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Highlights

Kenya on the Move

UNCTAD’s Secretary-General, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives, H.E. Adan Mohamed, and Mr. Jack Ma, UNCTAD Special Advisor for Youth Entrepreneurship and Small Business, the founder and executive chairman of Alibaba Group inaugurated the Empretec Kenya Centre hosted by the Kenya Institute for Business Training. As a follow up sessions, a four-day international training of trainers’ workshops brought together 21 Empretec trainers from African countries and beyond. A regional workshop for Africa “Financial Inclusion: Best Policy Practice and Guidelines on Accounting and Insurance regulation for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs)” was also held, paving the way for improvement in SMEs access to finance in the Continent.

Empretec Global Summit IV: Developing cross-border business linkages

UNCTAD successfully organized its fourth edition of the Empretec Global Summit held during the Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC) in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 15 March 2017. The main objective of the Summit was to offer new opportunities for Empretec graduates to internationalize their businesses, create cross-border B2B links, identify potential funding sources and forge new partnerships. This year the Summit consisted of a master class on international business networking skills and a panel on Empretec promotion. For the course, 60 participants were pre-selected out of 150 registrants for this event within 2 hours and more than 150 additional requests were made by participants for a further business partner search across the Empretec centers worldwide. This clearly reflects a high demand on cross border business ventures and related skills development.
First Edition Youth Connekt Africa in Rwanda

The Enterprise Hub mobilized on 20 July 2017 young entrepreneurs coming from Empretec, the International Trade Centre, the Commonwealth and the Francophonie networks. They prepared to exercise the famous elevator pitch in front of the young audience followed by exchanges with corporate leaders, impact investors and philanthropists on how new products and policies can be introduced to create new business opportunities in Africa with impact on development. Funding opportunities materialized for start-ups.

https://www.facebook.com/unctadempretec/videos/1241621372610790/

Regional Actions to foster Entrepreneurship in Africa

Ministers and high-level officials responsible for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) development representing 12 African countries, met in South Africa on 13 March 2017, to discuss the potential for entrepreneurs to help the continent achieve the targets set out in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The meeting was organized by UNCTAD, with the support of the South African Government and in partnership with the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN) and within the Global Entrepreneurship Congress. Ministers focused on the ways in which African governments, collectively create an "enabling ecosystem" by removing regulatory red tape, improving education and skills, creating better access to finance, raising public awareness, and driving innovation in even the smallest firms by spurring the digital economy.

XXII Empretec Directors Meeting

The Empretec Directors' Meeting, organized annually, gives Empretec directors and the UNCTAD team an opportunity to update vital information, share best practices and discuss challenges ahead. On 6-7 December 2016, the directors of fourteen centres gathered in Geneva. UNCTAD presented the progress made in the area of entrepreneurship policy and invited the directors to participate in the Trade and Development Board (TDB) session on “Facilitating investment and fostering local entrepreneurs”, where investment facilitation and enhanced local supply capacity through business linkages was discussed. Expanding business linkage cooperation is of great relevance to UNCTAD and the Empretec Centres.

Recent activities in Latin America and Africa provided new opportunities to reflect on the harmonization of Empretec training material. Further progress in measuring the impact of the Empretec programme was shown thanks to two recent assessment exercises; one study was conducted in Saudi Arabia, and a second research project took place in Panama, a collaboration between Empretec Panama and researchers from the Politecnico di Milano (Italy). Empretec outreach, communication policies and facilitation of B2B links were also discussed.
UNCTAD’s E-Commerce Week: Youth Employment in the Digital Economy

Over 450 youth from around the world participated, both physically and virtually, in UNCTAD’s E-Commerce Week, from the 24 to 28 of April 2017. The Youth session conveyed the message that e-commerce offers the opportunity to chart a new path for globalization, and holds huge potential to drive inclusive and sustainable development. This third edition had the honor of hosting Jack Ma, CEO and founder of Ali Baba who, as UNCTAD Special Advisor for Youth Entrepreneurship and Small Business, said the future belongs to “netpreneurs”, or digital entrepreneurs. For young entrepreneurs, technology skills and access to technology greatly improve productivity, lower costs and advance their businesses into higher value-added activities, thus enhancing their market competitiveness.

The 63rd session of the Trade and Development Board (TDB)

The TDB session, representing the executive board of UNCTAD, offers a platform to discuss policy issues, management and institutional matters. The session which took place on 6 December 2016 placed UNCTAD’s Division on Investment and Enterprise at the forefront of international investment policymaking. The importance of investment facilitation to guide foreign direct investments towards the achievement of sustainable development goals has been underlined, as well as the complementarity between investment promotion and support to entrepreneurship. The session discussed measures to support local entrepreneurs in adding value to their enterprises, to develop mechanisms that facilitate access to capital, and then encourage the creation of community groups that can benefit from empowerment funds, loans and guarantees funds. These are all incentives to develop the private sector through investment and entrepreneurship. ([http://unctad.org/en/Pages/Meetings/TDB.aspx](http://unctad.org/en/Pages/Meetings/TDB.aspx))

Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) 2016- Entrepreneurship and Migration

The increasing movement of people is a challenge that the international community and its member states, the private sector and civil society need to respond to. UNCTAD answered the call and organized two panel discussions, in collaboration with UNDP, OIM, WIPO and the U.S. Mission, on the topic of Entrepreneurship and Migration on 15 November, during the GEW 2016 ([http://gew.co/](http://gew.co/)). Economic policies of home and host countries need to take into account the imposing economic and social forces represented by migrants. This event enabled experts, academics and policy makers to discuss the way in which economic policies can unlock the opportunities offered by migration to trigger economic development and innovation, and to reduce inequality and social tension.

Ms. Laura Thomson, Deputy Secretary-General at IOM, Mr. James Zhan, Director of Division on Investment and Enterprise at UNCTAD, Ms. Patrice D. Juah, Director at Moie fashion (Geneva, Switzerland)
Updates on Entrepreneurship Policies

Sharing best practices on Entrepreneurship Policy in Latin America

The Regional Workshop on Entrepreneurship Policies Implementation is a new platform for discussion, stemming from the need to share best practices on entrepreneurship policy at the regional level. UNCTAD contributed to entrepreneurship policies in the Dominican Republic and Ecuador and subsequently organized a regional workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean. It was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 30 November to 2 December 2016 in collaboration with Empretec Argentina Foundation, the Ministry of Production of Argentina and Prodem Argentina. During the three-day workshop, 45 speakers from several Latin American countries and regional organizations made presentations during the fifteen sessions set up for the event. Close to 200 delegates exchanged experiences and perspectives on the status of entrepreneurship on the continent and stressed the importance of addressing the issue of entrepreneurship from a regional perspective. It is a way to ensure that public policies are keeping up with the dynamism of the global economy. Participants suggested several priority initiatives to be undertaken at the regional level, such as the simplification of administrative procedures to create new regional enterprises (the creation of a single visa for the entrepreneur), more support for the creation of start-ups with environmental / social impact and the formation of mentor networks to favour entrepreneurship for women.

Finalizing the Entrepreneurship Policy for The Gambia

An entrepreneurship policy workshop was organized jointly by MOTIE, GIEPA and UNCTAD, on 12-13 October 2016. It gave the different stakeholders an opportunity to examine the Entrepreneurship Policy, with the support of UNCTAD, and to provide final comments to a document that brings coherence to the economic development strategy of The Gambia. The challenges and opportunities of climate change were addressed, as well as the need to give women entrepreneurs prospects for equitable development. The participants also discussed the Action Plan that will affect other areas of public policy. Examples of initiatives are the integration of entrepreneurship into formal education, building the capacity of the financial sector to serve start-ups and supporting the diffusion of ICT into the private sector.

Supporting high-growth entrepreneurship and innovation in Thailand

Entrepreneurship policy can be implemented at the regional level, the country level or the institutional level, i.e. at the level of universities. UNCTAD responded to a request made by the Government of Thailand, which is currently promoting entrepreneurship, start-ups and entrepreneurial universities. A workshop on this topic was organized in Bangkok from 28-30 November 2016. The objective of the workshop was to identify specific actions that Thai universities and other national actors can carry out in order to build entrepreneurial ecosystems and support high-growth and technology-based entrepreneurship.
Regional events

**SME Financial Inclusion in Kenya, July 2017**

UNCTAD conducted a regional workshop for Africa “Financial Inclusion: Best Policy Practice and Guidelines on Accounting and Insurance regulation for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs)” held on 19-20 July 2017. The event gathered senior government officials, heads of regulatory authorities for accounting and insurance, professional bodies, the private sector, and multilateral organizations with geographical representation from eleven countries. Directors from several Empretec centers participated in the workshop, including Benin, Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe and greatly contributed to the success of the workshop [https://youtu.be/iK9k4QGsVkM](https://youtu.be/iK9k4QGsVkM).

**Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC) in Daegu, Korea - August 2016**

The GEC [http://gec.co/](http://gec.co/), a spin-off from the Global Entrepreneurship Week, is the annual gathering of people interested in bringing about an effective entrepreneurial eco-system. It gathers entrepreneurs, policy makers, experts and academics from around the world. The last regional GEC, organized in Daegu, Republic of Korea on 24-26 August 2016, was in fact a GEC +, a “deep-dive” event, which shed new light on research and analytical tools for practitioner working in the field of entrepreneurship development. It generated and focused discussions on approaches for collecting data to measure the development of the entrepreneurial mind-set. Ms. Fiorina Mugione, Chief of the Entrepreneurship Section at UNCTAD, delivered a keynote speech and participated in a panel on entrepreneurship education.

**Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) in Monterrey, Mexico - November 2016**

UNCTAD participated in INCmty [http://incmty.com/?lang=en](http://incmty.com/?lang=en) - Innovate, Network, Create, “The greatest entrepreneurship festival in Latin America” as it has become known, was held in Monterrey on 17-19 November 2016. It is an official GEW event, which brings together thousands of entrepreneurs, investors, and organizations of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The aim is to share knowledge, create, stimulate high impact companies and initiatives and promote innovating entrepreneurship. The UNCTAD presentations were well received and the interaction with global experts on the entrepreneurial mind-set and ecosystem was very constructive.

**SME Financial Inclusion in Medellin, Colombia - November 2016**

Organized on 28-29 November 2016 as part of a Development Account capacity-building initiative, UNCTAD held a high-level regional workshop in Medellin on SME financial inclusion. It was attended by key policy regulators and experts in financial inclusion for SMEs in Latin America. The workshop sought to facilitate the sharing of best practices and to enable the development of action-oriented strategies in accounting and insurance for SMEs, with a view to enhancing their access to finance and insurance services. UNCTAD delivered the workshop with the support of partner EAFIT University. The workshop highlighted the importance of facilitating collaboration between different stakeholders and policy makers in the area of access to finance. It also addressed the implementation of capacity-building tools that draw on international best practices and benchmarks as well as the need for support adapted to the needs and capabilities of small companies.

Representatives from UNCTAD and senior government officials from Latin America and the Caribbean (Medellin, Colombia)
News from Empretec

Cameroon

UNCTAD and the Ministry of SME, Social Economy and Handicraft organized an Entrepreneurship Policy workshop in Yaoundé, Cameroon from 15-17 May 2017. The Minister Prof. Laurent S. Etoundi Ngoa stressed the relevance of the coming entrepreneurship policy to accompany Cameroon on its path to emergence at the horizon 2035. He pointed out the need to canalize the energy of the youth and women for an effective and impactful implementation of the policy. 70 participants attended group sessions dedicated to developing the national entrepreneurship strategy.

Switzerland

The Empretecos who took part in the first Swiss Empretec master class can testify that it was a success. Conducted on 14-19 November 2016 in the Palais des Nations in Geneva and facilitated by two leading Empretec trainers, the objectives of this class were to expand the Empretec network and to create the basis for stronger North-South collaboration.

Gambia

From 8-23 August 2016, the Empretec Centre of The Gambia certified 13 local Empretec trainers. The closing ceremony was attended by a representative of the Ministry of Finance, the Director of GIEPA, the UNDP Resident Representative as well as several high-level government officials. Already the 700 Empretecos trained in this small country have a significant impact. Scaling up the programme in formal and on-formal education is therefore a priority.

Malaysia

UNCTAD and the National Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Malaysia (NAWEM) organized a pilot Empretec Workshop from 22-28 August 2016. 10 women and 16 men were identified to attend the pilot Empretec workshop. All 26 participants successfully completed the workshop and received certification.

Saudi Arabia

A recent impact survey was conducted on 165 Empretecos who attended Empretec workshops in Saudi Arabia in 2014-2015. The impact assessment found positive effects of the training on job creation (+49% on average) and sales growth (over 60% of the enterprises recorded a positive trend on sales after the workshop).

Panama

A team from the Politecnico di Milano (Italy) conducted field research measuring the impact of entrepreneurship training programmes in Panama through experimental methods, which included comparing a set of indicators covering four macro-areas. The research was conducted with the support and appreciated collaboration of the Empretec centre in Panama. Final results will be shared with the Empretec network in the coming months.

News from Business Linkages programmes

Benin

From 18-23 September 2016 in Cotonou, Benin, UNCTAD in collaboration with CaPEPE (http://cepepe.org/) organized a sensitization workshop on the opportunities offered by the Business Linkages programme. 20 suppliers of Accor Group (http://www.accorhotels-group.com/en.html) attended the workshop, highlighting potential benefits for participating companies and the role played by the different actors involved.

Argentina

Argentina launched a modified version of the business linkages programme called “Communities of Values”. This will link local communities with entrepreneurs around projects with high social return for the community.
Upcoming Events

Global Entrepreneurship Week

UNCTAD, in collaboration with WIPO, the Polytechnic University of Milan, Youth Business International and Impact Hub Geneva invite young entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas during the Global Entrepreneurship Week.

Impact investors and cutting hedge experts will provide feedback to young start-ups on how to promote sustainable and inclusive growth through Entrepreneurship.

Event at Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

14 November 2017

Pitchers will have the opportunity to win an equity fund of US$ 15,000 or a grant of US$ 5,000. The prizes are sponsored by ONE CREATION Cooperative, a Swiss investment cooperative whose commitments reflect the combination of social, economic and environmental priorities.

Be in the know

Books & Articles

The Third Wave: An Entrepreneur's Vision of the Future
http://tinyurl.com/j74tfmn

Videos

Entrepreneurs without borders - Course Introduction
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO8cz8yZGcY

Our refugee system is failing. Here’s how we can fix it
http://tinyurl.com/go3jl9r