



Biznet Weekly Issue 13

Inside this Week's Issue – 07/05/18.



COMESA – Connect- Industry Dialogue – “Smart Technologies for Sustainable Businesses”



The COMESA CONNECT Industry Dialogue will be held from 21st to 22nd June 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda. The event will be held under the theme; **“Smart Technologies, Sustainable Industries”**. The Dialogue seeks to structure strategic efforts towards harnessing today’s digital solutions to respond to the needs of our industries in the region. It is in this regard, that **COMESA**

Integrating ICT into business is a cross cutting advocacy and business facilitation agenda under the CBC. It is a call from the membership to respond to the need for industries to harness digital services solutions as a means of improving company operations.

- Establish a collective understanding and strategic focus on the potential of

blockchain and other technologies for supporting trade and trade facilitation as well as the other business and industry within the African region.

- Address the constraints that affect business competitiveness in the region and promote synergies between industry and IT to promote the use of technology and growth of African private sector.
- Structure policy recommendations to ensure the use of technology address

digital financial inclusion, industry competitiveness and revolutionary innovations for competitive sustainable enterprises.

- Address the ideal structures that to ensure data protection policies in the region
- Increase awareness and strengthen the national and regional intellectual property framework.

How to attend

REGISTER NOW;
INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS- 300 US\$
REGIONAL PARTICIPANTS- 200US\$
LOCAL PARTICIPANTS- 50US\$
EXHIBITION- SHOWCASE YOUR INNOVATIONS- REGISTRATION APPLIES

To participate in this meeting, contact CBC. Please note the meeting offers a limited number of seats- on a first come, first serve basis. Registration is free. Kindly submit your name and business profile to – kmadzivanyika@comesa.int , or GTembo@comesa.int , or RBanda@comesa.int .

Kenya’s MSMEs Get a boost



The Kenya Chamber of Commerce and Industry have signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Italian based, E4Impact foundation an accelerator that will fund, incubate and mentor 20 local businesses annually with the aim of boosting entrepreneurship in Kenya.

The MoU signed by Kenya Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO Angela Ndambuki and E4Impact director, Mario Molteni in Nairobi will allow both organizations to jointly spur growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME’s) in Kenya, foster North-South collaborations through the creation of favorable links between KNCCI and Italian companies, enhance green technological transfer from Europe to Kenya and engage in joint projects for the mutual benefits of MSMEs.

“Today is a great day for MSMEs in Kenya as some 20 start-ups can now be assured of funding as well as training as a result of our partnership with E4Impact. We realize that the lack of capital and capacity to run businesses remains among the greatest challenges that businesses continue to face especially in emerging economies like Kenya,” said Angela Ndambuki.

The accelerator will host 20 Kenyan every year, so as to support their growth, increase their revenues, guide them toward profitability

and impact. KNCCI will also offer the businesses a one-year free membership to non-member startups that are taken into the accelerator programme.

The Italian Agency for Development Co-operation has already disbursed €542,000 which will be channeled through the E4Impact accelerator to enable the 20 local businesses get business support, increase their revenues, receive mentoring towards profitability and impact as well as enable them partner with Italian businesses. The businesses will also have access to seed grants based on milestone attainment, better relationship with potential investors and financial institutions and links to interested Italian companies for partnerships.

Read More on;

<https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/kenyas-chamber-of-commerce-in-pact-to-boost-entrepreneurship/>

Zimbabwean Industry Players challenges Mnangagwa



The Zimbabwean local industry says government should create a conducive environment for the sector private to up capacity utilisation. The call was in response to President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who recently exhorted "all players in industry and

commerce to produce quality products, increase industrial capacity utilisation, think outside the box, innovate and use technology as well as appropriate solutions to reduce productivity costs and enhance product competitiveness".

Association for Business in Zimbabwe CEO Victor Nyoni disclosed to Standard business the constraints faced by business related to the macro-economic environment and government policies.

"Businesses are in a crisis and cannot just increase capacity utilisation on a word of encouragement no matter how well meaning it is," he said. Nyoni said business and government had to come together for a solution on how nostro accounts could be funded in order to finance importation of raw materials that would support local production. He said this would help build up Zimbabwe's exports, adding that production of quality products was an outcome of a functioning economy.

He said the call by Mnangagwa was encouraging, but it needed to go beyond rhetoric. "Government has to be careful that it does not get trapped in mantras without walking the talk," Nyoni said. "As businesses, it is in our best interest to increase capacity utilisation and improve the quality of our products. This is how we make money in any case."

Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce [ZNCC] president Divine Ndhlukula said industry was hamstrung by limited access to finance to acquire new machinery and replace obsolete equipment, foreign currency

shortages to import raw materials, high cost of production and transportation and competition from smuggled goods as well as the informal sector.

"Industry is failing to import raw materials because of foreign currency shortages and this has an impact on production levels," she said. "Also business finds it difficult to pay suppliers leading to low supply levels. This promotes arbitrage opportunities for speculators. "Basic physical infrastructure required for economic development, such as good roads and good rail transportation facilities, is not in good shape and needs to be revived to reduce the cost of doing business." Ndhlukula said smuggling remained rampant

at the ports of entry and this needed to be addressed.

"Business is facing competition from unregistered informal sector players competing unfairly with the registered formal sector players who offer similar products or services but with added fiscal obligations," she said. The ZNCC boss said government should strengthen the operating environment and not crowd out private investment through chronic fiscal deficits, which end up increasing the cost of funds as well as sovereign risk.

Read more on; <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-national-byo-134789.html>

Preps for Rwanda Trade Fair 2018 Underway



Preparations are already underway for the 2018 edition of Rwanda International Trade Fair (RITF). The exhibition, organised by the Private Sector Federation, is scheduled to run from July 26 through August 15 at the Gikondo Expo Grounds, Kigali Speaking to The New Times, Eric Kabeera, the head of communications and marketing at PSF, said this year's show is expected to attract over 500

business entities from 20 countries around the world. He said the annual fair will feature multiple sectors, from ICT and Agro-business to manufacturing, construction and textile.

"The whole idea is to provide a platform to connect Rwandan investors to foreign counterparts to help create the market for local products, and improve their competitiveness," he said.

The exhibition is expected to promote locally made products as well as link local businesses to their international counterparts for experience sharing and potential partnerships. The exhibition will also serve as a platform to attract foreign companies to consider setting up a presence in the country, organisers say.

Shaffy Hagenimana, the managing director of Holy Trust Limited Company – which is involved in manufacturing cosmetics –, said that, as an exhibitor, he intends to network with international firms for potential partnership. "As businesses we are happy that

they extended the expo period by a week,” Hagenimana said.

Agriculture to receive 10% of budget



The speaker of Parliament of Uganda, Rebecca Kadaga has assured Ugandan farmers that government will very soon respect the Malabo declaration which calls for African states to allocate 10% of their national budget to agriculture.

The speaker who was launching the skills development program for farmers in Kamuli district at the farmers’ association headquarters said government and parliament are committed to ensure that the performance of the agriculture sector improves so that Ugandan will earn more from the sector.

“We have been trying hard to push for this 10% allocation to agriculture in the past years, but now I can assure you we are going to see this soon, I promise you, soon, agriculture shall get its glory” said Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga

The speaker challenged farmers in Kamuli district to ensure that their children participate in the Agriculture sector instead of leaving it

<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/business/preps-rwanda-trade-fair-2018-underway>

to the ageing population. She noted that the younger generation has the capacity to adopt modern farming practices and once such practices are adopted they can push up the performance of the sector.

Kamuli District Farmers Association chairperson, Vincent Galisansana asked the speaker to fast track the budget allocation to enable Ugandan farmers to access better resources for better production if the sector is to perform better.

“As farmers from Kamuli District we challenge you as our leaders to ensure that Government allocates enough resources in the sector, this will enable local farmers to access cheap agricultural inputs on the market .The local farmers currently cannot afford to buy agro related inputs because they are expensive thus keeping farmers in traditional farming systems “ He said.

The president of Uganda national farmer’s federation Dr. Dick Nuwamanya Kamuganga assured farmers that the federation in partnership with the private sector is going to work together to ensure that farmers have access to quality agricultural inputs.

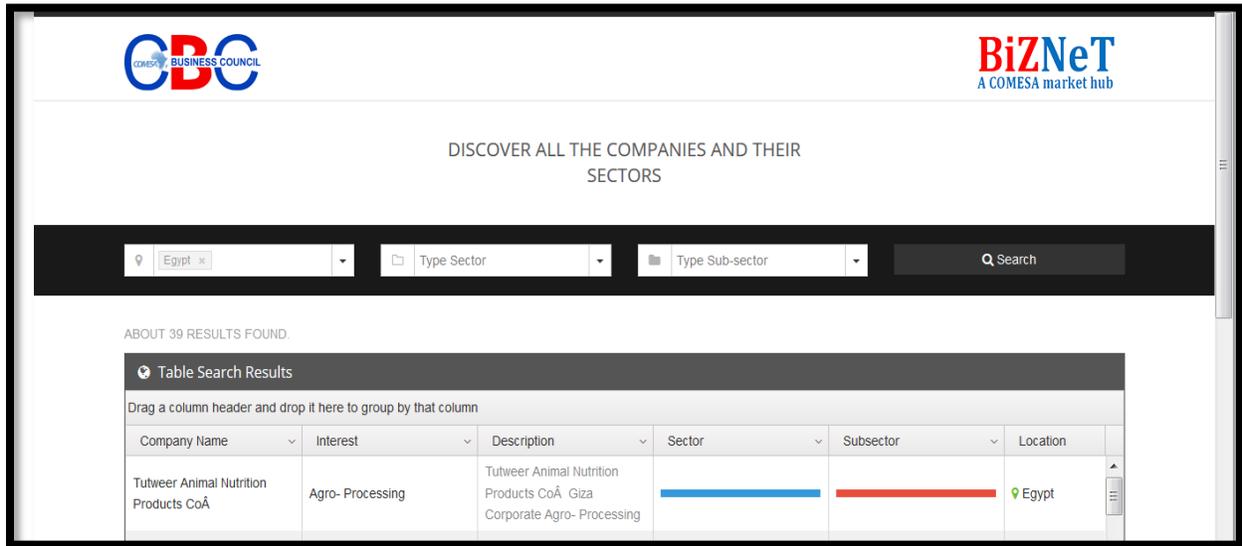
He added that the federation through the skills development program will train Ugandan farmers with basic farming skills which he said will help them to improve their production level. Under this program, the farmers’ federation intends to equip over 500 farmer groups with basic skills in agro business and agronomy.

<http://www.busiweek.com/agriculture-to-receive-10-of-budget/>

CBC Biznet – Get Connected Now.

The COMESA Business council has upped the game for regional buyers and suppliers by widening the online interactive market portal. The portal currently has more than 2000 buyers and suppliers that are transacting from across the

region in more than 34 sectors. Be part of the winning team and get integrated in regional markets by signing up for the CBC Biznet TODAY!!



Visit our website on <http://comesabusinesscouncil.org> and look out for BIZNET in the main menu of the website. Once you log onto the page sign up and follow through the simple and straight forward registration steps.



CBC MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1 Principal Members	Private Sector national business association representing various sectors of national economies of member states and other corporate companies. The annual subscription fee is USD 2000
2 Honorary/ Corporate Members	National and multi-National corporate companies and other interest groups. The annual subscription fee is USD 5000
3 Associate Members	Eligible are national business associations, investment and Export promotion agency, trade support institutions, regional associations and other associations directly or indirectly related to private sector issues. The annual membership fee is USD 2500
4 Emerging Businesses	Business startups, Small and Medium Enterprise. The Annual membership fee is USD 1000.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

1. Advocacy excellence in the region – influence decisions at the highest levels of policy decision makers in COMESA.
2. Regional brand recognition as a business through CBC
3. Market intelligence and analysis to inform trade, investment and joint venture decisions.
4. Increased partnerships in regional and global markets.
5. Business facilitation in regional and global markets through trade promotion, linkages and advisory services.
6. Industry collaboration through CBC memberships for efficiency and sustainability of enterprises and associations.

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