,354

Apart from USAID, PAE works with various U.S. government agencies in areas of aviation, capacity building and stabilization, infrastructure, logistics, information management and security. PAE has presence in over 60 countries and commands a workforce of 15,000 individuals. Earlier this year, PAE was acquired by Platinum Equity.

11. [FHI 360](#)

Headquarters: Durham, North Carolina, United States

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$63,021,701

12. [Morganti](#)

Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut, United States

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$56,350,972

13. [CAMRIS International](#)

Headquarters: Bethesda, Maryland, United States

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$54,465,293

14. [ICF International](#)

Headquarters: Fairfax, Virginia, United States

Obligated USAID contract funding: \$50,583,810

15. [Dexis](#)

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$48,658,930

16. [Deloitte](#)

Headquarters: New York, New York, United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$46,905,855

17. [Checchi and Company](#)

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$44,141,899

18. [Fintrac](#)

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$44,001,483

19. [Creative Associates International](#)

Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$43,067,478

20. [IBM](#)

Headquarters: Armonk, New York, United States
 Obligated USAID contract funding: \$37,556,140

Check out more [practical business and development advice online](#), and subscribe to [Money Matters](#) to receive the latest contract award and shortlist announcements, and procurement and fundraising news. (Update, June 2, 2016)

NIGERIA, UK SIGN MOU ON RETURN OF STOLEN ASSETS

The Nigerian Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British Government on the modalities for the return of Nigerian stolen assets.

The Attorney-General of the Federation, Mr. Abubakar Malami, signed on behalf of the Federal Government in Abuja on Tuesday.

Malami said that the MoU reflected the desire and willingness of both countries to continue cooperation and mutual support.

According to him, this is responsible and transparent return of all recovered assets.

He outlined the objectives of the MoU to include the fact that the processes of returning stolen assets was a partnership recognising the interest of both countries and based on mutual understanding, confidence and trust.

"That both countries recognised that they have a mutual interest in ensuring that returned assets are not at risk of being misappropriated again.

"And that both countries recognised they have obligations toward their own citizens for providing such assurances.

"That both countries recognised the importance of ensuring that the highest possible standard of transparency and accountability are applied for the return of assets," he said.

He assured the international community that all funds recovered would be judiciously utilised for projects that would benefit the poorest segment of the Nigerian society.

Earlier, the leader of the UK delegation, British Minister of State for Immigration, Robert Goodwill, said that the MoU provided the mechanism by which monies could be returned.

Goodwill, who is also a member of the British Parliament, noted that there was no safe place for stolen assets in the UK.

He noted that their ability to recover and return stolen assets should send a clear message to all who may seek to harbour such assets that there is no safe haven in the U.K.

According to him, the British government is committed to the return of all funds looted from the Nigerian State.

The signing of the MoU is a follow up to the agreement reached at the London anti-corruption Summit in May (APA 30-08-2016)

The Memorandum is supported by the ACP-African, Caribbean, Pacific Secretariat, Chamber of Commerce Tenerife, AHEAD-GLOBAL, Business Council for Africa, Corporate Council on Africa, ELO - Portuguese Association for Economic Development and Cooperation, Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development, HTCC - Hungarian Trade & Cultural Centre, NABA - Norwegian-African Business Association, NABC- Netherlands Africa Business Council, SwissCham-Africa and other organisations.

The Memorandum is also made available by AHEAD-GLOBAL, BCA, Chamber of Tenerife (by posting it at the Africa Info Market), CCA - Corporate Council on Africa (USA), ELO, HTCC, NABA, NABC (by posting selected news) and SwissCham-Africa to their Members.



www.acp.int



www.aheadglobal.hu



www.bcafrica.co.uk



www.camaratenerife.com



www.africacncl.org



www.elo-online.org



www.helafrican-chamber.gr



www.htcc.org.hu



www.norwegianafrican.no



www.nabc.nl



www.swisscham-africa.ch



U.S.-AFRICA INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE
BUILDING BLUE ECONOMIES
 October 16-18, 2016 | New Orleans, LA



U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference
Building Blue Economies

October 16-18, 2016
 Hyatt Regency New Orleans, Louisiana

With the launch of “Harnessing the Blue Economy in Achieving the African Union Agenda 2063,” African nations formalized their strategy to highlight the pivotal role of the maritime sector for the continent’s development. The strategy is aimed at highlighting security concerns as well as driving the effort to maximize the continent’s maritime potential to its fullest.

As traditional maritime practices including fishing and shipping have grown, so have security concerns including coastal environment degradation and piracy - costing nations billions of dollars in lost revenue. This current outlook can be transformed through well-planned strategic and economic solutions. Developing Africa’s Blue Economies present tremendous business opportunities for companies with the knowledge to develop the infrastructure for robust maritime, riverine and lacustrine industries.

Corporate Council on Africa’s U.S.-Africa Infrastructure Conference: Building Blue Economies will seek to highlight the numerous emerging business opportunities in Africa’s growing coastal frontiers.

Date: 10/16/2016 02:00 pm - 10/18/2016 07:00 pm

Location: Hyatt Regency New Orleans

Contact Name: [Vivienne Sequeira / vsequeira@corporatethecouncilonafrika.com](mailto:Vivienne.Sequeira@corporatethecouncilonafrika.com)

Contact Phone: (202) 263-3501

Last Day to Register: 10/15/2016

Fernando Matos Rosa

fernando.matos.rosa@sapo.pt

fernando.matos.rosa@skynet.be