

TECHNOLOGY

COVID-19 fast-forwards digital business solutions **P22**

POWER

Smart grid market set to grow up to 2025 **P32**

CONSTRUCTION

Demand for formwork services rises in East Africa **P40**

MINING

De-watering technology continues to improve mining operations **P45**

African Review

SEPTEMBER 2020

of BUSINESS and TECHNOLOGY

HEAVY HAULER SPECIAL

P39

How next-generation heavy haulers are improving performance and safety

SIERRA LEONE DIVERSIFIES

P18

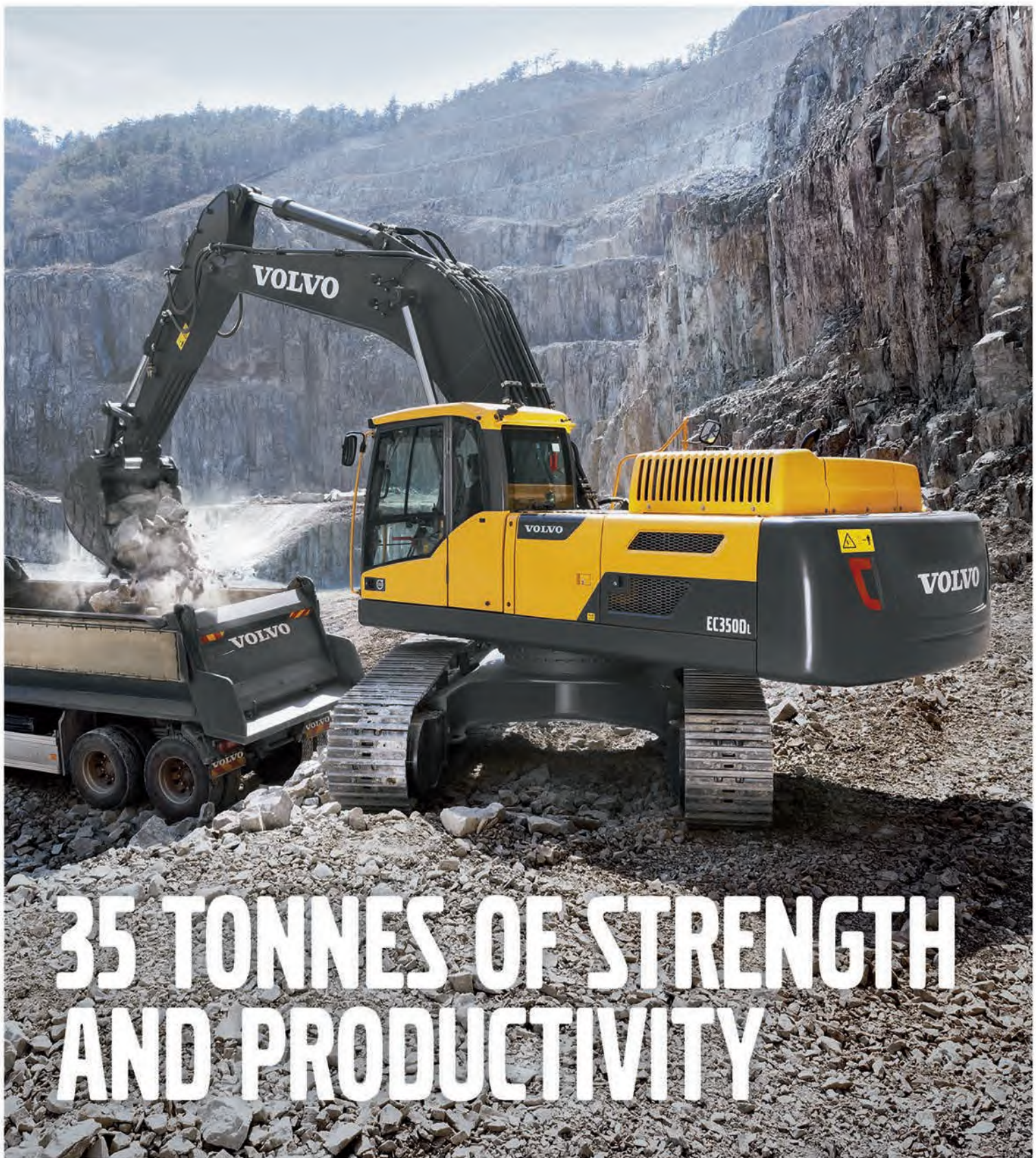
Will the nation broaden its economy to ensure growth amid global pandemic?



26

"COVID-19 is a burning platform for change and reform in Africa's health sector"
ABCHealth chairman,
Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede

56
YEARS
SERVING BUSINESS IN
AFRICA SINCE 1964



When we set out to make our 35 tonne excavator, we wanted to put strength and productivity first. So we put in a Volvo D8 engine to give it high performance yet with superb fuel economy. We gave it a Volvo CareCab – acknowledged as being probably the best operator environment in the market today, with climate control as standard. And we gave it a strong, reinforced undercarriage and frame to help it survive even the roughest of terrains. We believe this makes it the best excavator in its class. We think you'll believe it too. Talk to your local Volvo dealership today.

volvoce.com

Volvo Construction Equipment
Building Tomorrow





Cover picture: The new Volvo FH will be arriving in South Africa in mid-2021

© Volvo Trucks

Cover Inset: Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, ABCHealth chairman
© ABCHealth

Editor: Samantha Payne

Email: samantha.payne@alaincharles.com

Editorial and Design team: Mariam Ahmad, Prashanth AP, Fyna Ashwath Miriam Brtkova, Praveen CP, Manojkumar K, Nonalynka Nongrum Abhishek Paul, Rahul Puthenveedu, Deblina Roy and Louise Waters

Managing editor: Georgia Lewis

Contributing editor: Martin Clark

Publisher: Nick Fordham

Sales Manager: Richard Rozelaar

Email: richard.rozelaar@alaincharles.com

Magazine Manager: Serenella Ferraro

Tel: +44 207 834 7676 Fax: +44 207 973 0076

Email: serenella.ferraro@alaincharles.com

India **TANMAY MISHRA**
Tel: +91 98800 75908
Email: tanmay.mishra@alaincharles.com

Nigeria **BOLA OLOWO**
Tel: +234 80 34349299
Email: bola.olowo@alaincharles.com

UAE **MURSHID MUSTAFA**
Tel: +971 4 448 9260 Fax: +971 4 448 9261
Email: murshid.mustafa@alaincharles.com

UK **RICHARD ROZELAAR**
Tel: +44 20 7834 7676 Fax: +44 20 7973 0076
Email: richard.rozelaar@alaincharles.com

USA **MICHAEL TOMASHEFSKY**
Tel: +1 203 226 2882 Fax: +1 203 226 7447
Email: michael.tomashefsky@alaincharles.com

Head Office: Alain Charles Publishing Ltd, University House, 11-13 Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EX, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)20 7834 7676, Fax: +44 (0)20 7973 0076

Middle East Regional Office: Alain Charles Middle East FZ-LLC, Office L2-112, Loft Office 2, Entrance B, PO Box 502207, Dubai Media City, UAE,
Tel: +971 4 448 9260, Fax: +971 4 448 9261

Production: Srinidhi Chikkars, Swati Gupta, Nelly Mendes and Arjun S
E-mail: production@alaincharles.com

Chairman: Derek Fordham

Printed by: Buxton Press

Printed in: AUGUST 2020

ISSN: 0954 6782

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Rates for one year (11 issues):

Europe €107, Kenya KSh3400, Nigeria N6600, South Africa R460, United Kingdom £77, US\$140

To subscribe: visit www.africanreview.com/subscribe

For any other enquiry email circulation@alaincharles.com

Alain Charles Publishing

Serving the world of business

Editor's Note

Welcome to our September issue. On this month's cover, heavy haulers take centre stage as next generation models from Volvo, Scania, Iveco and Daimler Mercedes-Benz hit the market; find out more on page 39. While the continent still grapples with the socio-economic and health implications of the coronavirus pandemic, windows of opportunity are opening up and signs of transformation across all sectors in African economies are happening, notably, in the area of digitisation in the business and banking world, see page 21, for more. The COVID-19 crisis has also reinforced the need to implement reforms in Africa's health sector where current systems are failing and the need for investment from the private sector has never been so prominent. ABCHealth chairman Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede tells us more on page 26. Our special report on Sierra Leone shows how it needs to diversify its economy to improve its long-term growth post-COVID-19, page 18.

Elsewhere in this issue, smart grid technology is making its mark and is poised for further growth in the future, page 32.

Finally, what does the future of mining look like? John Lewis, managing director of Aggreko Africa, says investment in digital and technology delivers lower-cost operations in the long run as well as high efficiency. Find out his other insights on page 48.

Meanwhile stay safe everyone,

Samantha Payne, Editor

Contents

- 18 Sierra Leone**
The World Bank has pledged US\$40mn for the Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project, with private sector, and urban and rural development among the priorities.
- 20 South African Banking Review**
Standard Bank and Nedbank are among the top lenders in South Africa to announce a decline in their first-half earnings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 23 Technology**
Mobile technology is Africa's fastest growing market. Despite the challenges in the continent's digital space, caused by the pandemic, it could present opportunities in innovation infrastructure and the digital marketplace.
- 32 Power**
How smart grids are transforming Africa's energy sector. In South Africa, more than 10 million prepaid meters have been installed.
- 39 Transport**
Technology and environmental performance are among the major challenges facing vehicle manufacturers as they roll out the next generation of heavy haulers for work on Africa's roads.
- 40 Construction**
When it comes to formwork and scaffolding, standards and safety are still number one priorities. Martin Clark reports.
- 46 Mining**
The diamond sector of the mining industry might have been left reeling from the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic but operators, such as Alrosa, are looking at its online sales potential to keep potential buyers happy.



Alstom commissions Cairo Metro line 3-Ph4

Alstom has successfully supplied, tested and commissioned part of Cairo Metro line 3-Ph4 with a total of 10 stations from Heliopolis to Adly Mansour.

The work carried out by Alstom for Egypt's National Authority for Tunnels has included the provision of system and subsystem design, manufacturing, installation, testing / commissioning, training, maintenance for signalling, centralised control and telecommunication systems for Cairo Metro line 3 Phase 4A, as well as for the power traction system, along with the extension of the Cairo Metro Line 3 with an additional four stations and main depot (Adly Mansour).

"Today Alstom delivered 10 metro stations equipped with its Urbalis signalling solution, in the frame of Cairo Metro line 3 Phase 4 project and accomplished its commitment to always better serve the customer and meet the expectations. Despite the worldwide pandemic crisis, our teams maintained the same level of engagement and succeeded to deliver in the safest conditions," said Mohamed Khalil, managing director of Alstom Egypt.

Urbalis is an advanced signalling system that helps operators to ease commuter congestion. Constantly upgraded, the solution aids urban operators in maximising their performance and capacity while providing standard supervision and control supporting their operational needs. Designed for heavy ridership metros, the system offers a considerable range of functions that improve headway and average speed performance.

In July, Alstom completed the supply and testing of its power supply system and computer-based interlocking signalling system Smartlock 400 GP for the Mallawi section in the 240 km line linking Beni Suef to Asyut in Egypt, the fifth section of the line to enter into commercial service with Alstom's interlocking signalling system. To date, Alstom's signalling solution is used on more than 70 km of mainline railway in Egypt.



Alstom's signalling solution is used on more than 70 km of railway throughout Egypt.

Image Credit: Alstom

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR NORTH AFRICA

Socioeconomic stability, social inclusion and human capital development are prerequisites for resilience and emerging from the coronavirus crisis in North Africa, according to the African Development Bank's North Africa Economic Outlook 2020 report.

The report forecasts that in 2020, the region will face an economic contraction between 0.8 and 2.3 per cent, although economic recovery is forecast for 2021, with regional growth of between three and 3.3 per cent.

The report shows that the services, tourism and industrial sectors, which are the main contributors to the regional economy, have been severely affected by the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 response. Furthermore, the pandemic's negative impact on global demand and the prices of basic goods is likely to increase fiscal deficits and current account imbalances.

Social and regional disparities have widened as a result of the pandemic. The report recommends structural reforms to increase public sector efficiency and private sector competitiveness to create more jobs.

The report calls on North African countries to continue to implement fiscal measures to protect affected households and businesses. The development of the agro-industrial sector is recommended to promote local agricultural value chains. Countries should work toward greater trade openness and integration, in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The Bank recommends investing in human capital and skills to accelerate economic development. Adapting skills to match Fourth Industrial Revolution job opportunities will require coordinated reforms of education and training systems. Countries could provide grants to the private sector to create jobs for young people and women in strategic sectors. The development of the manufacturing sector is key in creating jobs.

EBRD PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has provided a US\$100mn loan to Banque Centrale Populaire (BCP) for on-lending to local private businesses in Morocco. The loan is the second in the country under the EBRD Solidarity Package, established to meet the immediate short-term financing needs of existing clients and to strengthen the resilience of the financial sector during the coronavirus crisis.

BCP will extend EBRD funds to corporations and small and medium-sized enterprises that are experiencing a decrease in activity, turnover and profitability to help them address liquidity needs.

BCP is part of Group Banque Centrale Populaire and the second largest bank in Morocco in terms of lending. It offers a wide range of retail, corporate and investment banking services with a strong focus on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

To date, the EBRD has invested US\$2.78bn in Morocco through 65 projects.

► BRIEFS



Safe drinking water will be provided through solar water disinfection.

Sudan drinking water project

Siemens has signed a MoU with HELIOZ, a social enterprise company, to provide safe drinking water to the marginalised Sudanese residents of Khartoum and Kosti, where there is no access to potable water. The technology to be utilised is based on an environmentally-friendly method of solar water disinfection with UV-indicator called WADI, which was specifically designed by HELIOZ for communities that require an easy-to-use solution for water disinfection.



Egypt's ICT sector has experienced strong growth.

Growth in Egypt's ICT sector

Egypt's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector grew by 15.2 per cent during fiscal year 2019/2020 despite the coronavirus pandemic, ICT Minister Amr Talaat has stated, as a result of the trend towards remote learning and working.

Training opportunities provided by the Ministry and its affiliates for the youth to improve their digital skills increased from 4,500 in 2018 to more than 100,000 in 2020, he said.

Globalstar launches new SPOT Gen4 Satellite Messenger in EMEA

Globalstar Europe Satellite Services, a leader in satellite messaging and emergency notification technologies, announced that SPOT Gen4, the new generation of the SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger, is now available in EMEA.

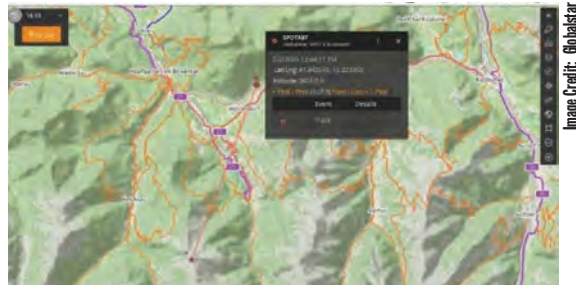
SPOT Gen4 offers many new features including an enhanced, more detailed mapping interface with more display options, improved product specifications for water resistance, and geofencing capability, among others.

As with its fellow SPOT devices, in an emergency, with a simple press of SPOT Gen4's SOS button, an alert along with the user's GPS co-ordinates are instantly transmitted to the GEOS International Emergency Response Coordination Center (IERCC) which in turn engages with local first responders to swiftly dispatch help to where it is needed.

"Thanks to SPOT Gen4's new professional-grade mapping capabilities, with detailed and informative displays, we have the ideal safety and tracking solution for even more independent occupational SPOT users; being able to support this customer segment complements our abiding commitment to supporting larger organisations who benefit from the sophisticated feature-rich platforms which our talented and dedicated VARs deliver," said Mark O'Connell, Globalstar EMEA general manager.

One leading VAR is UK specialist wireless and satellite technology reseller, Global Telesat Communications (GTC). Ten months ago, Globalstar announced that GTC had surpassed the milestone of selling 15,000 SPOT devices. This includes more than 1,500 SPOT units deployed to safeguard remote working and at-risk employees for organisations including the UK's Forestry Commission, Scottish Water and numerous other organisations.

"We are very excited to be a launch partner for the SPOT Gen4. Gen3 has been one of our most popular products and with the improved features, IP rating, competitive price and mapping options available on the Gen4, we have no doubt it will be popular with customers looking for their first SPOT product, a SPOT upgrade, or as an alternative to other devices," said David Phipps, CEO of Orbsat Corp.



The SPOT Gen4 includes an enhanced and detailed mapping interface.

FUND TO BOOST SUDAN FOOD AND WATER SECURITY

The Green Climate Fund, a unique global platform to respond to climate change, approved US\$25.6mn in new funding for an innovative climate resilience project in Sudan, designed to promote agriculture, health, and food and water security.

Around 1.2 million people from subsistence farming and nomadic pastoralist communities across nine states are set to directly benefit, with an additional 2.5 million people to benefit indirectly.

"Addressing the impact of climate change is a collective responsibility. We as a government recognise this global responsibility and are committed to protecting the people of Sudan from the risks we are currently facing," said Sudan's Prime Minister, Dr. Abdalla Hamdok. "Left unchecked, climate change will derail our nation's efforts to end poverty and conflict across the country."

"With Green Climate Fund financing, and support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Sudanese Government is working to build resilient economies and livelihoods. This will help us minimise the impact of COVID-19, and put our people and planet first."

Crop failures, the death of livestock, drought and other climate-related impacts are deepening poverty and reducing the capacity of people, communities and authorities to deal with other interconnected risks, such as COVID-19 and conflict.

Working at national and local levels, the new project will help Sudan address the challenges. Led by Sudan's Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources with support from the UNDP, the five-year project will provide training and equipment, rehabilitate land for sustainable use, introduce new climate-resilient practices, and construct infrastructure such as wells, dams and water storage.

500MW EGYPTIAN WIND FARM RECEIVES US\$50MN

The Red Sea Wind Energy S.A.E. is set to receive a loan worth US\$50mn from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to build the 500 MW Gulf of Suez II wind farm in the Gulf of Suez, Egypt, according to media reports.

The loan will be used for the construction, commissioning, and operation of the wind power project, situated 40 km northwest of the city of Ras Ghareb and operating 173 wind turbines. The project will also include the construction of a 33/220 kV substation. It will provide electricity to more than 800,000 local households and prevent more than 1 million metric tons of CO2 per year.

It is in line with the government's aim to produce 20 per cent of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2022 and 42 per cent by 2035. The Red Sea Wind Energy S.A.E is a joint venture company, comprising ENGIE, Toyota Tshusho Corporation and Eurus Energy Holdings.

BRIEFS



The MultiMAX low-loaders have a basic width of 3,000 mm.

Two low-loaders for DTR

A double delivery was prepared for Faymonville's customer DTR. The MultiMAX low-loaders were driven to Marseille from where they were shipped to Mostaganem, Algeria. The semi-trailers with a width of 3,000mm are equipped with air suspension, friction steered axles and interchangeable hydraulic single and double ramps. Both vehicles have telescopic loading platforms and can therefore be used to move various machines and industrial goods.



The EU has promised to help create jobs in Tunisia.

Italy and EU support Tunisia

Top Italian and EU officials promised to support Tunisian development efforts to create jobs and prevent illegal immigrants from fleeing the North African country, according to a report by the Associated Press. "Tunisia can count on the European Commission and on all its friends," the EU's commissioner for neighbouring countries, Oliver Varhelyi, said, according to the Tunisian president's office. Varhelyi also promised to create jobs in Tunisia.

Air Liquide to acquire Sasol oxygen production site

French chemical company Air Liquide has signed an exclusive negotiation agreement with petrochemical company Sasol to acquire the oxygen production site in Secunda, South Africa.

In this context, Air Liquide will operate this site's 16 air separation units (ASU) with an installed capacity of 42,000 tonnes per day, in addition to the unit it already operates, and will launch a multi-year plan to upgrade these facilities.

In addition to the benefits this will bring in terms of safety, reliability and efficiency, the solution provided by Air Liquide will allow, in coordination with Sasol, a targeted reduction of 30 per cent to 40 per cent in CO2 emissions arising from the oxygen production by 2030.

Benoît Potier, Chairman and CEO of Air Liquide, said, "The acquisition will enable new teams to join those of the Group already present on site. In line with our strategy and our know-how, this operation illustrates our intent to act as of now in favour of the climate and local ecosystems. It will allow both Air Liquide and Sasol to focus on their core business, combining operational efficiency and reduction of CO2 emissions.

"Climate action is at the heart of Air Liquide's growth strategy, and our climate objectives are the most ambitious of our sector. Our capacity for intervention is wide and goes from renewable energy-based hydrogen or oxygen production to energy efficiency programmes on existing sites. Solutions exist and we will continue to champion these worldwide. Now is the time to act."

Fleetwood Grobler, Sasol president and CEO, said, "While this transaction is in line with this review and has important commercial benefits there are very clear and compelling strategic objectives – one of the most significant being the pursuit of decarbonisation not only for the ASU operations but for the whole of Sasol's Secunda operations. This transaction is more than a business transaction. We welcome Air Liquide as one of our partners in our decarbonisation journey, and we are pleased to continue and strengthen our longstanding association with them."



Sasol's oxygen plant is the largest oxygen production site in the world.

NAMIBIA'S TWIN HILLS GOLD PROJECT UPDATE

Osino Resources Corp, Canadian gold exploration company, has completed the induced polarisation (IP) survey over the Twin Hills Gold Project in Namibia covering a total of 16 sq km. The survey has outlined new drill targets below the calcrete cover and extended and amplified the scale of known targets previously indicated by gold-in-calcrete and magnetic anomalies. The gradient array IP survey was completed over two months by contractors Greg Symons Geophysics (GSG) Namibia.

Dave Underwood, Osino's vice-president exploration, commented, "The entire Twin Hills area is covered by calcrete and windblown sand, and it is thus imperative to use geophysical techniques as we initially did with the ground magnetic survey. IP is an additional such tool which has enabled us to gather another layer of data on the subsurface geology and mineralisation before embarking on this follow-on drill programme to test these areas. The IP survey started with orientation work over known mineralisation at Twin Hills Central, which confirmed that the IP was identifying sulphide mineralisation associated with gold below thick calcrete cover, and this gave us the confidence to survey the entire Twin Hills area."

After completing a large-scale regional geochemical sampling programme during 2017 and 2018, Osino utilised the government magnetic data to identify and outline the large, regional-scale Karibib Fault structure, and then completed a detailed ground magnetic survey which detected coincident magnetic sulphide mineralisation.

However, non-magnetic sulphide arsenopyrite, which is strongly associated with known gold, is not detectable with magnetic surveying. The addition of the IP data allows the detection of such non-magnetic disseminated sulphide mineralisation.

COVID-19 RAISES URGENCY FOR STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa responded swiftly to the COVID-19 pandemic but, according to a new OECD report, the sharp decline in activity adds to longstanding challenges and raises the urgency for structural reforms. In South Africa's latest Economic Survey, the OECD indicates that the nationwide lockdown enacted in March 2020 reduced mining and industrial activity while bringing the tourism, entertainment, and passenger transport sectors to a near-standstill. Growth has collapsed, unemployment is rising and more needs to be done to reinforce responses to the crisis and ensure the recovery leads to sustainable and more inclusive development. The survey recommends a wide range of measures to improve healthcare quality and access and to support businesses and people. This includes lowering interest rates; providing households and businesses with temporary financial support; and extending financial relief in sectors hard hit by the crisis, especially if a renewed virus outbreak occurs later in the year.

► BRIEFS

BESIX to build marine facilities in Mozambique



The project is located in the Cabo Delgado Province.

Belgium-based BESIX has partnered with engineering and construction company Mota-Engil to design and build marine facilities for the Mozambique LNG Gas Development Project. The project is located in the Cabo Delgado Province, near the coastal town of Palma on the Indian Ocean coastline of Mozambique. The works include the execution of the engineering, procurement and construction of the LNG load-out jetty and the material offloading facility.

Netcash expands payment acceptance for SMEs



Netcash merchants can generate a QR code on an email or paper invoice.

Netcash, a South African payment service provider, has partnered with Zapper and SnapScan to expand mobile payments acceptance options for SMEs. The company has added QR payments from Zapper and SnapScan to the payment methods supported on its Pay Now Online Payment Gateway, Pay Now Invoice billing platform and Pay Now Request alerts. According to the company, this expands options for merchants.

Namibia's O&L acquires German energy company

Namibia's largest private group Ohlthaver & List (O&L) has acquired the majority stake in Cronimet Mining Power Solutions GmbH, a German-based renewable energy project development, Engineering-Procurement-Construction (EPC), investment and asset management company.

O&L stated that the stake was acquired from the exiting shareholder Cronimet Mining AG in Switzerland.

The firm said the merger comes through a joint venture after half a decade of successful partnership with Cronimet in Namibia. The O&L Energy and Cronimet will henceforth adopt its new trade name and brand, "O&L Nexentury," in cementing the corporate merger.

O&L Group executive chairman Sven Thieme and CEO Wessie van der Westhuizen welcomed the new member to the O&L family and portfolio, and said, "In line with our Vision 2025 Breakthrough Strategy of 'being a catalyst for positive change, creating new realities and fulfilling dreams', we are excited to welcome on board O&L Nexentury as we continue unlocking and maximising synergies and value for renewable energy and long-term sustainable business for both the group and our external customers.

"This exciting, new partnership is a big leap in the O&L Group's quest of venturing beyond borders. The projects successfully completed by O&L Energy and its partners have proven that we can compete with the best in the world, and therefore it is time to take this Namibian business to the world."

Co-founders and directors of O&L Nexentury GmbH Rollie Armstrong and Steffen Kammerer commented, "With this merger, the two companies have aligned their renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure business models to expand development and asset aggregation throughout Africa and into Europe." O&L Group chief operations officer Gunni Hanke and director of O&L Nexentury GmbH Bernd Walbaum said, "With this merger the O&L Energy Business enters into a new and very exciting era. By building an international business in Namibia, Africa and Europe we follow the O&L purpose 'Creating a future, enhancing life'."



ZSE SHIFTS TO SOLAR POWER

The Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE) has commissioned a solar power plant with an output capacity of up to 40KVA. This is consistent with ZSE's commitment to sustainability practices.

The overall goal of the solar project was to move towards a cleaner, affordable and reliable source of power given the need to continually keep trading servers up. When electricity is unavailable, the ZSE has had to rely heavily on diesel powered generators as a fallback, a costly and environmentally unfriendly strategy. CEO Justin Bgoni said they looked forward to annual cost savings of around US\$42,000 from switching to solar power, and the payback period is three years from now. The ZSE has been a member of the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchange Initiative since 2015 and in 2019 it adopted sustainability disclosure requirements in its listings requirements. In 2019 the ZSE also published principles for Green and Social Bonds to be considered by issuers intending to raise funds for green projects.

POWER METAL ANNOUNCES PROGRESS ON BOTSWANA PROJECT

Power Metal Resources, the AIM-listed metals exploration and development company, has announced that the local government has approved the environmental management plan for the Kalahari Key Mineral Exploration Pty Ltd Molopo Farms Complex (MFC) project in Botswana.

The plan covers planned drilling operations and represented the last formal regulatory step prior to commencement of drilling. Power Metal has an 18.26 per cent shareholding in Kalahari Key and has elected to earn-in to a 40 per cent direct interest in the MFC project by spending US\$500,000 on exploration expenditure, notably target drilling, this year.

Once the earn-in is completed, Power Metal will have an effective economic interest in the MFC project of 50.96 per cent.

Paul Johnson, CEO of Power Metal Resources, commented, "The receipt of the approval is a major step forward for Kalahari Key and Power Metal. We have the funds reserved in a USD account to cover the cost of drilling, and are working with Kalahari Key on finalising drill plans, with a view to mobilisation at the earliest opportunity.

"Power Metal has a diverse portfolio of interests, but undeniably the launch of a drill programme targeting prospective large-scale massive nickel sulphide mineralisation must be one the major moments in a junior exploration company's life cycle.

"As part of the preparatory work Kalahari Key, and their geophysical consultants, have been completing the Audio Magneto-tellurics survey ("AMT Survey") to further refine drill targets, which was announced recently. The AMT Survey is well advanced and the initial results in terms of target confirmation are positive. I look forward to providing further information with regard to the AMT Survey and drilling plans in the near future."

BRIEFS

Jubilee Metals expands copper operations in Zambia

Image Credit: Chetany Pixels



Total project capital is expected to be US\$15mn.

Jubilee Metals Group has signed a Joint Venture (JV) agreement with a private Zambian company that guarantees the right to process two million tonnes of Run Of Mine copper material containing more than two per cent copper.

With an additional 2.5 million tonnes of copper-containing tailings available for processing, there is a further potential under the JV agreement to increase the supply of copper ore to approximately four million tonnes.

Transnet to supply 300 wagons to CFM

Image Credit: Thomas Benne/Unsplash



TE will supply 300 freight wagons to CFM.

Transnet Engineering and the state-owned Mozambican railway operator Caminhos De Ferros De Mocambique (CFM) have signed a rolling stock supply deal valued at more than US\$2.3mn. As per the agreement, TE will supply CFM with 300 freight wagons.

The wagons will be manufactured at TE Bloemfontein centre, creating opportunities for local supply. This transaction follows an earlier successful delivery to CFM in December 2019.

Helios Towers acquires more than 1,200 sites from Free Senegal

The independent telecommunications infrastructure company Helios Towers has signed an agreement with Free Senegal to acquire its passive infrastructure assets for an upfront cash consideration of US\$189mn.

This represents an enterprise value of US\$210mn including an estimated US\$21mn of taxes and capitalised ground leases.

Free Senegal is Senegal's second-largest mobile operator backed by an investor consortium including NJJ, founder of Iliad S.A. Private holding company Xavier Niel Group, Teyliom Group and Axian Group.

Helios Towers and Free Senegal have signed a 15-year service agreement to provide hosting and energy services on the acquired sites and future sites to be built.

The transaction is expected to close by Q1 2021, subject to customary conditions of completion and regulatory approval.

"This agreement is aligned perfectly with our 2025 strategic ambitions, broadening our footprint within the African towers infrastructure market," Kash Pandya, CEO of Helios Towers, said.

"We are acquiring a market-leading independent position in Senegal with long-term contracted revenues and a clear path to value creation through additional organic tower development, uplifts in the tenancy ratio and improved operational effectiveness, all built on the foundation of 15-year contracts. We look forward to working with Free Senegal and the other MNOs over the coming years to further develop mobile infrastructure in Senegal," he added.

Mamadou Mbengue, CEO of Free Senegal, commented, "The transaction will allow Free Senegal to further expand its network mobile coverage in Senegal by partnering with the leading tower company in the region. We look forward to working closely with them in the future as a service partner of choice as we both look to further improve mobile connectivity and infrastructure for the Senegalese people, aligned with the digital plan for the country, Digital Senegal 2025."

Image Credit: blackcheap/Adobe Stock



The transaction will allow Free Senegal to further expand its network mobile coverage in Senegal.

NIGERIA'S ATI MEMBERSHIP TO HELP ATTRACT INVESTMENTS

President Buhari has signed the instrument of ratification to the African Trade Insurance Agency's (ATI) treaty, thus finalising Nigeria's membership in ATI.

The membership allows Nigeria to attract additional insurance capacity to help attract investments and increases ATI's capacity to support sovereign and commercial transactions in the country. Ultimately, Nigeria benefits because effective risk mitigation is vital to increasing investments and trade flows.

Nigeria's membership comes at a critical time for the economy as a sharp drop in oil prices due to a COVID-related one-third decrease in demand, has impacted the country's spending plans. The IMF predicts that falling oil prices will halve Nigeria's export earnings to US\$26bn, which traditionally accounts for 90 per cent of the government's budget.

In the last three years, ATI has helped crowd-in nearly US\$3bn of investments to several African countries. With ATI's sovereign and sub-sovereign credit wrap solutions, governments and state-owned enterprises have been able to obtain competitively priced and longer-term financing.

"As one of the largest economies in Africa with a vibrant private sector, ATI looks forward to working with the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, local financial institutions and corporate traders to support Nigeria's economic diversification plans and its post-COVID recovery," noted Benjamin Mugisha, ATI's chief underwriting officer.

As an important strategic partner, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has played a significant role in funding the membership participation of several African countries.

RADISSON GROUP TO RUN 100 HOTELS IN 32 AFRICAN MARKETS BY 2024

The Radisson Group has announced the introduction of six new hotels in focal business and economic centres across Africa, such as Johannesburg, Addis Ababa, Mali, Durban, Ghana and Nigeria, over the next four years.

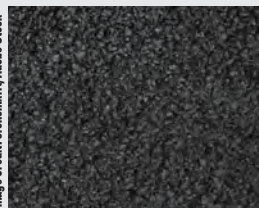
The new additions will bring the total number of Radisson Hotels across 32 African markets to 100. While the premium lifestyle brand will be making debuts in some new markets, in others, it will be reintegrating existing hotels within their network.

Elie Younes, executive vice president and chief development officer, Radisson Hotel Group, said, "We believe Africa has vast potential and the addition of six hotels, following the announcement of Radisson Hotel Saint Denis earlier this year, has placed us on track to have more than 150 hotels in operation, across the continent, in the next five years."

► BRIEFS

Nigeria kicks off exploration of bitumen reserves

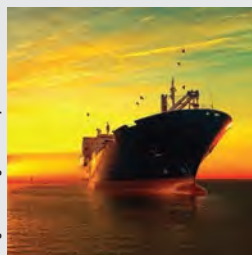
Image Credit: srckomrnt/Adobe Stock



The government has estimated the probable reserve of bitumen in Ondo State is 16 billion barrels.

The Nigerian government has estimated that the probable reserve of bitumen in Ondo State is 16 billion barrels, while that of tar sands and heavy oil is estimated at 42 billion barrels, approximately 120km, the second largest deposit of bitumen in the world. The deposits are largely undeveloped, but South West Bitumen, an indigenous Nigerian company, will soon start an exploration of the bitumen.

Image Credit: Nightman 985/Adobe Stock



NIMASA has submitted proposals to seek fiscal and monetary incentives for shipowners.

NIMASA to phase out single hull tankers

The Nigerian Maritime and Safety Agency (NIMASA), the apex regulatory maritime agency in the country, has said that it will stick to the decision to stop the use of single hull tankers by December 2020.

Bashir Jamoh, director-general of NIMASA, said, "Operators still using this type of tanker should make adequate preparation to comply because there will be no going back on this decision."

NDF and REDAVIA sign first EEP catalyst loan

Loan financing from NDF's EEP Africa Catalyst window will accelerate REDAVIA's commercial and industrial (C&I) solar leasing model with SMEs in Ghana and Kenya.

NDF launched the EEP Catalyst window in 2019 as a pilot to provide follow-on debt financing to successful companies from the EEP Innovation grant portfolio. EEP Catalyst is an evolution of the EEP Africa platform that builds on a decade of grantmaking and a portfolio of close to 250 early stage clean energy companies to enable scale-up of commercially viable clean energy solutions.

"This first EEP Catalyst loan to REDAVIA is a clear demonstration that we can deliver on the new NDF Strategy and its commitment to deliver flexible financing and catalytic impact. It has all the ingredients that define NDF's added value in the Nordic climate financing landscape. It demonstrates our unique mix of financing instruments and capacity to blend and match solutions to support our partners, public or private," said Karin Isaksson, managing director, NDF.

The loan represents a financing commitment of US\$1.76mn and supports scale-up of REDAVIA's solar power leasing model toward C&I and SME clients in Ghana and Kenya.

"The relationship with REDAVIA started with a grant in 2015; now we are leveraging that good experience and pivoting to a lender role. This new injection of financing enables REDAVIA to accelerate the clean energy transition in the commercial and industrial sector and scale up solar farm installations in Ghana and Kenya. It culminates a multi-year vision to establish a follow-on debt financing window under EEP Africa," said Charles Wetherill, fund manager, EEP Africa, NDF.

EEP Catalyst financing will enable REDAVIA to scale up its operations and contribute to green jobs and green growth by installing 1.26 MWp and generating 1,700 MWh/year of clean energy. The shift among SME and institutional clients to lower cost, clean energy consumption will lead to savings of US\$20,000/year in energy expenditures and reduce or avoid 730 tCO₂e/year in GHG emissions.



Image Credit: lovelyday12/Adobe Stock

The aim is to develop next generation of clean energy solutions in Africa.

PRESIDENT BUHARI SIGNS COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT 2020

President Muhammadu Buhari has signed the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020 (CAMA 2020) to reform and improve Nigeria's business environment.

The new act repeals and replaces the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990, 30 years after the previous law was signed.

According to the analysts, the new law will help in improving the business climate, reduce regulatory hurdles and help in the Nigeria's quest to improve its ease of doing business index.

The concept of 'authorised share capital' has further been replaced with the concept of 'minimum share capital.' With the new law, promoters of business need not pay for shares not needed at a specific time.

The amended version also provides for remote virtual meetings provided that such meetings are conducted with the Articles of Association of the company and the idea that such an amendment will facilitate participation from any location at minimal costs.

The act prohibits a person from being a director in more than five public companies at a time.

For a company in distress, the act introduces a framework to keep it alive, as against allowing the company to become insolvent with respect to company's voluntary arrangements, administrations and netting.

A company can now be established with only one member or shareholder, and such a company will no longer be mandated to appoint auditors at the annual general meeting.

The new law exempts the procurement of a mandatory common seal, in what is said to be in conformity with international best practices.

PELKTEC PARTNERS WITH ABSOLICON TO ACQUIRE PRODUCTION LINE IN GHANA

Pelktec Company, dedicated to development projects in energy, water, environment and waste management in Ghana, has signed a framework agreement with Absolicon for the acquisition of a production line for the T160 Solar collector in Ghana.

The total sales value covered by the agreement is estimated at US\$4.74-5.93mn plus a monthly license fee of four per cent and sales of components.

Through the agreement, Absolicon ensures access to patented components and high-quality inputs partly manufactured in Ghana or locally at the installation site.

Additionally, to promote Ghana's clean energy drive, Pelktec is developing ecofriendly projects equipped with advanced technologies, enhancing energy conservation, efficiency and water sufficiency.

BRIEFS

Axella raises US\$26mn fixed secure bond



Image Credit: tomas/Adobe Stock

The bond will be used to support the enterprise on many fronts.

Bolaji Okunsanya, managing director, Axella, one of the growing power and gas firms based in Lagos, said that the issuance enables the company to pursue a multi-pronged strategy for optimising its operations and assets, expanding the company's footprint and revolutionising the midstream sector.

According to Okunsanya, the bond will be used to support the enterprise on many fronts, but largely for growth projects.

Finnfund lends to First National Bank Ghana

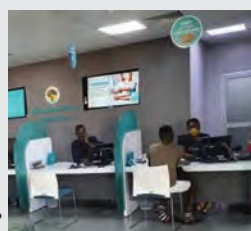


Image Credit: Finnfund

The aim is to strengthen the Ghanaian financial sector.

Finnfund, a Finnish development finance company and impact investor, has provided a US\$10mn senior loan to First National Bank Ghana Ltd. The investment aims to support the Ghanaian financial sector and the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and in particular, foster affordable housing in the country. According to estimates, Ghana is facing a shortage of approximately two million homes in a population of 30mn.

EIB-ENGIE initiative for off-grid solar scheme in Uganda

ENGIE, through its Solar Home System company Fenix International, and the European Investment Bank have agreed on a off-grid solar scheme in Uganda.

The move is expected to help millions of people, small holders and entrepreneurs in remote villages across Uganda to access reliable and cheap electricity.

"This will provide access to clean solar power and financial empowerment. Providing access to energy in Africa is a huge undertaking, but I firmly believe that universal access to energy is achievable in the foreseeable future, through smart investments in a combination of national grid extension, solar home systems and mini-grids. With our off-grid platform, we are industrialising and scaling up the development of a wide range of decentralised solutions, with a sustainable business model," said Yoven Mooroooven, CEO of ENGIE Africa.

The European Investment Bank has agreed to provide a US\$12.5mn loan to support the deployment of 240,000 high-quality solar home systems in Uganda by Fenix International, a subsidiary of ENGIE.

Customers will also be able to benefit from Fenix International's service centres that provide support in 30 languages across Uganda.

Following the new agreement between Fenix and the European Investment Bank households, entrepreneurs and small holders across Uganda will be able to access electricity for mobile phones, solar lighting, refrigeration, radio and television. This will help farmers to sell produce, create new markets for traders and improve health.

"Harnessing renewable energy through innovative off-grid solar technology, combined with productive uses of power in rural areas, is a direct demonstration of the European Union's green deal for Africa, providing new opportunities for millions of Ugandans," said Attilio Pacifici, European Union Ambassador to Uganda.



The European Union is committed to supporting sustainable economic and social development across Uganda.

AFDB COMMITS US\$41.16MN GRANTS IN DJIBOUTI

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved US\$41.16mn to Djibouti to bolster the national budget in support of the government's efforts to mitigate national and regional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding will take the form of an African Development Fund grant for US\$4.12mn and a US\$37.04mn grant from the Bank's Regional Operations Envelope. The Bank is providing the funding under its COVID-19 Response Facility.

The financing is expected to enable the government of Djibouti to support three interlinked COVID-19 response programmes to enhance health systems; safeguard livelihoods and provide social protection; and defend labour force productivity and economic activity.

"This approach was pertinent to ensure that Djibouti has adequate resources to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in its territory and limit cross-border impacts that pose serious risks for health, social and economic development for the country and ensure adequate controls at territorial borders and all points of entry," said AfDB's acting director-general for East Africa, Nnenna Nwabufu.

Health sector interventions include the implementation of a multi-sectoral crisis response strategy and dissemination of infection prevention and control guidelines to health facilities. To support the workforce and economy, the government proposes to suspend non-priority expenditure while increasing social spending in the budget; defer taxes for the hardest-hit enterprises and defer tax deadlines and social security contributions for enterprises that commit to continue paying employee salaries.

Djibouti, with a population of around one million, has one of the highest COVID-19 case rates in the Horn of Africa.

GIVEPOWER DEPLOYS SOLAR WATER FARMS IN KENYA AND HAITI

GivePower, a non-profit organisation that provides solar energy and clean, affordable water to people who need it most, has deployed two of its solar water farms in Mombasa, Kenya, and La Gonâve, Haiti.

Kenya's Likoni facility began distributing water on 27 July, with people eager to acquire clean water. Powered by solar energy and battery storage, GivePower's desalination systems are housed in 20 foot shipping containers and capable of transforming 70,000 litres of brackish and/or seawater into clean, healthy drinking water every day.

GivePower has partnered with World Hope International in Haiti who supported the project with a US\$250,000 donation as well as a variety of corporate and individual donors who helped fund the two projects.

► BRIEFS

Image Credit: Hiren Ramana/Adobe Stock



ESLSE provides operations, shipping and dry port services.

ESLSE income up 37 per cent

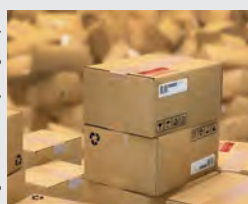
Ethiopia Shipping and Logistics Services Enterprise (ESLSE) has collected a total of around US\$726mn revenue during the budget year that concluded on 7 July 2020.

As reported in the New Business Ethiopia, ESLSE's income is 37 per cent more than the revenue collected the year before.

The source has further added that the revenue is collected from transporting a total of 11 million tonnes of imported as well as export goods.

Image Credit: Christoph Burscheit/Adobe Stock

ParcelABC expands activities to Africa



There is a steep demand for delivery services in the ongoing COVID-19 scenario.

The online shipping platform ParcelABC has announced it is to expand its activities to East African countries including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda.

Besides East Africa, ParcelABC operates in all other regions in Africa.

According to Andrius Balkūnas, the company's expansion plan comes after observing a steep demand for delivery services in the ongoing COVID-19 scenario since all travel stopped.

Upcoming Events Calendar 2020

SEPTEMBER

10-11

ICSWM 2020

Windhoek, Namibia
conferencefora.org/Conference/12697/ICSWM

22

EXAMINING GRID AND STORAGE ISSUES IN AFRICA TODAY

Online
www.africa-energy.com/events/examining-grid-and-storage-issues-in-africa-today

23-25

DAR CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE AND TRADE EXPO

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
www.expodatabase.de/en/expos/73540-dar-construction-dar-es-salaam-tanzania

OCTOBER

5-9

GLOBAL EXPO BOTSWANA

Gaborone, Botswana
www.globalexpo.co.bw

6

SOLAR SHOW MENA VIRTUAL 2020

Online
www.terrapinn.com/virtual/solar-show/?pk_campaign=listing&pk_kwd=AF&pk_source=terrapinn&pk_medium=link

6-8

NIGERIA BUILDEXPO

Lagos, Nigeria
www.nigeriabuildexpo.net

19-20

AFRICA RAIL 2020

Johannesburg, South Africa
www.terrapinn.com/exhibition/africa-rail/index.stm

29-31

GHANA BUILD

Accra, Ghana
www.ghanabuild.org

NOVEMBER

3-6

ECOMONDO

Rimini, Italy
www.ecomondo.com

4-6

POWER & ELECTRICITY WORLD AFRICA 2020

Online
www.terrapinn.com/exhibition/power-electricity-world-africa/index.stm

DECEMBER

8-9

THE SOLAR SHOW MENA 2020

Cairo, Egypt
www.terrapinn.com/exhibition/solar-show-mena/index.stm

Spotlight on West Africa's energy market at Nigeria Energy 2021

Around 47 per cent of Nigerians do not have access to grid electricity, and those who do have access, face regular power cuts, according to a World Bank report. The economic cost of power shortages in Nigeria is estimated at around US\$28bn, which is equivalent to two per cent of the nation's GDP.

According to the Ease of Doing Business Report 2020, lack of power has been one of the major challenges faced by the private sector. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for the country's power sector developers to unlock the full potential of the industry as well as create new business opportunities.

In line with this, Informa Markets is set to organise Nigeria Energy 2021 Exhibition & Conference from 21-23 September 2021 at Landmark Centre, Lagos, facilitating new business by providing networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities and connecting regional buyers to sellers from around the globe.

Nigeria Energy aims to offer an essential platform for exhibitors to showcase the latest brands, products, technologies and innovations to a range of individuals from the power and energy industries. The event is set to provide a platform to increase international presence, generate new business, network with industry leaders and potential buyers and showcase the latest products and services.



Image Credit: Confidence/Adobe Stock

Nigerian power sector developers need to unlock the full potential of the industry.

The 2019 edition witnessed robust growth in participating companies and trade visitors, comprising more than 115 exhibitors representing more than 20 countries. With 93 per cent exhibitor satisfaction rate, the show is expected to provide participants with a strategic opportunity to meet the industry's most influential decision makers, develop an international customer base and reinforce their position in the market.

Exhibitor profiles include automation and control systems; cable installation; switch cables and cable management systems; communication equipment; energy management systems; energy storage devices;

electrical distribution equipment; insulating materials; lighting - lamps, luminaires, LED; new and renewable energy; nuclear energy; power distribution systems; electronics; electric / power generators; power transmission; transformers and utilities and service providers.

Visitor profiles include agents; distributors; suppliers; construction; government; municipal authority; electrical power systems; public utilities; engineering consultants; main/MEP contractors; real estate/community developers; sub-contractors; architecture; engineering; operations; oil and gas; petrochemicals; procurement / purchasing; project management and quality assurance.

Electra Mining Botswana 2021 to help mining stakeholders expand their footprint

Electra Mining Botswana 2021 has been a highly successful event in recent years, and the next edition promises to continue the tradition of helping mining industry stakeholders make new connections, expand their African footprint and share knowledge. The event will be held in Gaborone, the Botswanan capital, from 14-16 September 2021 at the Gaborone Fairgrounds.

The 2019 edition was said to be the best ever. Such was the positive response that many exhibitors had booked their place for the 2021 show before the close of the 2019 show.

Free seminars have proven popular at earlier editions with 21 such events taking place at the last Electra Mining Botswana. More seminars are promised for 2021, along with a workshop from Botswana Chamber of Mines which will focus on the latest trends and developments in the industry.

As well as the seminars and workshops, Electra Mining Botswana will offer opportunities for delegates to see, source and learn about new products and services; learn about the latest industry technologies; view world-class machinery live in action; discover ways to cost-



Image Credit: Cretay/Wikimedia Commons

Botswana's Jwaneng mine is the richest diamond mine in the world.

effectively streamline operations; and engage with leading experts for technical advice. The event will be held in conjunction with A-OSH Expo, a health and safety event which aims to improve practices in Botswana and beyond. It has become clear that taking care of health and safety at mining operations is absolutely essential. It has become increasingly important for companies to ensure the uncompromised

health, safety and wellbeing of employees in the workplace – for economic reasons, as well as to promote good company values. The A-OSH component of the event aims to help operators walk the walk rather than merely paying lip service to best practices.

For more information and to register:
www.electramining.co.bw

HITACHI

Reliable solutions

**WE DIG. WE HAUL.
THAT'S ALL.**

ROCKPLANT
IMAGINE A NEW TOMORROW
KENYA | TANZANIA | UGANDA

Rock Plant (Kenya) Ltd, PO Box 27530-00506, Nairobi, Kenya, Tel +254 020 354 43 29, Fax +254 020 354 43 19
Email: sales@ock-plant.com, Web: rock-plant.com

www.hitachicm.ae

“This engagement of Mozambique LNG’s stakeholders must ... be active and well-constructed. While providing relevant information is critical, it must also be timely, and its substance reflect institutional credibility.”



C. DEREK CAMPBELL
CEO, Energy & Natural Resource Security

“While we are a relatively new bank, Sombank has big ambitions to play a significant role in rebuilding the country’s financial infrastructure by improving access to financial services throughout Somalia and beyond.”

GARAD KHALIF NOR
CEO, Sombank

“As one of the largest economies in Africa with a vibrant private sector, the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI) looks forward to working with the [Nigerian] Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, local financial institutions and corporate traders to support Nigeria’s economic diversification plans and its post-COVID recover.”

BENJAMIN MUGISHA
Chief underwriting officer, African Trade Insurance Agency

“Smartphone adoption in Sub-Saharan Africa is set to rise to 66 per cent by 2025 (GSMA) which means that access to online services will continue to grow exponentially. The African operators we are talking to are all seeing an increase in payment purchases for digital services and they are keen to get ahead of the curve to capitalise on this opportunity.”

SIMON RAHMANN
CEO, Mondia Pay

“One of my priorities has been building resilience to disaster and climate risks which continue to impact our continent. Drought, floods and pests are some of the hazards threatening food security in Africa. In my interactions with African ministers responsible for disaster risk reduction at global and Africa’s fora, I have always insisted that disaster risk reduction is a matter of survival and that resilience building must be our way of life.”



AMBASSADOR JOSEFA SACKO
Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union

“Soon, every company will have a digital workforce to automate, streamline, and accelerate work. We’re dedicated to making the vision of a digital workforce for every enterprise a reality.”

JASON KINGDON
Chairman and CEO, Blue Prism

“We believe that the provision of international-standard warehouses in Africa for storage, distribution and light manufacturing is one of the fundamental building blocks necessary for economic growth.”

GEOFFREY WHITE
CEO, Agility Africa

“These past months of responding to COVID-19 have emphasised the need to make peace and security a priority in Africa, especially in fragile communities.”



DR. AHMED OGWELL E. OUMA
Deputy director, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention

“People in South Sudan are in dire need of electricity. COVID-19 has impacted the economy, especially the energy sector, but we must keep on developing the plans. Even though there is an impact, we must work very hard to ensure the economy is surviving.”

JACOB MANYUON DENG
Director general, planning and projects, South Sudan Electricity Corporation

► QUOTES

“We have always perceived technology not as a goal but as a tool. We aim to positively impact peoples' lives through technology; and for this to happen credibly, solutions need to be backed by scientific research.”



DR AHMAD AL-KABBANY
Founder, VRapeutic

“Clean drinking water is an essential and basic human right. Communities having reasonable access to clean water promotes better health, while preventing the spread of easily avoidable diseases. This solution that we're bringing to the people of Sudan will provide an improved way of life and will add value to our people.”

SABINE DALL'OMO
CEO, Siemens, Southern and Eastern Africa

“Governments and lenders need to urgently unchoke the bottlenecks so that the money can flow quickly, otherwise it will be too late to prevent closures and job losses. There will be no point re-opening the borders and skies if there is no industry left to speak of that is capable of supporting trade and tourism, which are the key components of any thriving economy.”

MUHAMMAD ALBAKRI
Regional vice president for Africa and the Middle East, IATA

“As a key contributor to the petrochemical and downstream industries in Egypt, we focus on strengthening the all-round efficiency and safety standards of our plants. Reducing unplanned downtime and increasing the operational workflow is critical towards achieving our production targets. The long-term preventive service agreement with Siemens Energy is aligned with our strategy.”

AYMAN EL-SHAFEI
Maintenance general manager, ETHYDCO

“Jubilee continues to aggressively drive its expansion across both its South African and Zambian operations. Our significant progress in Zambia, ... is followed by the successful implementation of these two key agreements supporting the expansion of our South African chrome and PGM operations.”

LEON COETZER
Chief executive, Jubilee Metals Group

“During the second half [of 2020], I expect our product diversification and operating model to continue to serve us well. As the global economy recovers, PGMs, copper and iron ore are all particularly well positioned, while De Beers, as the world's leading diamond business, is taking all appropriate steps to address the effects of acute disruption. As a company, we are continuing to invest and grow, with our products increasingly geared towards a fast-growing population and a cleaner, greener, more sustainable world.”

MARK CUTIFANI
Chief executive, Anglo American

“The results are in; cloud is the answer. But enterprises, especially large, globally deployed ones, want a vote in how customer experience cloud transformation is accomplished.”

SHEILA MCGEE-SMITH
President, McGee-Smith Analytics

“The SME market represents 98 per cent of businesses in South Africa, and has been deeply impacted by the pandemic. We recognise the overwhelming pressure that small business owners are currently facing and are committed to supporting them through COVID-19 and beyond by bringing our tools at a low cost and rapid time to market.”

GAURANG SHAH
Senior vice president, product management, digital payments & labs, Middle East and Africa, Mastercard

“When summarising the results of the first quarter, we assumed that COVID-19 would be the main topic for spammers and phishers for the past few months. And it certainly happened. While there was the rare spam mailing sent out without mentioning the pandemic, phishers adapted their old schemes to make them relevant for the current news agenda, as well as come up with new tricks.”



TATYANA SIDORINA
Security expert. Kaspersky

“Customers have been showing a significant increase in demand for online shopping. As a customer-centric organisation and one that prioritises the needs of all shoppers, we strive to keep our finger on the pulse of what consumers want. We are extremely proud to be launching our new click-and-collect service here in Egypt, meeting our customers’ demand for innovative, convenient, and seamless shopping experiences.”

PHILIP EVANS

Managing director, West Region shopping malls, Majid Al Futtaim – Properties

“AfCFTA will offer a huge opportunity for UAE investors who will be able to do business on a single set of trade and investment rules across the African continent. Dubai is well placed to benefit from the landmark trade agreement due to its status as a preferred re-export hub for African traders and strong presence of UAE companies in African markets and vice versa.”

OMAR KHAN

Director of international offices, Dubai Chamber

“As our customers look for greater flexibility in how they train personnel, our Digital Classroom empowers companies to elevate the skills and experience of their workforce on their terms.

Our goal is to fit training into workers’ daily schedules while working remotely by enhancing engagement, minimising travel and improving productivity across users’ organisations.”

VIDYA RAMNATH

President, Emerson’s Automation Solutions business, Middle East and Africa region

“The positive outlook for Africa is reinforced by the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which seeks to deepen regional integration across the continent and allow the free movement of people and trade across borders.”

BAJABULILE SWAZI TSHABALALA

Acting senior vice president and CFO, African Development Bank Group

CARMIX EVERYWHERE YOU BUILD



READY. MIX. EVERYWHERE. CONCRETE.

CARMIX MOBILE BATCHING PLANTS, BEST PERFORMANCE ON THE TOUGHEST JOBSITES




carmix.com
 Metatgalante S.p.A. - T. +39 042165191 - info@carmix.com





AFRICAN REVIEW / ON THE WEB

A selection of product innovations and recent service developments for African business

Full information can be found on www.africanreview.com

ESKOM HOPES TO DEVELOP NEW, MORE ROBUST POWER SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AFRICA



Image credit: Shutterstock/Adobe Stock

South Africa aims to boost its power generation capacity.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) will see measures announced by Eskom, South African power giant, to separate the state-owned enterprise (SOE) into three entities to curb load shedding and address various other problems at the power utility the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee meeting.

With stage two load shedding again creating havoc, Eskom is reportedly shuffling the positions of 12 senior staff members in its power generation division.

According to the government official, this is reminiscent of re-arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. What the utility needs at its helm is deep operational and financial experience in the generation sector which accounts for 85 per cent of Eskom's business.

Eskom CEO André de Ruyter said that developing a new IT system would not only delay the separation but would be very expensive.

Current efforts might ameliorate some of the management issues (procurement, corruption, defects, coal procurement, etc) but it will not fix the core problem.

Economic growth in South Africa is dependent on a stable power supply and unless a stable baseload is re-established, load shedding will continue to hamper economic growth.

Eskom needs teams with solid backgrounds in finance, design, project management, construction, commissioning and testing, operations

and maintenance, to focus on fixing the SOE's legion of problems while the power utility simultaneously pursues privatisation options. Independent power producers (IPP) should also be allowed to generate and supply electricity to businesses, municipalities and provinces.

B2GOLD CONTINUES OPERATING AT FEKOLA MINE IN MALI



Image credit: Shutterstock/Adobe Stock

B2Gold is helping the government to mitigate COVID-19-related challenges in the country.

B2Gold's mining operations at its Fekola Mine in Mali have not been affected and the company continues mining and milling operations as normal, stated the company in a release.

The Fekola Mine has sufficient supplies on hand to maintain its budgeted activities through the end of the third quarter and beyond if needed. Additionally, the expansion of the mine remains on schedule.

"No operational days have been lost due to the political situation in the country and all of B2Gold's mine personnel are safe," according to the company.

With an aim to provide economic benefits and job creation to the communities and regional and national governments, B2Gold has decided to continue to monitor the situation and work to ensure that its mining operations continue normally.

B2Gold is helping the government to assist the people of Mali in facing the COVID-19-related challenges and its impact on the mining sector.

As a vital commercial enterprise in Mali, the Fekola Mine generated almost US\$134mn in revenue for the government of Mali in 2019.

SOMBANK SELECTS TEMENOS CLOUD TECHNOLOGY IN SOMALIA



Image credit: Shutterstock/Adobe Stock

Sombank focuses on rebuilding the country's financial infrastructure by improving access to financial services throughout Somalia and beyond.

Sombank, a privately-owned Islamic bank in Somalia, has selected the Temenos Islamic Banking solution in the cloud to accelerate its digital transformation and create innovative products to increase access to financial services in Somalia.

Temenos Infinity and Temenos Transact will enable Sombank to design and launch customised digital products more quickly while also reducing its operating costs.

Temenos' cloud-native technology is expected to allow Sombank to create innovative digital products and offer lower cost services that are more accessible to all Somalis via a mobile device, including current and savings accounts for individuals and small businesses as well as the latest mobile money products.

A report produced for Temenos by the Economist Intelligence Unit found that governments across the Middle East and Africa regions are increasingly embracing digital agendas to encourage financial inclusion and accelerate digital banking and a cashless economy. According to the report, smart phone use expected to hit 74 per cent in the region by 2025 and the affordability of smartphones is a major driver in the development of mobile-only and mobile-first banks.

Currently, Sombank serves customers via branch and online network and representative offices throughout Somalia. Sombank will use

the Temenos Infinity digital front office to create a unified customer experience for all financial and non-financial services across all channels, helping its staff serve customers faster in branch and online.

Garad Khalif Nor, CEO, SomBank, stated, "Sombank has big ambitions to play a significant role in rebuilding the country's financial infrastructure by improving access to financial services throughout Somalia and beyond. Implementing the Temenos banking platform in the cloud will allow us to achieve rapid time to value for new digital products and the cost savings to fulfil this vision."

WORLD BANK APPROVES US\$150MN FOR KENYA

The World Bank has approved US\$150mn International Development Association (IDA) credit to improve tenure security and access to basic services for 1.7mn residents living in selected Kenya's urban informal settlements.

"Rapid urbanisation and an increasing share of the poor living in urban areas has outpaced services and infrastructure provision, and this project will contribute to reducing this infrastructure and services gap," said Camille Lampart Nuamah, World Bank operations manager and acting country director for Kenya.

The second phase of the Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP2) will improve the living conditions of informal settlements and its residents through titling to enhance tenure security; infrastructure upgrading for basic services (roads, drainage, water, sanitation, street lighting, community facilities) and livelihoods support and community engagement to assess and address risks, including the impacts of COVID-19.

Upgraded infrastructure under the KISIP2 is set to improve access to basic services, such as clean and safe water; mobility within the informal settlements; access for emergency

AFRICAN REVIEW / ON THE WEB

A selection of product innovations and recent service developments for African business
Full information can be found on www.africanreview.com

vehicles; and the resilience of communities in instances of disasters. In addition, it will increase the



The KISIP2 project will be implemented through institutional arrangements at the national level and county level.

connectivity of residents to socio-economic opportunities while the high-mast lights will enhance economic activities by reducing crime.

AUDA-NEPA LAUNCHES MSME ACADEMY

DA-NEPAD and the African Union Development Agency, has announced the launch of the MSME Academy, in partnership with Ecobank Group.

Spearheaded under the AUDA-NEPAD "100,000 MSMEs by 2021" (100K MSMEs) programme for Africa's Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, the academy provides easy access to practical training and resources on financing opportunities in various countries, materials on how to build digital presence for businesses and

how to adapt business operations in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The platform will provide access to market intelligence, a host of mentors with diverse experience, while assisting with access to funding opportunities.

The academy has country specific content with world-class pan-African design to ensure the right balance between local realities with a structured pan-African approach for the sustainability and scalability of the initiatives.

AUDA-NEPAD CEO Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki declared, "In this continent, where the majority of the countries are low income and middle-income economies, where youth account for almost 60 per cent of all of

Africa's unemployed, the contribution of MSMEs and informal enterprises to the GDP growth and employment creation is fundamental."



The aim is to boost challenges and opportunities in the MSME sector.

Metallic Screens

Wedge wire Screens

Rubber Screens

Polyurethane Screens

Self-cleaning Screens

Perforated metal Screens

Electro-welded Screens

Crusher wear and spare parts

Vibrating finger Screens

Other products and accessories

www.nubasm.com

Screening Media and Accessories for the Aggregate and Mining Industries

+34 916 160 500 | international@nubasm.com

CRUSHER WEAR AND SPARE PARTS

Jaws, toggle plates and jaw wedges

Eccentric shafts, coil springs and other mechanical components

Mantles and bowl liners

Side liners, blow bars and breaker plates

Consultancy on Crushing and Screening Plants

Strategies for strengthening Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is at a post-lockdown crossroads with calls to diversify its economy and improve infrastructure to ensure growth in the challenging months and years ahead. Georgia Lewis reports.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Gayle Martin, World Bank country manager for Sierra Leone, has outlined how the West African country can move forward in succinct terms: “Promoting economic diversification to reallocate resources from low- to high-productivity sectors can boost growth in GDP per capita and reduce poverty.”

In this context, the Sierra Leonean government’s Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023) needs to be viewed in practical terms as to what this means for the different industry sectors that will play leading roles in economic recovery.

Sierra Leone’s main exports are fish and seafood (20.2 per cent of total exports), minerals (16.1 per cent), cocoa (10.5 per cent), vehicles (10.2 per cent), wood (9.7 per cent) for machinery, food products, as

well as minerals and precious stones (gold, diamonds, iron ore). Cereals (15.6 per cent of total imports) and other food products, machinery (11.3 per cent) and vehicles (9.3 per cent) account for the bulk of the country’s imports.

According to the updated IMF forecasts from April this year, the outbreak of the COVID-19 was expected to cause Sierra Leone’s GDP growth to fall to -2.3 per cent in 2020 and pick up to 4 per cent next

year, subject to the post-pandemic global economic recovery. Despite having a relatively low COVID-19 caseload, the impact of a long, worldwide economic shutdown has been felt heavily in Sierra Leone. At the time of writing, the country had reported 1,877 confirmed cases of the virus and 68 deaths.

The World Bank has earmarked US\$40mn for the Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project, which has themes of private sector

development, urban and rural development, and environmental and natural resource management.

Nordea, a bank and financial services group, produced an economic outline on Sierra Leone which noted that last year, the progress made under the IMF-supported programme within the Extended Fund Facility has contributed to stabilising the economy, but the situation remains difficult. Attracting investment will also be essential for recovery and growth but currently the trade balance is in deficit. Exports of palm oil, coffee and cocoa are expected to help but dependence on imports of energy, capital goods and food will continue to be a hindrance to economic progress.

According to the Nordea report, China has become a major investor, while traditional investors include

“ Promoting economic diversification from low- to high-productivity sectors can boost GDP per capita and reduce poverty.”

GAYLE MARTIN, WORLD BANK COUNTRY MANAGER, SIERRA LEONE

Nigeria, Sweden, Mauritius, Belgium, Germany and the United States. The report went on to say that foreign investors are engaged in energy (including renewables), infrastructure, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and natural resources.

Like many other African countries, public-private partnerships will continue to play an important role in financing major infrastructure projects that are expected to help economic progress and act as fiscal multipliers, such as power, water, roads, ports, and telecommunications.

Major projects that are being funded with Chinese investment include a hydroelectric dam, a hospital, rubber production plant (funded by China Hainan Rubber Group), rice cultivation and mining, such as the \$US6bn mining project which involves the Kingho Group.

UK's Winch Energy is working on the construction of solar plants, America's SL Mining is investing in the Marampa iron ore mine, Israel's Agrotop is working with South Africa's Integrated Solutions Africa on commercial egg production, and a subsidiary of France's Bolloré Group is building a new dock in the capital, Freetown, for \$US120mn.

Boosting access to energy is creating opportunities in Sierra

Leone as well as improving infrastructure. With less than 10 per cent of Sierra Leonean citizens having access to electricity and power outages being commonplace in urban and rural areas, there is enormous scope for economic growth in tandem with improving the lives of people across the country.

In regard to solar energy, a growth area for Sierra Leone, the Winch Energy example is just one of many projects which is seeking to transform the country and improve access to energy by using renewables. Another solar project which launched this year despite the challenging circumstances was an online sales platform for solar products. This was launched by Easy Solar, a company with 350,000 daily users, as a means to sell products such as solar lanterns and cooking stoves more easily, without consumers having to rely on access to physical shops.

"We realised there is more we can do to make our products affordable," says Nthabiseng Mosia, co-founder, Easy Solar. "The majority of Sierra Leonean households in rural areas receive money from someone in a big town or city, while remittance flows from abroad are estimated to be close to

“By tapping into existing remittance flows, our platform is the next step into truly unlocking access to energy for all.”

NTHABISENG MOSIA, CO-FOUNDER, EASY SOLAR

US\$200mn per year. We feel that, by tapping into these existing remittance flows, this platform is the next step into truly unlocking access to energy for all.”

Access to energy will also be boosted by a deal that was finalised in July this year. Karpowership, a floating power plant operator, has reportedly signed an agreement to supply electricity to the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority of Sierra Leone over a five-year period.

According to Reuters, Karpowership will add 5MW of power to the country's existing capacity under the agreement. Karpowership is owned by Turkish company Karadeniz Energy Group, and it has two power ships moored off the coast of capital Freetown. These ships supply nearly 80 per cent of the contracted electricity to Sierra Leone under a contract signed in 2018. Karpowership power ships, which use either heavy fuel

oil or LNG, will generate approximately 63MW of electricity during the dry season, and 23MW during the wet season.

There is still heavy reliance on organisations such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank and the IMF to ensure funding for major infrastructure projects will continue for Sierra Leone but these have great potential to improve multiple sectors of the Sierra Leonean economy.

The AfDB funded improvements to the notorious Matotoka-Sefadu Road in the north-east of the country, where the 120km journey could take an entire day and accidents, which often resulted in the loss of goods, were commonplace. The upgrading project was completed in March this year and, as a result, access to mining sites, farms, healthcare facilities, markets and schools have all improved.

Meanwhile, in June 2020, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved a US\$100mn grant from the International Development Association to support the Sierra Leonean government in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth and building economic resilience amidst the pandemic.

"This financing will help address fiscal challenges and improve overall governance to build resilience and enhance the delivery of services to the people amid this global COVID-19 pandemic," said Gayle Martin. "Sierra Leone's opportunities to eradicate extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity rest on sustained macroeconomic stability, robust growth and a solid enabling environment for the exploitation of its abundant natural resources." ■



Infrastructure challenges, such as access to water and electricity, continue to create issues for Sierra Leone.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Standard Bank remains resilient despite weaker earnings due to pandemic

The CEO of Standard Bank Group, Sim Tshabalala, cited COVID-19 as the worst economic shock in living memory and in South Africa, the pandemic has caused the worst economy in more than a century. Within this extremely difficult context, Africa's largest bank by assets has emerged resilient, but has suffered profit losses related to the pandemic. Samantha Payne reports.

Despite an uptick in customer activity and business turnover in July, Standard Bank Group said the ongoing uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic "is expected to constrain balance sheet growth".

On 20 August, the bank announced its interim results that showed the scale of the negative impact of COVID-19 on the business. Its headline earnings per share (HEPS) for the half year that ended June was down by 43 per cent caused by impairment charges almost tripling in the prior period (1H19). Its credit loss ratio stood at 1.6 per

cent for the first half.

The group's headline first-half earnings were down by 44 per cent (R7.5bn) and return of equity (ROE) was 8.5 per cent from 16.2 per cent. Trading revenues in the next half of the year are now expected to be below 2020 first half levels and lower interest rates also are expected to continue throughout the year, putting pressure on Net Interest Income, the bank said in a statement.

The bank also said it could not confirm medium-term targets because of too much ongoing uncertainty caused by the pandemic.

Elsewhere in Africa

In other parts of Africa, the picture was a little more positive. The Standard Bank Group's Africa Regions business delivered headline earnings growth of 11 per cent and seven per cent in constant currency (CCY). As a result, the Africa region's contribution to the banking headline earnings for the first half of 2020 grew to 62 per cent. The top six contributors were Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda.

"Globally, the first half of 2020 has been dominated by the Covid-19

pandemic and the distressing human and economic cost thereof," said Sim Tshabalala, CEO of Standard Bank Group. "During this time, we have remained steadfast in support of our clients, our employees and the communities in the countries we operate in."

In comparison to Standard Bank's interim results, Nedbank, one of the other top five lenders in South Africa, due to announce its half-year results on 26 August, (before going to press), expected its HEPS to fall between 67 per cent and 72 per cent from the same

period last year and said it was removing its interim dividend.

In a trading statement, Nedbank said, “The largest impact of the COVID-19 pandemic ... has been a significant increase in the impairment or expected credit loss charge.”

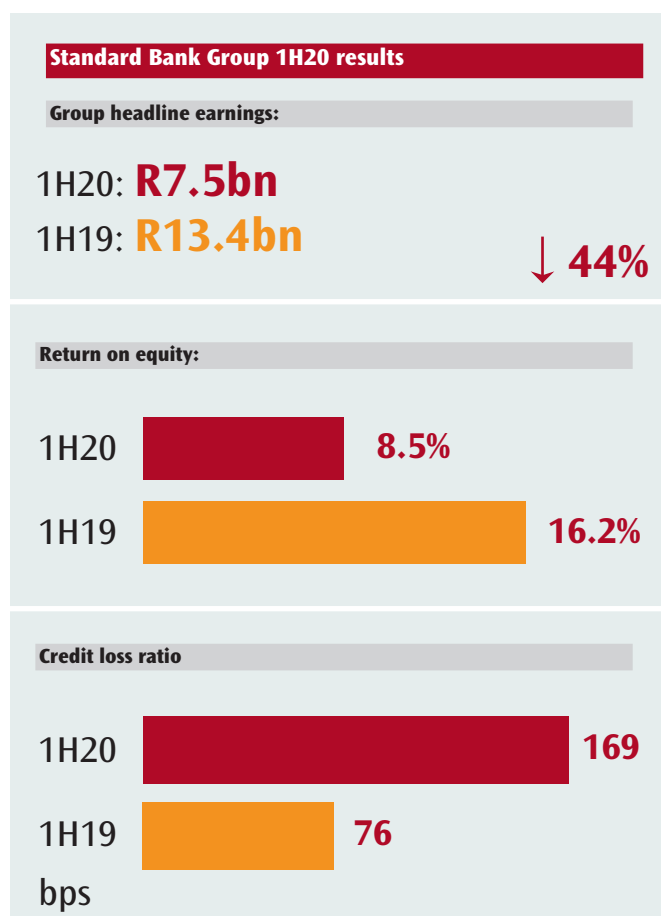
Absa Bank’s woes look worse than its peers with an expected 85 per cent slump in earnings for the six months to June while First Rand’s headline earnings per share could be down anything between 35 and 45 per cent. Investec said it was looking at a 16.8 per cent drop in full year profit because of the coronavirus crisis, according to a Reuters report.

South Africa’s economy

In South Africa, Standard Bank’s first-half earnings dropped 72 per cent as the pandemic exacerbated an already difficult environment. The country already dipped into recession in the last quarter of 2019 due to ongoing power cuts. The strict lockdowns that then came into effect in the first quarter of 2020 brought the South African economy to a near-standstill.

Tshabalala said the uncertainty in the first half of the year drove “an emerging market risk-off stance for foreign investors”.

He continued, “Sub-Saharan Africa experienced record capital outflows and financial conditions tightened. Trade and foreign exchange inflows dried up and oil-exporters were negatively impacted by the lower oil price. Covid-19 related regulatory actions included wide-spread interest rate cuts, easing of capital



and liquidity requirements and fee waivers and restrictions. West Africa was impacted by lower oil prices, East Africa, by lower trade and a halting of travel and the South and Central economies remained closely coupled with South Africa.”

A modest recovery in 2020 looks bleak as South Africa’s real GDP is forecast to contract by 8.5 per cent in 2020 (Standard Bank Research), followed by 4.5 per cent in 2021. This is in spite of President Cyril Ramaphosa’s R500bn (US\$29.6bn) COVID-19 relief package.

Standard Bank Group’s strong capital and liquidity position entering the crisis has allowed the

bank, it said, to provide significant temporary relief to clients without constraining their ability to lend to existing and new clients or support new projects.

The bank’s pandemic-related donations amounted to R20mn in South Africa and more than US\$1.6mn in Africa regions. It also paid out R250mn to 22,700 employees and 3,500 businesses on behalf of the South Africa Future Trust and approved R8bn loans to SMEs via the COVID-19 loan guarantee scheme.

In March, Fitch Ratings downgraded South Africa’s top five banks (Standard Bank, Absa Bank,

FirstRand Bank, Investec Bank, and Nedbank) to ‘BB’ status, with a negative outlook. However, on a brighter note, in the ratings agency report in May, entitled: ‘Coronavirus Impact on South African Banks’, it argued they would be able to weather the storm, that “adequate levels of capital have been built up since Basel III was implemented” and that “despite weaker earnings, and inflated risk-weighted assets related to rising credit risk, banks are likely to maintain moderate buffers over regulatory requirements”.

In Standard Bank Group’s case, the board has not declared an interim dividend and announced that “it would continue to take into account guidance from the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), the group’s capital position and the outlook before deciding whether to declare a final dividend”.

“COVID-19 has already had a profound impact globally and there remains much uncertainty as to the ultimate human and economic toll,” added Tshabalala. “The world changed fundamentally and, to some extent, permanently, in a matter of weeks. While the pandemic has created distress and anxiety for many people, it has also created new opportunities, specifically the opportunity to accelerate change. As we re-imagine the future, we remain of the view that our future-ready strategy remains valid. However, we recognise the need to accelerate our digital delivery and, in parallel, drive operational efficiency.” ■

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF BANKS

One positive outcome of the pandemic has seen more customers and businesses turn towards South African banks’ digital channels and solutions. The number of digital active customers in the Standard Bank Group increased 13 per cent to 2.6 million.

Sim Tshabalala, CEO of Standard

Bank Group said, “Lockdowns encouraged customers to transition to our digital channels. Digital transaction volumes increased 78 per cent in South Africa, and comprised 99 per cent of total transactions, while in Africa Regions volumes increased 24 per cent and comprised 94 per cent of total transactions. Physical

transactions are expected to continue to decline as the transition to digital accelerates post COVID-19.”

Kweku Bedu-Addo, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank South Africa and Southern Africa, which committed US\$1bn globally to support companies in the health delivery supply chain to combat

the COVID-19 pandemic, and US\$50mn to assist communities in Africa, sees “digitisation and the new ways of working will define who stays competitive, productive and can survive. Almost every sector or industry and even governments will need to invest in digital solutions to future-proof their survival and relevance.”

COVID-19, telecommuting and Africa's digital space

Workplaces and the education sector can now create new, sustainable models which are accessible, inclusive and qualitative. By Opeoluwa Runsewe, executive director, Ojar Foundation.



Improved internet access will improve work and educational opportunities across Africa.

Image Credit: Adobe Stock

It is no news that the outbreak of COVID-19 have had some of the most acute implications on global economies in recent times; the vast majority of private and public institutions have been put on edge and are being forced to mitigate these unforeseen contingencies by adopting the swiftest and most dynamic mechanisms.

Gradually, the virus has spread to 188 countries, with its ramifications cutting across all demographics. Schools, businesses and airports have been closed, restrictions on movement and large gatherings have been enforced, and one too many businesses have been obligated to urgently close shop regardless of the concerted effort by governments and health care professionals to curtail the rate of infection. However, it remains largely uncertain and highly debatable as to whether the recently

imposed restrictive measures will be totally terminated in a bid to ensure that economic activities can imminently reach full potential. According to the IMF, the global economy will shrink by 3 per cent this year; in what is described as the worst decline since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The effects of restrictions on countries expectedly differ. The availability of universal healthcare, digital devices, access to data, digitalisation of systems and processes, good and affordable broadband internet service, financial inclusion, social prosperity and other proactive measures have been consequential in countries that appear to attenuate the enormous economic impact. For instance, the central banks of several countries have successfully slashed interest rates alongside other fiscal and monetary policies, all in an effort to

encourage borrowing and spending. These measures have however proven to be some of the most feasible ways to theoretically boost their respective economies. The UK, Germany, Italy and France are some of the countries that have furloughed government-supported job retention schemes extended to the millions of people that constitute their workforces.

However, the impacts of COVID-19 join a long list of factors that expose Africa's perceived economic backwardness; evidently prompted by some of the earlier mentioned infrastructure either lying in poor state, being totally dormant, lagging behind on up-to-date trends or being summarily unavailable to the majority of the working population. In turn, this constricts the capacity to remain productive, keep businesses running and ensure optimal revenue generation.

The pandemic has undoubtedly caused significant social and economic disruption. African countries have been propelled to impose various preventive and containment measures; South Africa, Rwanda, Tunisia and the Democratic Republic of Congo constitute some of the countries that announced complete lockdowns. Governments, through their machineries and the media, have urged residents to stay home and distant, all in order to limit person-to-person transmission.

Many employers across the continent have therefore transitioned to telecommuting; permitting employees to work from home or outside their traditional workspaces, and using video conferencing platforms to conduct staff and client meetings. These employers are also adopting technological solutions that enable

them to shift the bulk of their operations online.

With the exemption of a few essential service providers, most organisations swiftly directed members of staff in various locations to work from home. Ringier One Africa Media (ROAM), a media company with operations in eight sub-Saharan African countries is one of those organisations. In March, it signaled its readiness to adjust by announcing that it required its 400 employees to work remotely, as part of its efforts to protect them from the widespread of the virus.

Organisations are taking advantage of Africa's booming digital space to convene virtual management and shareholder meetings, to maintain the standard procedures required for effective decision-making and corporate governance. United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA) is a Pan-African financial institution offering bank services to more than 20 million customers, across 1,000 offices and customer touchpoints, in 20 African countries. In April, UBA held its first virtual Annual General Meeting. In attendance were representatives of relevant regulatory bodies, shareholders, management and staff. Industry leaders such as Zenith Bank and Standard Bank Group have since followed suit.

Finally, businesses have adopted strategies that have allowed staff and customers to smoothly transition from routine cash payments to online transactions.

Paga, a mobile money organisation with 500 employees and a presence in two African countries is one of such. In March, it announced strategies to reduce cash handling, in order to slow the spread of the virus and adjusted its fees in such a way that merchants can accept payment with its platform without incurring charges.

COVID-19 has had enormous implications in the education sector. UNESCO says that 9.8 million African students are experiencing acute interruptions in their education, and this raises pressing concerns.



Opeoluwa Runsewe is calling on the public and private sectors to ensure internet access is widened.

In Nigeria, a few state governments have made provisions for continued learning via local television and radio following the indefinite closure of schools, as declared in March by the Federal Government of Nigeria. This is also the case in Côte d'Ivoire and Botswana, with both operating similar models aimed at bridging this gap. In Ghana, the University of Ghana conducts online classes and has negotiated free internet data with indigenous telecom companies.

In Rwanda, South Africa, and Tunisia, universities have partnered with governments and internet service providers to avail students free access to select educational websites. In March, Eneza education partnered with Safaricom to deliver free revision material to Kenyan students for 60 days; OJAR foundation, an NGO committed to the capacity development of young innovators, and African digital education leaders, Sapphital partnered to deliver an initiative dubbed 'E-learning4impact' which provides free access to an impressive catalogue of specially curated courses for young African across different disciplines. Private organisations and NGOs have

adopted similar strategies in Egypt, Libya, Liberia, Tunisia, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa.

While these strategies are admirable, their plausibility raises important questions against a backdrop of twin challenges – power supply and internet access. In Africa, these are effectively crippling the digital solutions aimed at taking the edge of the effects of the virus.

While the rate of global access to electricity is 87 per cent, the rate in Africa is 43 per cent. Residents in African countries like Chad, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda suffer sporadic power supplies. In addition, going online presents complications in an Africa where only 24 per cent of the population have access to the internet. Related problems include poor connectivity and exorbitant costs. Getting online is expensive for the majority of the populace, reports suggest that purchasing a mobile phone and 500MB worth of internet data cost an average 10 per cent of monthly income.

Notably, Transsion Holdings, an Asian company, produces mobile phone brands like Techno, Infinix and Itel, specifically tailored to be hybrid option; providing top-notch

features and at the same time, relatively low-cost. Africans also purchase previously owned phones flooding the markets from around the world, considerably reducing the cost of mobile phone purchase amid the barely existent credit or installment payment options. Yet many African telcos do not offer the high-speed internet access and affordable data packages to facilitate telecommuting and easy digital transactions.

In usual African fashion; thriving amid long-existing turbulence, Africa is experiencing fast growth in its digital space. There is a visible increase in tech-enabled businesses in Africa. Notably, mobile technology in Africa is its fastest growing market. Seventy per cent of the world is already connected via mobile with Africa experiencing the fastest growth in this respect. PwC reports that between 2007 and 2016, mobile phone usage in Africa increased by 344 per cent. Mobile broadband is accessible to two-thirds of the population and has contributed to the continent's socio-economic development by affording digital and financial inclusion.

Importantly, mobile phones have afforded small businesses the means to participate in e-commerce. Nigeria's e-commerce sector is Africa's largest, valued at US\$13bn. Meanwhile, WhatsApp is a free mobile app used by millions of Nigerians. Small businesses have become smart; using WhatsApp to build strong consumer relationships, increase market share and, to boost revenue generation.

The challenges in Africa's digital space, as unveiled by the pandemic, have been perceived to be slowing down the expected utilisation of technology on the continent. However, the present awareness of these problems present endless opportunities, and should become an important launch pad for innovation in infrastructure and the digital marketplace. The workplace and the education sector, for instance, can now create new, sustainable models which are accessible, inclusive and qualitative. ■

Moving ahead digitally by air, land and sea

The transport and logistics sector is going from strength to strength across Africa and the world with advances in digital technology modernising operations. Georgia Lewis reports.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Delivering protective equipment has been a logistics challenge during the pandemic.

The days of transport being a simple matter of loading goods on trucks, trains, ships or planes and hoping they will reach their destination are long gone. But this means that the technologies which have reshaped transport and logistics are improving customer service and making operations more efficient and effective.

In recent years, adopting digital technology has become a must-do rather than a nice-to-do. Two years ago, for example, East Africa-based Spedag Interfreight, launched their real-time tracking solution PeriSpoor to more than 500 stakeholders. This allows the tracking of cargo along its journey by sea, rail and road to or from any seaport in the world to or from any location in Eastern Africa, and customers can track their goods by mobile app and web application, showing the position in real-time on Google maps. This service has become an industry standard.

COVID-19 and logistics technology in healthcare

The COVID-19 pandemic has added new urgency to the logistics sector, particularly in regard to the transportation of essential medications and equipment, which can range from masks for medical professionals through to ventilators. According to a report by MarketWatch, “Global Rural Clinical and Healthcare Logistics Market by Service, By Application and By Region Forecast to 2027”, the worldwide rural clinical and healthcare logistics market is estimated to grow because of the rise in global demand for pharmaceuticals and medical devices along with the lack of efficient logistics infrastructure in various countries. The companies which can provide these services effectively, especially in regions where transport can be a challenge, will be in a good position to win contracts, at least while the pandemic is still active.

An example of this was a PPE shipment transported as part of DHL’s dedicated weekly air freight solution from China to Africa, using UbuntuConnect, the specific air freight solution for the China-Africa lane via Dubai.

“The ongoing pandemic is causing a dearth in global air freight capacity making it ever critical that we continue to amass our resources globally to ensure a stable supply chain, especially for medical and critical supplies. With UbuntuConnect, we are carving out specific routes from the transit hub in Dubai to Africa, so lifesaving essentials can continue to reach local communities in Ghana,” said Serigne Ndanck Mbaye, CEO, DHL Global Forwarding (West Africa) and country manager, Ghana.

The MarketWatch report found that technology is certainly playing a role in this particular sector. The global rural clinical and healthcare logistics market projected to experience CAGR of 5.4 per cent during the forecast period of 2020-2027. As well as the upswing caused by the pandemic, the primary factors for growth in this sector are the increasing life expectancy worldwide and the surge in sales of pharmaceutical products. Additionally, the upsurge in demand for blockchain technology to improve efficiency and data security in the healthcare supply chain is projected to trigger the growth of global rural clinical and healthcare logistics market size. The digitisation and improvement of logistics chains is expected to lead to the robust growth of the market. Through efficient order and warehouse distribution system, GPS, and other Internet of Things equipment and transportation transit equipment optimisation, while improving efficiency and reducing costs, it ensures the safety and

real-time tracking of cargo transportation. Customers can follow the real-time position of vehicles in real-time through mobile platforms.

Furthermore, growing usage of cloud-based supply chain solutions and a secured supply chain function for verifying the authenticity of the drugs will accelerate the demand for rural clinical and healthcare logistics services over the next six or seven years. The increase in global population and chronic diseases increased medical opportunities around the world, and technological advancements in the healthcare supply chain will boost the rural clinical and healthcare logistics market.



Image Credit: DHL

Air freight operators remained busy during the lockdown period.

Emerging from lockdown

The transport and logistics sector has been relatively swift to emerge from the COVID-19 lockdown, which also augurs well for companies looking to supply technology. For example, in South Africa, the movement of non-essential cargo only shut down for a short period of time after the coronavirus outbreak. By April this year, these operators were up and running again. Transnet, a state-owned logistics firm, was among the first to restart operations, moving goods such as minerals and other commodities. There had been a temporary ban on the transport and handling of all cargo from South African ports of entry to their intended destinations, which was originally meant to last 21 days, but the government amended its disaster management regulations and lifted this ban early.

The growth in e-commerce across Africa will also help drive technology in the logistics sector. In May this year, DHL acquired a stake in their strategic partner company, Link Commerce, in support of growing e-commerce in Sub-Saharan Africa and other global emerging e-commerce markets, indicating the power of digital technology in this sector. Link Commerce, a UK-based e-commerce firm, helped the logistics company develop its hugely successful DHL Africa eShop platform.

At the time of the deal, Hennie Heymans, CEO of DHL Express sub-Saharan Africa, said that the acquisition demonstrated the company's commitment to growing e-commerce on the continent.

"Acquiring a stake in Link Commerce – the company behind the MallforAfrica.com platform – shows our tremendous support of e-commerce in Africa. It positions us to realise our ambitions of growing the eShop offering globally, and work on the scalability of the platform when the opportunity arises," Mr Heymans said. ■



SPEDAG INTERFREIGHT
 Logistics connecting continents®



BUILT FOR
EFFICIENCY

A dependable supply chain, based on highest quality and maximum efficiency, is a key ingredient for success. We are your dependable partner for transport and logistics solutions.

Spedag Interfreight Ltd.
4132 Muttentz / Basel
Switzerland

+41 58 677 77 77

**Worldwide Network.
Skilled Professionals.
Logistics connecting continents.**

www.spedaginterfreight.com

Transforming Nigeria's primary health care sector

ABCHealth chairman Aig-Imoukhuede shares his vision of the private sector-led Adopt-a-Healthcare-Facility Programme (ADHFP) and the positive consequences for Nigeria.

ABCHealth is committed to the transformation of Africa's healthcare system, originating universal access at the primary level. Chairman, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, who also chairs GBCHealth, recently provided insights into a new idea to transform Nigeria's primary health care sector named 'The Adopt a Primary Health Facility Programme' which will bring many benefits including the provision of quality healthcare to people regardless of geographic, social or financial barriers. The programme has the backing of the Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria (PSHAN) founded by Aliko Dangote, Jim Ovia and Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede.

GBCHealth: What's your vision for ADHFP? What's the anticipated timeline for creation and implementation and, importantly, what's the potential impact for Nigeria?

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede: The 'Adopt-A-Healthcare-Facility-Programme' (ADHFP) is driven by my belief that the African continent will continue to carry the painful and shameful burden of high disease mortality long after the rest of the world has overcome such challenges unless we address the poor state of healthcare systems at the primary level.

The goal is to establish a chain of Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs), across Nigeria's 774 Local Government Areas and apply market-based reforms to provide low-cost health services at decent standards to the poor and vulnerable. We expect to complete the programme design phase by Q3 2020 and commence pilots before the end of the year.

The ADHFP is a multi-impact initiative with several benefits for



Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede.

Nigeria including:

- Reduction in mortality rates
- Creation of new jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and health-focused start-ups
- Improved public sector accountability
- Female gender empowerment
- Increased uptake of micro-health insurance
- Successful health policy reform

GBCHealth: Why ADHFP – focusing on healthcare facilities/systems/standards/infrastructure – and why now? How did the pandemic influence this decision? How will COVID-19 inform the design of the programme? What will change as a result?

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede: The ADHFP was conceived early in 2019 well before I had ever heard of the

word 'Coronavirus'. Interestingly, whilst championing the Global Citizens global goal live campaign in Davos this January, I made the case that it is unacceptable for Africa to continue suffering the effects of pandemics like HIV and malaria long after the rest of the world has put them to bed. I said Nigerians and other stakeholders must launch a movement to revive our ailing healthcare sector starting by fixing the 80 per cent of our 30,000 primary health care facilities, which are currently comatose. COVID-19 is a burning platform for change and reform in Africa's health sector.

With COVID-19 beaming a spotlight on the weaknesses and inadequacies of our health system, the pandemic has simply reinforced, with devastating effect, the reasons ADHFP was conceptualised in the

first place. As the pandemic spreads, it has become evident to Nigerians that our primary health system must be fixed with urgency, otherwise our people will continue to die needlessly.

GBCHealth: Why a private sector-led initiative? What is the business case/value proposition for 'angels' to adopt one or more PHCs? Have conversations started, and if so, what's the response? Do you think this is an easier 'sell' in today's environment, in the midst of the pandemic, when health and healthcare are the recurrent lead stories and priorities?

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede: The government's track record on annual health spending falls far short of the 15 per cent Abuja Declaration to address the heavy burden of HIV, AIDS, TB and malaria agreed upon by African heads of state in 2001. Revenue challenges due to global commodity prices as well as poor governance and corruption have also constrained what is spent on health by the government. Funding must come from other sources such as foreign assistance and the private sector. But beyond funding, Nigeria's primary health sector is largely the responsibility of the local government tier of government, which suffers from weak capacity, poor governance, and an absence of accountability.

So beyond funding, we will continue to perform abysmally at the primary healthcare level without the involvement of capable and engaged citizens in the running and administration of our primary health system, hence the need for private sector organised participation.

The programme will be implemented as a private-sector-driven initiative. ADHFP will be



The programme is focused on Nigeria but could be replicated across Africa.

Image Credit: Adobe Stock

sponsored by angel investors who could be individuals or institutions. Each “angel” will take responsibility for one or more PHCs. They will build and operate the PHCs for the period of adoption under strict rules and guidelines.

Serious work is ongoing to make this vision a reality. The work is led by the Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria (PSHAN) founded by Aliko Dangote, Jim Ovia, myself and a number of notable organisations who have established themselves as serious actors in the field of Nigerian philanthropy and have rallied to the cause. They include: Global Citizen, Africa Business Coalition for Health (ABCHealth), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), World Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC), MTN Nigeria Plc, Dangote Group, Zenith Bank, Access Bank, Stanbic-IBTC Bank, PwC, Cisco, Ford Foundation, Nigerian Stock Exchange, Flying Doctors Nigeria, Africa Practice, Cedar Advisory Partners, GBCHealth, Health Federation of Nigeria, Health Law, Eti-Osa Local Government, JNC International Ltd, Johnson &

Johnson, Justice in Healthcare, Lagos State Government, MSD for Mothers, Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG), ONE Campaign, PharmAccess Foundation, Women-At-Risk International Foundation as well as the SSA to the President on Sustainable Development Goals among others.

GBCHealth: What are some of the challenges you are anticipating and how are you planning to mitigate those? Do you see this as a replicable model for other countries?

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede: The ADHFP is a ground-breaking, innovative, private-sector driven initiative, but there are a number of risks and challenges associated with its development and implementation.

At the moment, the most significant risk is the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, with attendant effects arising from restrictions in movement, risks to life and the damage to the Nigerian economy. Fortunately, a number of tried and tested business continuity strategies have emerged that we can apply to mitigate pandemic risks.

Another major risk to be mitigated is the possible loss of enthusiasm by ADHFP sponsors, donors and implementing partners. These are mission critical stakeholders whose interest must be sustained through the highs and lows of reform implementation. Great reliance will be placed on our ability to engage the hearts and minds of donors and implementing partners. Adopting best practices in project management, getting some quick wins and successful delivery of program objectives will go a long way to ensuring that our angels stay the course. Another risk is misinformation about the ADHFP. To mitigate this, an effective communication strategy will be developed to ensure PHC host communities are carried along. In addition, Traditional institutions, civil society and the media will be carried along through traditional and technology enabled channels. Extensive stakeholder consultations with both current and past actors at state and local government level is also ongoing with the purposeful intent of getting them to support ADHFP. Once we have demonstrated that we can effectively

manage these risks, I am quite confident that ADHFP will become a model of reference for strengthening primary health care delivery across Nigeria. Indeed, through the Africa Business Coalition for Health (ABCHealth), it is our intention that the initiative will become a flagship community health development strategy in Africa.

GBCHealth: Your legacy already includes building and strengthening Nigeria's financial and capital markets and the public sector through AIG. Is reimagining the healthcare system the missing piece on the way to a more prosperous Nigeria?

Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede: There are many missing pieces required to solve the Nigerian puzzle. It takes leadership for a community to reach its full potential. I know that each of Nigeria's 774 local government areas is blessed with citizens who have the capacity to transform the quality of primary health care available to their people. Let's join forces and become partners in the business of saving lives. ■

Germany ramps up investment in Africa energy

In an exclusive webinar hosted by the Africa Energy Chamber and Germany Africa Business Forum, panellists sought to mobilise German investment into the African energy sector, establishing power production, clean energy and digitalisation as major pillars of economic and investment cooperation.

In recent years, the African continent has shifted to the forefront of Germany's foreign policy and development agenda, with programmes rolled out under the country's US\$1.1bn Development Investment Fund for Africa, which is primarily dedicated to easing the entrance of German businesses into African markets.

A prime example of German-African cooperation lies in Equatorial Guinea, which employed two German contractors in the construction of West Africa's first LNG storage and regasification plant located on the country's mainland.

Senegal enjoys a long-standing partnership with Germany that has mobilised more than 1 billion in funding. Germany plays a significant role in power projects through investment in small-scale plants and renewables energy, facilitated by its agreement with the the G20 Compact with Africa (CwA) that has supported almost 800 SMEs in the country. "We currently have more than 200 million in undergoing projects, primarily focused on renewable energy, energy efficiency and access to electricity throughout the whole country," said Ibrahima Mané, director general for Cooperation & Financing for the Republic of Senegal. "The energy sector ... is a dynamic sector with many bilateral and multilateral partners. Germany is making a major contribution in the field of renewable energy, principally through power plants of 25MW implemented in areas outside of Dakar."

There are major opportunities for German companies in Africa in digitalisation, as German businesses possess the technical expertise and know-how to enable knowledge and technology transfer.

"Opportunities are immediately available, in terms of smart grids, automation of metering systems, automation of production lines and adoption of FinTech. On top of that, we are seeing companies invest in training youth and the utilisation of digital technologies," said Onyeché Tifase, head of Strategy, Technology & Innovation, Oil and Gas Division for Siemens Energy. "For German companies that are in the high-tech space and have found ways to create a success story in advanced countries, now is the time to transition to Africa. Furthermore, with the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, we are seeing an even greater push toward industrialisation. We are hoping for Nigeria to become a net exporter, and this cannot be done without digitalisation."

Siemens is playing a leading role in Nigeria's power sector. In 2019 the company signed a contract with the Nigerian government to rehabilitate and expand the country's electricity system with the aim of boosting transmission capacity to 25,000MW by 2025, from 4,500MW. This will involve upgrading dozens of power substations and building new ones, as well as installing new transformers and distribution lines. German lenders are expected to finance the supply of all equipment, products and systems for the project.



There are major opportunities for German companies in Africa in digitalisation.

Image Credit: Adobe Stock

SASOL INVITES BIDDERS FOR SOLAR PV FACILITIES

Sasol is inviting interested bidders to participate in a Request for Proposals (RFPs) process for the development of two embedded 10MW Solar Photo-Voltaic (PV) facilities at its South African operations in Secunda, Mpumalanga and Sasolburg, Free State – as part of its response to climate change. The closing date for submissions is 2 October 2020. The RFPs are a first step towards Sasol realising its commitment and objective to eventually procure 600MW of renewable energy capacity. The successful bidder(s) will supply electricity from the Solar PV facilities as Independent Power Producer(s) to Sasol as part of a long-term Power Purchase Agreement.

Sasol's chief sustainability officer, Hermann Wenhöld, said, "We are excited to launch the RFP which forms part of our broader Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction aspiration and moves us forward on our journey to achieving our target of a 10 per cent GHG emission reduction by 2030."

DRC TO PROGRESS GAS MONETISATION PROJECTS

The Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi has requested ministers to fast-track legal processes and permits pertaining to the valorisation of the natural gas produced onshore by independent French oil and gas company Perenco. The move is expected to result in the monetisation of natural gas through power generation, to address the DRC's energy deficit and provide a stable supply of power to its booming mining industry.

The administration of President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi has made energy security and investment a priority, seeking to get massive hydropower projects off the ground as well as to diversify the country's energy supply and create jobs in the process.

► BRIEFS

Report launched on energy opportunities in Africa

Image Credit: Africa Oil Week



The report considers how factors accelerating the energy transition will affect Africa.

Africa Oil Week has launched a report in association with Wood Mackenzie entitled "Opportunities for Africa in the Energy Transition". It explores the continent's role in meeting global hydrocarbon demand and also looks at how net zero goals, electrification, and new technology deployments are accelerating the energy transition globally, while providing an overview of how these factors are at play within Africa. The report is available at <https://bit.ly/330FbNc>.

NOGP Conference & Exhibition to be held in 2021

Image Credit: Africa Oil & Power



The event will focus on gas monetisation and power generation.

With good potential for gas-to-power, LNG and downstream diversification to power Nigeria's economy in the long-term, the first-ever Nigeria Oil, Gas & Power (NOGP) Conference & Exhibition, to be held in Lagos on 26-27 October 2021, will focus on the path forward for Nigeria post COVID-19, with an emphasis on gas monetisation and power generation. The conference will also highlight the marginal fields licensing round held in 2020. www.africaoilandpower.com

Fuel cells to power South Africa military hospital

South Africa's Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) has unveiled five methanol fuel cell systems and two hydrogen fuel cell systems, which will be used at Pretoria's 1 Military Hospital as a primary source of power for the field hospital facilities established as part of Government's response to COVID-19.

The project is a partnership between the DSI, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, the Department of Defence, and private sector companies. In addition to it being part of government's COVID-19 response, it is also integral to government's vision to integrate hydrogen within the economy, motivated by the benefits that will accrue as a result, which include decarbonising the economy. Hydrogen fuel cell technology has the potential to make a strong contribution in decarbonising the energy and transport sectors.

Sasol will be donating 10 000 litres of methanol and 600 kg of hydrogen every month until the end of April 2021 to help power the field ICU facility at the hospital. The company is also working with its customers, Air Products and Protea Chemicals, to assist with logistics for supplying the fuels to 1 Military hospital.

"This is an important initiative for Sasol for many reasons," said Charlotte Mokoena, executive vice president for Human Resources and Corporate Affairs at Sasol. "We are deliberately pursuing renewable energy sources through technology, innovation and collaboration, and sustainably produced hydrogen is integral to us reducing our carbon footprint across our operations."

Beyond this project, Sasol will continue working with the DSI in the process towards the development of a South African Hydrogen Roadmap.

"We see public-private and private-private partnerships as critical in decarbonising South Africa's energy landscape, whilst fulfilling socio-economic and sustainable development goals," said Mokoena.

Other partners on the project are Bambili Energy Group, which is a Black and Black female-owned entity that specialises in commercialising intellectual property developed through the Hydrogen South Africa (HySA) programme, as well as technology providers Horizon, Element One and Powercell Sweden.



South Africa is looking to develop its hydrogen economy.

FIRST UNDERGRID MINIGRID PROJECT LAUNCHED IN NIGERIA

Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), Nigerian distribution company IBEDC, and Nayo Tech, with support from the Nigerian Rural Electrification Agency (REA), have joined forces to develop Nigeria's first commercial undergrid minigrid project in the rural community of Mokoloki in Ogun state. The Mokoloki project demonstrates a financially viable business model that could provide electricity access to millions living in underserved rural communities throughout Nigeria, says RMI.

"We are delighted to witness strategic collaborations geared toward accelerating energy access in unserved and underserved communities across Nigeria. What makes this project unique, beyond being Nigeria's first commercial undergrid minigrid in a rural community, is the social and economic transformation that the project ultimately brings to the Mokoloki community," said Ahmad Salihijo, MD/CEO of the REA.

"Mokoloki's undergrid minigrid shows how utilities, developers, and communities can collaboratively develop innovative power solutions, and this willingness to test new approaches has unlocked a new option for increasing energy access," added James Sherwood, principal at RMI.

Mokoloki previously struggled with intermittent electricity access and poor voltage quality. An estimated 40 million rural residents are underserved by the main grid in Nigeria, nearly 35 per cent of whom could be served by over 4,000 commercially viable undergrid minigrid systems.

Using a modular design approach, the solar-hybrid minigrid initially provides 100 kW of generation for an estimated peak load of 88 kW, with an expansion plan in place for anticipated load growth. After three months of operation, it is serving 230 households and more than 60 commercial and public enterprises.

DIGITAL ENERGY FESTIVAL FOR AFRICA

Africa Energy Forum 2020 is joining forces with the African Utility Week & POWERGEN Africa and Oil & Gas Council's Africa Assembly to host the Digital Energy Festival for Africa.

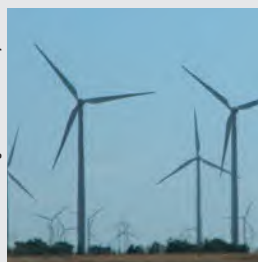
The event will take place online from 20 October - 26 November 2020 under the theme 'The 5th Industrial Revolution.' The digital platform will allow attendees to access content and networking offerings across all three market leading events, making it the largest ever energy event for the African continent.

Following the impact of the pandemic on the energy sector in Africa, the event will seek to address critical issues such as pivoting to digital, new financial models and innovative power generation sources.

More than 10,000 attendees are expected to register for the Festival, which will employ AI technology to match attendees with relevant content and networking opportunities. The event will feature an online marketplace of products hosted by sponsors and exhibitors. www.africa-energy-forum.com

BRIEFS

Image Credit: Alana Sise/Flickr



The wind project will alleviate around one million tonnes a year of CO₂ emissions.

New wind project for Egypt

Egypt's New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA) has signed an agreement with Denmark's Vestas and other European partners to develop a 250MW wind project on the western coast of the Gulf of Suez. It will be one of the largest privately developed utility scale wind power plants in Egypt, and will be financed through an agreement between the Government of Egypt, the French Development Agency, the EU, the EIB and Germany's KfW Development Bank.



The VAT exemptions will apply to equipment such as solar PV panels.

Senegal VAT exemptions

Senegal's Ministry of Petroleum and Energies has announced that renewable energy equipment will be exempt from value added tax (VAT), resulting in an 18 per cent reduction in purchase costs, with the aim of increasing rural electrification and universal access to energy. Senegal has focused strongly on renewable energy, with a 158MW windfarm inaugurated in 2019 and several major solar projects as well as off-grid solutions developed over the last few years.

Electrifying Africa: a new initiative for the continent

Dr Kevin Kariuki, vice-president, Power, Energy, Climate Change & Green Growth, at African Development Bank talks about the progress made through the African Development Bank's New Deal on Energy for Africa initiative.



Five years into the African Development Bank's ambitious New Deal on Energy for Africa (NDEA), the bank's investments are set to provide electricity access to around 13 million people and deliver about 55,000km of distribution lines, and 6,700km of transmission lines, of which 3,200km are for regional interconnections.

The NDEA called for a substantial increase in investments to realise the bank's High 5 priority to "Light Up and Power Africa," which aims to mobilise finance and expertise to expand access to reliable, sustainable energy for more than 200 million Africans through investments in power generation, inter-connections, transmission and distribution. This effort is critical to unlocking Africa's vast economic potential, enabling the growth of value-adding industries and services, and, most importantly, unleashing the ingenuity of the continent's 1.3 billion people.

The strategy was grounded in the recognition that partnerships are central to its success. In collaboration with African countries, the bank's interventions have ranged from setting up the right enabling policy environment, supporting utilities, to increasing the number of bankable energy projects. Additionally, the bank is accelerating major regional projects and driving integration through the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa, while supporting bottom-of-the-pyramid energy access programmes.

Priority was given to investments in low-carbon technologies, set to contribute to over 2GW of additional generation capacity by harnessing the large, hydro, solar, geothermal and wind resources of the continent.

Yet this is only the beginning, as much of the work to date has been centered on setting up the right frameworks to mobilise different partners and alternative forms of capital to tackle the various challenges in the sector at country, sub-regional and regional levels.

Indeed, mobilising partnerships and rolling out countrywide energy transformation are continuous works in progress. In 2019, as testament to the bank's efforts in enhancing dialogue and consensus, the G5 Heads of State endorsed the bank's Desert to Power initiative, intended to build the world's largest solar zone across the Sahel by adding up to 10GW of solar generation capacity through public and private interventions. The Yeleen Solar Program in Burkina Faso — the first of dozens of similar projects expected to flourish across the Sahel region — will provide energy to 150,000 households in rural areas through solar mini-grids and solar home systems, and an additional 52MW of grid-connected solar generation, enough to power 30,000 new households.

Achieving the objectives of the New Deal on Energy for Africa will require a significant increase in private sector investments. The bank catalyses more private investments into independent power producers and off-grid projects through partnerships with project developers, commercial banks, private equity funds, institutional investors and

other development finance institutions. Over the past five years, the bank's interventions reached US\$1.5bn in private sector operations, corresponding to 1.7GW additional generation capacity through independent power producers.

In addition to mobilising concessional resources through bilateral and multilateral sources — notably from the European Union, Green Climate Fund and Climate Investment Funds — the bank hosts the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA), one of the largest multi-donor technical assistance and concessional capital funds in the continent, designed to catalyze private sector participation in renewable energy.

In 2019, the bank converted SEFA into a special trust fund to widen its interventions into green mini-grids to accelerate energy access to underserved populations; green baseload to support clean generation capacity; and energy efficiency to optimise energy systems and reduce energy intensity. SEFA is expected to contribute to the electrification of more than 7 million households by 2030.

The bank is also actively supporting the mobilisation of commercial capital through blended finance solutions. The Facility for Energy Inclusion, which was operationalised in 2019, is a US\$500mn investment platform organised around two funds — off-grid and on-grid — to provide flexible debt

products, including in local currency, to emerging business models in the small-scale renewable energy space. The Facility for Energy Inclusion will contribute to more than three million new connections by 2030.

To enhance institutional performance and improve the enabling conditions to attract much needed investments, the bank has also implemented initiatives such as the Electricity Regulatory Index to monitor and benchmark regulatory performance against best practices, the Sustainable Utilities Transformation Agenda, to build sustainable utilities and energy institutions, and the Africa Energy Portal to provide accurate, up-to-date data on Africa's energy sector.

In 2019, the African Development Bank reported that an additional 96 million African households had gained access to electricity between 2015 and 2019, with countries like Rwanda on track to achieve universal access by 2025. Despite this encouraging progress, close to 600 million Africans still lack electricity access and achieving universal access goals under SDG7 still requires greater and swifter efforts to meet the demands of Africa's growing population.

Addressing electricity access remains a costly enterprise, with the International Energy Agency placing the price tag at around US\$120bn annually through 2040, four times higher than current levels.

While our direct financial contribution is modest by comparison, we are confident that its judicious application to catalytic power projects, innovative financial structures, sector reform processes and acceleration of decentralised solutions will get us far in our mission. ■

“ In 2019, an additional 96 million African households had gained access to electricity between 2015 and 2019.”

Greening the Network

Power has long been a big focus of the passive telecom infrastructure industry. A new initiative offers telecom tower professionals a chance to discuss how to reduce network emissions, as Matthew Edwards of TowerXchange tells Phil Desmond.

Greening the Network is described as a community for telecom tower professionals to meet and discuss ways to reduce network emissions. It sprang from ongoing concerns about energy.

“Power is the main reason communications networks go dark in emerging markets,” says Matthew Edwards, head of research, EMEA, TowerXchange, an open community for thought leaders in the global tower industry. “So power has always been a big focus of the passive telecom infrastructure industry. Mobile operators often contract for 99.5 per cent uptime or better in emerging markets, and this is impossible without really resilient and reliable cell site power.”

Diesel generators remain the biggest source of power for telecom sites in developing markets. However, diesel comes with all sorts of drawbacks: it is noisy, dirty and requires frequent maintenance and refuelling. And of course diesel theft and shortages present major operational challenges.

No wonder as Edwards puts it, “Green technologies like solar, wind, battery storage and smart power management are all being adopted to reduce reliance on diesel and reduce costs and operational complexity.”

Hence Greening the Network was started to enable the industry to coordinate and share insights on the transition to greener networks.

Telecom tower professionals are hungry to move towards a greener network. They are always concerned about keeping sites available and keeping costs down; the focus on greening the network also revolves around these two priorities.

Edwards explains, “First of all, much of the technology is now

proven. Solar panels and batteries are becoming cheaper every year, and that makes adoption much easier. They have been used as back-up on cell sites for many years, so adoption is easy and accelerating.” There is, however, less known about wind power or fuel cells “and so,” he says, “there have been lots of questions about how these technologies can be deployed and added to the cell site energy mix.”

Another concern is around supply chain support. Spare parts, maintenance contractors and fuel for diesel generators are all easy to find, but for newer technologies without support networks in place, there can be concerns about introducing a new technology into the mix.

Similarly, the ground space at cell sites has been sized for a diesel generator, not for solar panels or a wind turbine – and at many sites it is not possible to use renewables for primary power. “So,” says Edwards, “the industry is still working out how to move from a diesel default to a green default.”

What then is the current state of tower power in developing world markets like Africa? “In Africa there has been big investment in green energy, but we are still at the start of the curve. If you look at Helios Towers for example, they have solar installed at 400-500 of their 7,000 sites. And telecom energy service companies (ESCOs) are currently in the process of upgrading 3,000

Orange sites to green configurations.”

However, most of sub-Saharan Africa’s approximately 170,000 sites are diesel only. Edwards explains, “With capital scarce in Africa, old generators are run for a long as possible, so it will take time for the capital replacement cycle to see sites upgraded. But,” he adds, “it is happening.”

Green power is also fairly competitively priced, it seems. Solar panels and energy storage have come down in price massively, so the question is less about cost competitiveness and more about reliability and the correct mix of green sources and diesel.

“Of course some sites are hard to transition for space or local supply chain constraint reasons, but price is no longer the principal barrier.” The Greening the Network initiative refers to decarbonising tower power and improving network resilience, which, says Edwards, “go hand in hand: a real win-win situation.”

He explains, “Adding a new generating technology to a cell site energy mix adds resilience. If you run out of fuel because your maintenance crew is delayed but the sun is shining then your site stays up. If it becomes cloudy but you have a diesel generator on standby then your site stays up too.”

Could a growing emphasis on asset sharing, outsourcing, neutral host and virtualisation also help with greening the network? As

Edwards says: “Infrastructure sharing is inherently green and capital efficient. Virtualisation and neutral host systems can allow for much lower power draw from network equipment, and that makes it easier for sites to rely solely on green energy and minimise the need for diesel. A smaller site allows for solar and storage to cover much longer periods of operation, in some cases eliminating the need for a diesel back-up generator altogether.”

Of course, Greening the Network isn’t just an emerging market programme. TowerXchange is, says Edwards, very encouraged to see towercos and MNOs in developed markets embracing network greening. As he says, “5G and 4G/LTE are very efficient on a watt per byte basis compared to 3G but, because data throughput is so much higher, the network equipment can be very power hungry. Keeping equipment power draw down and properly managing cell site power is going to be essential to a quick and cost-efficient roll-out of 5G.”

Greening the Network has started very strongly, with two digital meetings so far. “We are building a membership of the top 100 tower power teams from across the world and we will be helping coordinate the industry to share best practice,” says Edwards, but he is careful to add, “We aren’t advocates for green power – that battle has already been won – but I see our role in helping ensure the whole industry is able to move as quickly as possible to meet its green potential.”

The next Greening the Network takes place on 23 September, please register here to watch <https://meetup.towerxchange.com/greeningthe-network/>. ■

“Adding a new generating technology to a cell site energy mix adds resilience.”

MATTHEW EDWARDS, TOWERXCHANGE

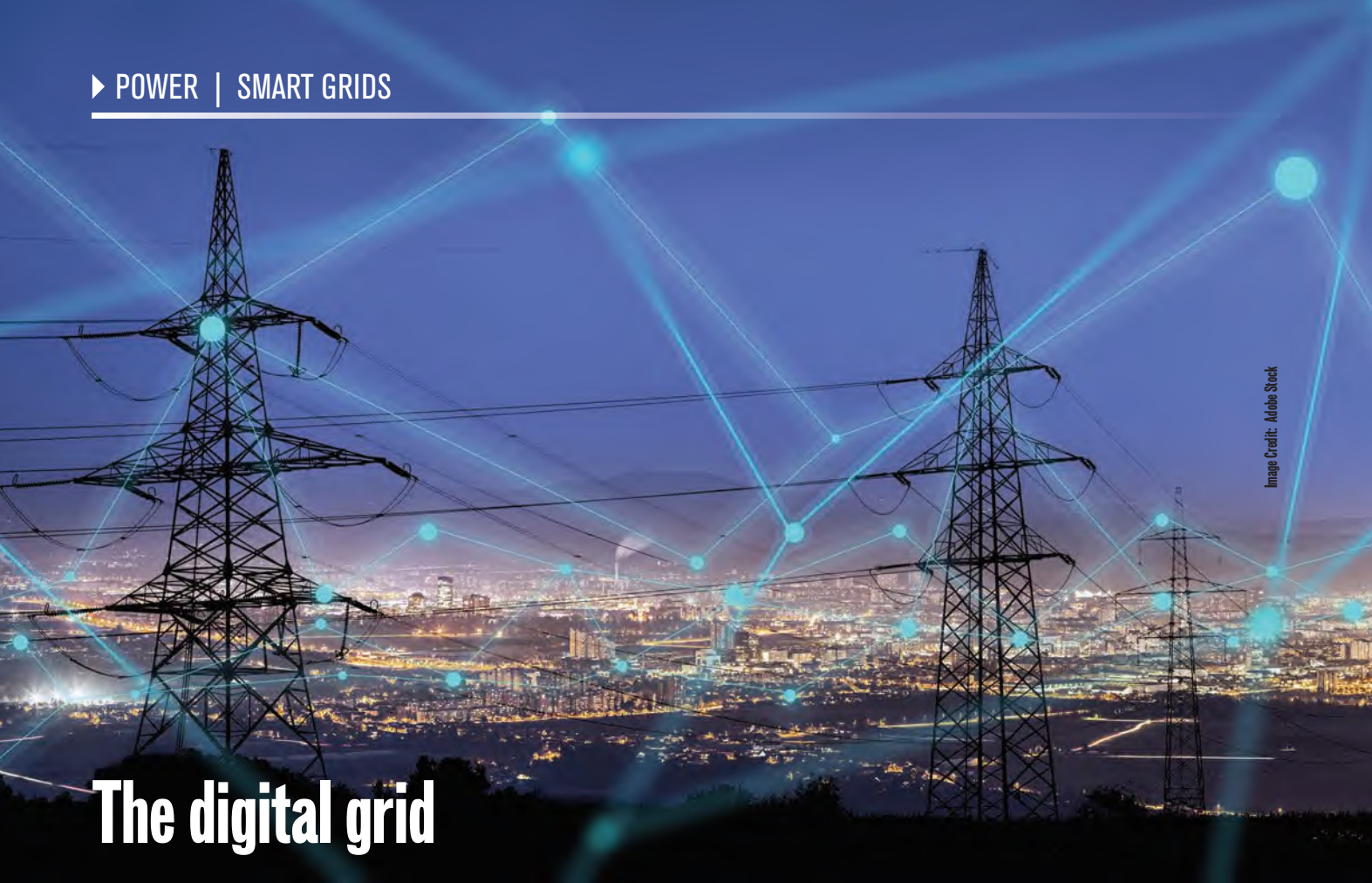


Image Credit: Adobe Stock

The digital grid

How smart grids are transforming Africa's energy sector. Martin Clark reports.

Smart grid technology is already making a big impact in Africa but is poised for significant further growth in the years ahead.

Leading smart grid and meter vendors active already in the market include ambitious Chinese technology firms such as Inhemeter, ZTE and Sanxing, among others.

But the potential for growth is simply huge, given Africa's long-term development needs and comparative energy poverty.

The market for smart grid networks in South Africa, for example, the continent's biggest economy, is expected to grow at more than 3 per cent annually through to 2025, according to a report by Mordor Intelligence.

The country has already installed more than 10 million prepaid meters.

As well as helping to boost network coverage and management by generating data and other inputs, smart meters can also help to improve revenue collection for utilities, as well as address electricity theft in low-income areas.

The technology has the potential

to make Africa's power sector more resilient, transparent and accountable.

Mordor Intelligence says this growth in South Africa and elsewhere will fuel further demand for smart metering systems, intelligent transmission lines, and other associated smart grid infrastructure.

It mirrors activity elsewhere, in which digital technologies are being deployed throughout the energy system to improve efficiencies and create a better, more reliable network system.

In West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire is rolling out smart grid technology among other energy initiatives, including a plan to achieve a 42 per cent renewables target by 2030.

Here, the government aims to use the grid network to expand access to electricity, tapping into new smart technologies, automation and control systems.

Consultancy firm EnerNex is currently working on a smart grid study to support Côte d'Ivoire Énergies (CI-Energies) in improvements to the Ivorian grid.

The project, funded by the US

Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), will lead to a full loss-reduction strategy, while factoring in other major national priorities such as the heightened use of renewable energy.

The deployment of smart meters and grids come at a time when interest in clean and alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power, is at an all-time high right across the continent.

Increased use of advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) – which differs from automatic meter reading (AMR) in that it enables two-way communication between the meter and the supplier – can play a role in maximising the potential of any new generation, from renewables through to traditional thermal-based power.

In neighbouring Ghana, though it is focused on prepaid metering, medium-scale AMI projects have been completed, including a 200,000-meter deployment by El-Sewedy Electrometer, notes Northeast Group in its Emerging Markets Smart Grid Outlook 2020 report.

Its findings suggest that this

decade will be one in which almost all emerging market nations begin, continue, or complete smart grid infrastructure rollouts.

And there is mounting competition for business, in turn.

China's Inhemeter became the first Asia-based smart prepaid meter supplier accepted by South Africa's Eskom and has already supplied half a million prepaid meters to the utility via a local partner, and established a local factory.

Elsewhere, it has supplied more than three million smart meters to Kenya.

International competitors includes India's Genus Power, which is now exporting its smart meter products to Africa and other territories.

With its long-term potential given its vast energy disparity, Africa looks set to be a market hotspot for some time to come.

South Africa, Nigeria and other high-population countries, the likes of Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, will continue to pull in foreign know-how as the drive to expand smart grid use continues in the decade ahead. ■

Isuzu Motors focuses on black empowerment in the South African market

Isuzu Motors South Africa's (IMSA) third Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) audit has resulted in the company attaining an automotive industry-leading level 1 on the scorecard for 2020.

IMSA, which launched in South Africa in 2018, became a participant in the Automotive Industry Transformation Fund (AITF), which was established by the Department of Industry, Trade and Competition to support transformation along the automotive industry value chain.

"We have embraced transformation as a business imperative and our new scorecard reflects the good business practices which we have implemented in support of this," said Billy Tom, CEO and managing director, IMSA. "We regard transformation as critical to ensuring the sustainability of our business, while at the same time it reflects our commitment to being part of the transformation of our country."

"Furthermore, to help drive this change, South Africans should support businesses who are actively contributing towards the transformation and growth of our local economy," Mr Tom added.

Elvis Hermans, Isuzu's senior vice-president for human capital and corporate services, said this achievement is the result of a number of critical actions and decisions taken over the past year to ensure Isuzu's alignment to the country's transformational and economic progression goals.

"We are committed to the growth and development of our people, our dealers and our suppliers. To this end we set ourselves rigorous goals and have acted swiftly in implementing the right strategies to achieve these goals," Mr Hermans said. "We will be working closely with the AITF to further support supplier and dealer transformation initiatives, as well as the deepening of the localisation of components, which is a pillar of the Automotive Industry Master Plan."



Isuzu Motors is making a positive impact in the South African market.

Image Credit: Adobe Stock

VOLVO WINS WITH DRIVER TRAINING FOR WOMEN

Volvo Trucks is reporting successful outcomes with its heavy vehicle driver training programme for women in South Africa before it was temporarily suspended owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Volvo Trucks Iron Woman heavy commercial driver training programme is conducted at the Commercial Transport Academy in Kempton Park in South Africa's Gauteng province. Last year, 40 women trained as professional commercial vehicle drivers, with 30 more trainees added to the programme this year.

Iron Women is aimed at enhancing the capacity of professional women drivers and to enable them to contribute to their future employers' fleet safety, profitability, and efficiency, as well as contributing to the country's wider economy.

This qualification, which is approved by South Africa's Transport Education Training Authority, is based on theoretical and practical modules.

Nicci Scott, founder of the Commercial Transport Academy where the women receive their training, said that it has been calculated that the commercial driving sector in SA is short of about 15,000 drivers.

"With truck driving today a gender-neutral task, we believe this programme is addressing gender parity in the sector through the employment of highly determined, well-trained female drivers, while creating job opportunities for SA women in economic plight," said Ms Scott.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic it once again became clear that truck drivers form the backbone of our economy," added Marcus Hörberg, vice-president of Volvo Group Southern Africa. "With women severely underrepresented in the industry, it is hoped that Iron Women will continue to help increase the pool of skilled women drivers in the country."

VOLKSWAGEN OPENS GHANA FACTORY

Volkswagen has opened a vehicle assembly facility in Accra, Ghana. With this engagement, Ghana becomes the fifth Volkswagen vehicle assembly location in sub-Saharan Africa, along with facilities in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda. Universal Motors Limited, a licensed Volkswagen importer since 2005, has been awarded the assembly contract for the initial phase of the project. The Accra plant has an installed capacity to assemble 5,000 units per annum. The models to be assembled using semi knocked-down assembly kits are the Tiguan, Teramont, Passat, Polo and Amarok.

The opening of the facility is the realisation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which Volkswagen signed with the Ghanaian government in the presence of the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, nearly two years ago. The government has fulfilled its MoU by developing a comprehensive Automotive Industry Policy with the announcement of the Ghana Automotive Development Policy.

BRIEFS



Patient transport receives a boost.

Image Credit: Ministry of Health, Liberia

New ambulances for Liberia

Liberia's Ministry of Health has received 10 new hard top ambulances from the World Bank to ensure the safe transfer of patients to health facilities. The donation will strengthen President George Manneh Weah-led government's response to the fight against the coronavirus in Liberia. The ambulances worth US\$636,000.00 are equipped with plasters, needles, IV fluid, gloves, first aid kits, stretchers, AED machines, oxygen tanks, suction and other medical equipment.



A restored railway bridge.

Image Credit: Bolloré Railways

Cameroon's 13-bridge project

Renovation work on 13 railway bridges, which was initiated as part of the five-year infrastructure renewal programme agreed between the Cameroon government and Camrail, has been completed. Under the programme, and with the contribution of the World Bank, Camrail renovated 12 metal bridges on the Transcam 2 line between Yaoundé and Ngaoundéré and one on the Edéa railway bridge on the Transcam 1 line between Douala and Yaoundé.

Full speed ahead for commercial vehicles

There is promising news for Africa's commercial vehicles sector, particularly with manufacturers getting busy building vehicles for the local market as well as export. Georgia Lewis reports.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

A Mordor Intelligence study found that while the African passenger vehicle sector is expected to maintain a bigger share of the overall automotive market, the commercial vehicle sector is forecast to grow at a faster rate.

The report cited factors such as increasing levels of infrastructure slated to drive growth until 2023 in the north and west of the continent, with Morocco and Ghana expected to be the major players. This is attributed to Ghana aiming to become a developed country by 2030 and the integration of Morocco into the global economy, particularly with the signing of free trade agreements with the European Union and the United States.

Morocco has Africa's biggest car manufacturing industry, which is helping boost the country's exports. The Renault-Nissan factory, with an annual production capacity of 340,000 vehicles, makes the Dacia Lodgy and Dokker, two popular low-

cost light commercial vehicles, as well as three passenger models. At a local level, Dacia has captured 29 per cent market share.

Stallion Group has continued to grow its African commercial vehicle operations in recent years. In 2015, it took over a moribund ex-Volkswagen factory in Nigeria and now has a capacity for making 200,000 vehicles annually. While this plant is focused on passenger cars, it has the capacity to build buses, trucks and pick-ups. The company also distributes Ashok Leyland vehicles in Nigeria and

last year, Ashok Leyland and Stallion launched the Partner and the Boss, two commercial vehicles which are assembled in and for Nigeria.

But can the African commercial vehicle market move away from traditional internal combustion engines and make the pivot to more sustainable forms of transport, such as electric vehicles?

Automotive markets across the world are looking to move to cleaner, greener vehicles and the commercial vehicle market is no exception. While African markets

will be dependent on petrol and diesel engines for many years ahead, the push towards more environmentally sustainable transport for the commercial sector cannot be ignored.

However, 2020 has not been kind to the global electric commercial vehicles market because of the economic impact of COVID-19.

According to a report by ResearchAndMarkets.com, the worldwide commercial vehicles market is expected to decline from last year's figure of US\$48.54bn to US\$40.7bn this year, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of -16.06 per cent.

In the long term though, the good news is that the global market is then expected to recover and reach US\$96.85bn in 2023 with a CAGR of 21.8 per cent, the report found. Kia Motors and the Hyundai Motor Company are set to become even bigger players in this sector in the years to come. ■

“Increasing levels of infrastructure are slated to drive growth in the commercial vehicle sector until 2023.”

MORDOR INTELLIGENCE STUDY INTO AFRICA'S COMMERCIAL AND PASSENGER VEHICLE MARKETS

Heavy duty vehicles for major projects

Specialist trucks are on duty across Africa on important projects, such as the Mercedes-Benz Unimog and adapted vehicles for cleaner, greener mining operations. Georgia Lewis reports.

The Unimog has been an intriguing success story for Mercedes-Benz. They first went into production in 1948 and since then, these chunky, all-wheel drive trucks have made their mark on major projects across the world, and Africa is no exception.

This year, the Unimog has been called into action in Mauritius for an important major infrastructure project – the construction of a 37km tram system. Four Unimogs are to be used as rescue and assistance vehicles on the rails.

Adaptations were required so the Unimogs would be up to the task. The U 423 vehicles were equipped with rail technology from the Zagro company based in Bad Rappenau, southern Germany. Zagro is a Unimog ExpertPartner – a status which is issued to bodybuilders who fulfil especially high criteria in terms of service, quality and technology so that Unimogs can be adapted for a range of purposes.

Two of the Unimogs are equipped with an elevating work platform and will be used for maintenance work on overhead lines, while the other two will be used as rescue and assistance vehicles in the event of accidents or technical malfunctions. The tram project is part of Mauritius' plan to reduce traffic. The first section of track opened in January this year and the second section, the Mauritius Metro Express line, is in construction.

Adaptation was also the focus for heavy duty mining trucks on an Anglo American project in South Africa. The company was seeking a more sustainable power source for the vehicles which have traditionally run on fossil fuels. Retrofitting was the focus of the South African project and Anglo American called in Ballard Power Systems to upgrade nine trucks



The classic Unimog continues to work hard on projects such as the Mauritius tram line.

with fuel cell technology for zero-emissions operations.

Eight of the FCveloCity-HD modules are powering retrofitted ultra heavy duty mining trucks, with the final module maintained as a spare. Following this, Anglo

American expects to deploy similar trucks, each with megawatt scale fuel cell power, around the world.

"This mining truck demonstration with Anglo American is another significant example of fuel cells offering a value proposition in

Heavy Duty Motive applications," said Rob Campbell, chief commercial officer, Ballard. "We are very excited to now provide a zero-emission mining solution in support of Anglo American's environmental and broader sustainability plans."

Julian Soles, Anglo American's head of technology development, mining and sustainability added, "We look forward to working with Ballard to deliver this important step-change technology, which is part of our plan to create a smart energy mix that moves us closer towards our carbon and energy targets for 2030 and, ultimately, our vision of operating a carbon-neutral mine." ■

“ We are very excited to provide a zero-emission mining solution in support of Anglo American's environmental and sustainability plans.”

ROB CAMPBELL, CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, BALLARD

Bechtel completes 10-year infrastructure partnership with Gabonese government

Bechtel has completed its decade-long master planning and construction partnership with the Government of Gabon, building major sustainable infrastructure projects with ambitions for transforming lives and enhancing the economy. As a result of the 10 years of large-scale works, new healthcare facilities, schools, energy generation and distribution projects, transport and digital connectivity infrastructure has been built in the central African country.

Landmark projects have included the infrastructure needed to host the 2012 and 2017 Africa Cup of Nations; the Schweitzer medical centre with world-class research in tropical and other diseases; and an innovative urban planning tool to tackle the pressures of increased urbanisation.

Major achievements during the partnership include: road, rail and port improvements that have been attributed as playing a vital role in the 60 per cent increase in foreign direct investment; a five-fold increase in hospital beds across 27 healthcare facilities; 17 new schools to give an additional 15,000 children access to education; the installation of more than 2,000km of optic fibre cable to give more than 75 per cent of the Gabonese population access to broadband internet; and reliable energy to 64,000 homes thanks to a hydro-electric and gas-powered facility, with plans for the construction of five more power facilities by 2025.

"The government of Gabon shares our passion for sustainable infrastructure that has a transformational impact on people's lives and livelihoods. From the very start, we planned to employ and procure locally and build in a way that protects resources and biodiversity," said Bogdan Sgarciu, Bechtel's project director in Gabon from 2016 to 2020. "Where there were skills gaps, we supported local people and supply chains to develop home-grown content. We are incredibly proud to hand over the infrastructure masterplan to a new generation of talented Gabonese engineers, project managers and construction professionals."



The 10-year infrastructure project has improved access to electricity across Gabon.

BOOST FOR LAGOS HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE

Nigeria's Lagos State government has released a blueprint to boost healthcare infrastructure. The architectural designs for the Lagos State Infectious Disease Centre, General Children's Hospital and Doctor's Quarters have reached an advanced stage. Work has begun on the blueprint for the Comprehensive Health Centre, Primary Health Centre, Health Post, Psychiatric Centre, Maternal and Child Centre as well as the Infectious Disease Research Institute. Doctors' quarters will be built at all healthcare facilities, commencing with a 42-apartment block at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Yaba.

"From our reviews, we noticed that constructed health facilities are in need of rehabilitation works within a few months of commissioning. Similarly, few renovation projects make an impact on the quality of the facility while new structures have defects inflow and function to health needs of patients and providers," said Professor Akin Abayomi, the state's commissioner for health.

COVID-19 ISOLATION CENTRE BUILT IN JUBA

As part of its ongoing support to the national-led COVID-19 response in South Sudan, various arms of UNMISS, including military peacekeepers from Ghana as well as civilian staff from Relief, Reintegration and Protection (RRP) and Engineering sections in the mission's Bentiu field office implemented extensive renovations on the Bentiu Infectious Diseases Centre to upgrade it to a fully equipped isolation centre for coronavirus patients.

Eight structures were upgraded by UN peacekeeping team, including two accommodation units, three wards, one triage unit, a kitchen and a laundry.

Engineering staff from the Field Office were supported by the technical expertise and skilled labour from Ghanaian peacekeepers deployed in the Unity region. The centre was then handed over to the State COVID-19 Task Force on 11 August.

Speaking at the handover event, Peter Koang Chuol, the State Task Force representative, commended the RRP staff for their role as important facilitators between the Ministry of Health, humanitarian partners and the mission to ensure appropriate resources for the refurbishment of the centre.

Moses Dak William, State Secretary General, commented, "This is not the first time UNMISS has helped us create health infrastructure. A key example is their renovation of the hospital in Bentiu in 2015. We greatly appreciate their ongoing commitment to ensuring the health and welfare of our citizens and will operationalise this isolation centre without delays."

This construction project follows on from UNMISS providing additional vehicles to allow healthcare professionals to access and transport patients in remote parts of South Sudan for treatment.

► BRIEFS



Data centres support internet use.

Data centre construction up

The Africa data centre construction market is growing, especially in South Africa, Morocco, Kenya and Nigeria, according to a report by ResearchAndMarkets.com. The growing internet population has been a strong factor for growth. Government agencies across countries are looking to improve their digital economy. The Africa data centre construction market by revenue is expected to grow at a CAGR of close to 12 per cent during the period 2019-2025, the report found.



Benin energy access to improve.

Power project for Benin

The Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund (EAIF) is progressing its due diligence as the sole lender to a US\$42mn, 25MW natural gas-fuelled power station project, to be built by the Nigerian company, Genesis Holdings, at Maria Gleta, near Benin's capital, Porto Nova. EAIF is providing US\$32.5mn of long-term debt. Financial close is expected in the first quarter of 2021, with construction forecast to begin shortly afterwards. The project is EAIF's first in Benin.

Long-term benefits of Ghana-Togo road construction demonstrated by report



Image Credit: AfDB

An early picture from the successful Akatsi-Akanu road construction project.

A report into the long-term benefits of the construction of the Akatsi-Akanu road project have been outlined in a report by the African Development Bank (AfDB), released in August.

The reconstruction of the Akatsi-Akanu road, which was completed in 2013, has stimulated trade between Ghana and neighbouring Togo, helping to alleviate poverty. Additionally, it has improved the livelihoods of many women living along the international route, according to the report. The AfDB funded the project with a concessional loan of US\$27.8mn.

The new road has yielded a 55 per cent reduction in transport costs and a 20 per cent decrease in travel time. Motorists using the road say their vehicles no longer break down as often. The costs of vehicle repairs incurred by commercial transport operators are usually passed on to passengers.

"Merchants have indicated that due to the reduction in travel time, they can sell their goods in several centres over a week. This road could become the favoured means of transporting merchandise to and from Togo, Benin, and Nigeria," the report noted.

The project's scope initially included two sections, comprising a 30km Akatsi-Dzodze-Akanu stretch in south-eastern Ghana and Akanu-Noepé in south-western Togo. This was later reduced to cover only the Akatsi-Dzodze-Akanu portion and a bridge over the Aka River along the border. The works included the construction of a 30km two-lane asphalt concrete road with a 7.3m carriageway. It incorporated improvements to road safety and two wide shoulders from Akatsi to Akanu in addition to the concrete bridge over the Aka river.

CONCOR'S SUSTAINABILITY AND EFFICIENCY DRIVE

Demanding economic conditions – aggravated by stoppages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic – have highlighted the value of environmental stewardship in the construction sector, according to a statement from Concor, a major construction company working on projects across southern Africa.

"A key focus of good environmental stewardship is on project efficiency," says Bruce Paul, environmental manager, Concor. "It is vital that contractors develop end-to-end engineering processes that conserve resources and manage risk – now more than ever."

Before construction on a project starts, Concor considers issues including material sourcing, reduction of potential wastage, and the carbon footprint of fuel and materials, according to Paul. On a building project in Botswana, for example, Concor had to find solutions when a moratorium was placed on all non-drinking uses of municipal water. This led to the construction of a building with its own brown water source.

JOHANNESBURG HOUSING PROJECT UNDERWAY

The renewal of Johannesburg's city centre is getting a further boost with a project undertaken by Raubex Building.

Work is underway on the refurbishment of Union Square, a 19-storey block in Johannesburg's original central business district. The project, scheduled for completion in the last quarter of 2020, is being undertaken for the Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO), under Savage and Dodd Architects. According to Juan Jardim, Raubex Building's senior site manager on this contract, the project involves a number of important innovations.

"The building was previously an office block, and is being repurposed for residential use," said Jardim. "This means the installation of considerably more walling and other infrastructure than the building was initially designed for."

While the ground floor at street level will be used as retail space, the first floor to the 19th floor each accommodates 18 residential units. The range of apartments includes studio flats of 19sq m in size, one-bedroom units of 35sq m, two-bedroom units measuring 43sq m and four-room communal cluster units of 94sq m. The building is served by two passenger lifts, a service lift and a goods lift, as well as three fire staircases. There are three basements for parking.

"Load-bearing considerations led to the selection of the lightweight Imison walling system, achieving a significant weight reduction when compared to bricks and mortar," Jardim added.

The Imison system is applied as a series of interlocking wall panels of Neopor insulation. The panels are installed in a framework that is fixed to the soffit and slab, after which the services such as conduits and pipework are fitted. A mesh is installed over the panels, which are sprayed on both sides with two layers of high density fibre-cement.

BRIEFS

Urban planning tech for Libya



Benghazi is undergoing rebuilding.

Two years on from UN-Habitat launching a training course in Geographic information System (GIS) mapping on urban planning for civil servants from Libya's Urban Planning Agency and six municipalities (Benghazi, Ubari, Al Kufra, Sebha, Sirte and Jazour), the agency has reported that while there has been ongoing conflict, eight reconstruction projects have been completed. With 85 per cent of Libyans now living in urban areas, the GIS technology has proven invaluable.

Affordable homes for Limpopo



Pioneering project in South Africa.

Vantage Capital has provided R82 million of mezzanine funding for the development of Kayalane Heights, a first-of-its-kind affordable housing development located in Lebowaqomo, Limpopo. The promoter of the transaction is the Alleyroads Group, a leading South African black-owned property development company. Since its inception in 2009, Alleyroads has built more than 3,000 residences across South Africa, including more than 1,500 affordable homes.

Recognising the leaders on African roads

With road building and maintenance essential for progress in Africa, the African Development Bank Group has honoured the leaders who are paving the way for a more connected continent.

Road building and maintenance improves economic opportunities for the continent.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Leaders from across the African continent have been honoured by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) for their work in road building, a vital part of the ongoing infrastructure projects which are aimed at boosting economies, creating jobs and improving connections within countries and across borders.

Egyptian president Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi was awarded the Babacar Ndiaye Great Road Builder Award, a distinction for heads of state whose countries initiate outstanding projects in the development of roads, transportation and mobility.

President Al Sisi was recognised for his “personal leadership” in projects in Cairo such as the Heliopolis metro station and a suspension bridge on the Nile, George Orido, said a spokesman for the selection committee of the Africa Road Builders.

For their contributions to road infrastructure and connectivity,”

Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara and AfDB president, Akinwumi Adesina, were given special prizes.

“Road transportation is a critical enabler for productivity and sustainable socio-economic growth. Over the past 12 years, the Bank has financed more than US\$8bn of regional transport projects. Close to 13,000km of regional highways have been built on 17 road corridors, along with 26 one-stop border post facilities,” said Solomon Quaynor, the bank’s vice president, infrastructure and industrialisation.

Fouad Safer, director of transport and infrastructure studies at the National Bureau of Studies and Development (BNETD) in Côte d'Ivoire said challenges include the balance between the development of cities in Africa and that of transport, the promotion of professionalisation, renewal of fleets, and restructuring networks.

“There is an urgency to have a new generation of mass transport to improve the quality of life of our populations,” Safer said.

Mamadou Faye, administrator of

the Senegalese Autonomous Road Maintenance Fund (FERA) added, “Road infrastructure is the most expensive capital in Africa. Without proper and timely maintenance, the roads deteriorate. So it’s not just about building, it’s also about maintaining, having a funding model for road maintenance. In addition, we must invest in mass transport and innovation.”

Looking ahead, Somalia has received financing from the AfDB toward the cost of Strengthening Institutions for Economic Policy Management and Infrastructure Development Project (SIEPMID), which includes funding towards the contract for the Road/Highways Engineer for Enhancing Skills for Infrastructure Development component which aims to improve the capacity of the public works ministry to undertake feasibility studies, detailed engineering design, and assessment reports for infrastructure projects. ■

“ There is an urgency to have a new generation of mass transport to improve the quality of life of our populations.”

FOUAD SAFER, DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE STUDIES, NATIONAL BUREAU OF STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT

Heavy duty haulers on the market

New innovations fitted on next-generation heavy haulers improve performance, safety and driver experience.

Technology and environmental performance are among the major challenges facing vehicle manufacturers as they seek to roll out the next generation of heavy haulers for work on Africa's roads. Heavy haulers are typically large transporters for moving oversize loads by road, usually consisting of a heavy tractor unit and a multi-axled lowboy flatbed trailer. They are an essential piece of kit for moving heavy items – such as other vehicles or equipment used in the mining, energy and construction industries – across Africa's long highways network.

SCANIA: R-SERIES



For ever-changing cargo needs at maximum weight, the new R-Series from Scania offers tailor-made solutions for the heaviest of weights. The distinct R-cab is sturdier yet sharper than ever with a host of perks for the driver, including an 800-1,000mm bed, plus smart storage options, an optimised dashboard and on-board entertainment. The shape of the cab has also been optimised for performance to help reduce aerodynamic drag. Front, roof, side, underbody: all areas have been analysed and adjusted to streamline air flow and achieve the lowest possible air resistance. All gaps and angles have also been narrowed and streamlined to achieve more efficient air flow and dynamic flow of lines.

DAIMLER MERCEDES-BENZ: ACTROS



Daimler Mercedes-Benz launched its fourth-generation Actros truck a couple of years ago, but the vehicle is now in South Africa and available with a clutch of next-level innovations. This year, that includes a mirrorless cab or MirrorCam: the removal of the mirror housing and in-cab screens linked to outside cameras instead, showing the field of vision for the driver and a picture which follows the movement of the semitrailer when on the road. Among the other innovations are active drive assist, active brake assist 5, a multimedia cockpit and a re-worked predictive powertrain control. It was voted as truck of the year for 2020 among some of the trade press.

VOLVO TRUCKS: VOLVO FH



Volvo Trucks launched its new Volvo FH this year, featuring a re-imagined cab, innovative safety features and a driver-focused working environment. A key aim of the new design is to give the driver a more productive, safe and comfortable life on the road. It continues a trend towards improving driver comfort and safety generally. The new vehicle also boasts improved fuel efficiency and productivity, another important customer priority. This is further optimised due to the Volvo FH's capacity for increased front axle loads, as well as tag and pusher axles with improved steering angles to reduce tyre wear and improve manoeuvrability. Also available with Tandem Axle Lift, enabling the rear axle to be disengaged and raised when the truck is not loaded, reducing fuel consumption.

IVECO: S-WAY



Iveco launched the new S-Way model last year, a 100 per cent connected, driver-centric long-haul truck. The on-road S-Way became the first vehicle in the new Iveco Way heavy range. It marks a shift to providing customers with an integrated transport solution, economically and environmentally sustainable, in which the services around the product become more important than the product itself. It was developed to deliver a complete package of features and services focused on the driver. The driver-centric design of the cab provides first-rate living and working conditions with a spacious environment, outstanding driving ergonomics, plus reinforced structure and much improved visibility all around and in all conditions for additional safety.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Safe as houses

Standards and safety are the number one considerations when it comes to formwork and scaffolding, essential components for Africa's construction industry. Martin Clark reports.

While the events of 2020 surrounding the coronavirus pandemic are expected to have a knock-on effect on construction activity worldwide, many projects in Africa continue undeterred.

That means ongoing demand for formwork and scaffolding services, which underpin the building of infrastructural, residential and other works, from new hotel blocks to giant hydro power dams, and for the essential maintenance of existing high-rise buildings.

That is especially true in fast-growth economies, like Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia, or where local populations are rising rapidly, such as Nigeria.

The two most established systems used in the scaffolding industry are metal, typically steel, and bamboo.

Leading international firms like Peri, one of the world's top suppliers of formwork and scaffolding systems as well as civil engineering solutions is active in

many big African markets.

It recently played a role in the construction of new facilities for the African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases (ACEGID) in Ede, Osun State, Nigeria – a reflection of the intense focus on healthcare provision during the 2020 pandemic.

In March, the World Bank-supported centre contributed to mapping the first SARS-CoV-2 genome sequence within Africa.

The first research lab of its kind in Nigeria, it enables African scientists to use cutting-edge technology in a biosafe level 3 facility that can handle highly-toxic pathogens.

The Peri Duo formwork system was incorporated for the build – which can be used for foundations, walls and columns as well as for slabs and beams – on what was a very Nigerian-themed construction using stabilised rammed earth (SRE) walls.

The rammed earth walls have a number of benefits: load bearing up

to three storeys without any reinforcement; approximately 70 per cent less embodied carbon compared to other wall materials; and a high thermal mass that allows for slow heat/cold penetration.

As they contain a mixture of local earth and a waterproofing admixture, the walls can also stand strong to the harsh Nigerian weather conditions.

Peri's other recent projects include the building of 12 vast underground oil storage tanks in Saldhana, South Africa.

Other major international players in this segment include the likes of Layher, Brand and Safway, among others.

Safety imperative

Like other strands of the construction industry, safety is always an essential component, which underscores the need for clear and rigorous standards.

That's evident in ensuring the integrity of any structure, but no

more visibly so than on high-rise tower blocks or imposing dams.

Successful scaffolding and formwork systems can be simple and incorporate standard pieces for use in a wide array of applications.

In some of Africa's larger markets, such as South Africa and Morocco, modular formwork systems are being widespread.

But there are many other systems, materials and technologies still being utilised in parts of Africa and elsewhere.

And on rare occasions, accidents can be hard reminders to the industry of the need to adhere to the very best practices.

Sadly, it is not hard to find examples of where things have gone wrong, and where people have lost their lives following a scaffold collapse.

"Safety of scaffolding will depend on the quality of materials adopted and the assembling process," it was noted in a 2018 report by the International Association of



The IAEME warns the safety of scaffolding depends on the quality of products and the assembly process.

Engineering and Management Education (IAEME).

The report highlighted some of the issues and risks involved with bamboo scaffolding in Nigeria, a common means to support people, materials and structures under construction or for maintenance works, especially in less-developed nations in Africa and Asia.

It analysed a total of 102 collapsed reinforced concrete buildings and found that over 20 per cent of the cases may have been caused by the failure of overloaded bamboo.

It notes that the factory-built steel scaffold system, comprising tubular sections and accessories, has a “definite advantage” due to its regular shape and engineered design, while bamboo has “intrinsic size inconsistency” as a natural material.

“It is less ductile than steel and stands a high risk of being brought down by high wind and overload,” it added.

In Nigeria, bamboo remains a common building and construction commodity due to the abundance of the crop from tropical rain forests.

The report also cited other causes often blamed for building collapse in Nigeria as the use of low-quality materials, employment of incompetent artisans and contractors, poor supervision, non-compliance with specifications or standards and non-enforcement of existing laws.

Standards shift

While standards have been around for a long time, compliance and enforcement do not always follow and can be difficult to police.

Even in more developed markets such as South Africa, where strict standards are in place, there are still concerns.

Highly-respected local players such as Cape Formwork Contractors are among those championing greater awareness on the issue in the interests of public safety.

Ultimately, the company notes, the responsibility lies with the country’s Department of Labour to police the safe erection of scaffolding and ensure the protection of the public, but unfortunately it is understaffed and may not have the skills required to successfully execute its mandate.

But as markets evolve, so do best practices.

In Kenya, which has been enjoying robust growth in recent years, there is a renewed emphasis on training to upgrade the professionalism of all those involved in the formwork and scaffolding industry.

Kabete National Polytechnic is now Kenya’s new centre of excellence in scaffolding after teaming up with various other parties such as the National Construction Authority (NCA) and the Kenya Federation of Master Builders (KFMB).

It brings with it a greater degree of professionalism to the industry which will, in turn, drive up standards across the board.

“Scaffolding wasn’t an own professional occupation in Kenya up to now,” said David Jomeli, KFMB technical director, speaking in The Standard recently. “It is found in the curriculum of technical vocational education and training programmes, but was mostly only a unit of about four hours, which introduced the topic briefly.”

The new Kabete National Polytechnic programme is expected to mark a major improvement and leap forward. ■



Layher SIM[®]

FROM DIGITAL PLANNING TO
THE SUCCESSFUL PROJECT
WITH FULL PLANNING AND
SCHEDULING CERTAINTY

- ▶ Planning and scheduling certainty at the site
- ▶ Transparency in all work steps and cost control
- ▶ Increase in safety and profitability for every project
- ▶ Your access to BIM

Learn more:
industry.layher.com

Layher 

More Possibilities. The Scaffolding System.

Altus Strategies gives update on Agdz silver and copper project

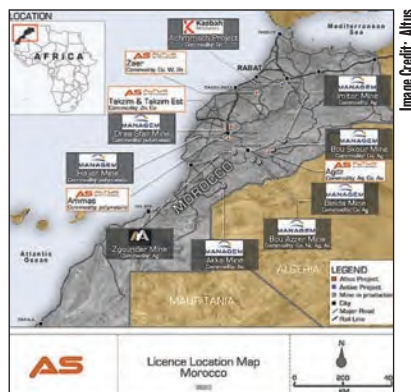
Altus Strategies has provided an update on its Agdz silver and copper project located 14km southwest of the Bou Skour copper and silver mine in the eastern Anti-Atlas of Morocco.

Steven Poulton, chief executive of Altus, said, “We are pleased to report the successful approval of our environmental impact assessment (EIA) and baseline study at our Agdz silver and copper project in Morocco. This approval represents a key milestone in the process of converting the current exploration licence into a mining licence.”

The EIA was completed in the Q1 2020 and, following public consultation, was accepted and approved by the Ministry of the Interior, Administrator of the Draa Tafilalet Region and Regional Centre of Investment. The approval is valid for a period of five years and is renewable thereafter.

“Separately, Altus has been working in partnership with the University of Orléans and the BRGM in France to generate new targets based on cutting edge predictive mapping techniques. This work has defined a one kilometre long, northeast striking priority target in the vicinity of the Makarn Prospect, where sampling by the company has yielded multiple high-grade silver and copper results, including 448 g/t Ag and eight per cent Cu from outcrop. This target will be the next priority for our field team to assess, along with the Minière Prospect, where sampling of spoil from historic mine shafts, adits and exploratory pits has returned grades of up to 13 per cent Cu,” said Steven Poulton.

A predictive mapping programme for Agdz was completed at the University of Orléans ‘BRGM Campus’ in France. Analysis was undertaken on all surface data compiled by Altus to date, including surface rock and trench results, mapping data and gamma spectrometry and ground magnetic survey results. The predictive mapping programme was designed to delineate targets in areas of shallow soil cover.



Location of Agdz and Altus' exploration projects in Morocco.

CONTANGO SIGNS COAL OFFTAKE LOI WITH SOUTH MINING

Contango Holdings, the natural resource development company, has signed a letter of intent (LOI) with South Mining relating to an offtake agreement for coal products produced at the company's Lubu Coalfield Project in Zimbabwe.

The LOI establishes the framework for formal offtake documentation to be advanced between Monaf Investments, Contango's subsidiary company, and South Mining, a Zimbabwean coke producer.

South Mining is committed to producing 420,000 tonnes of coke from its new battery oven located in the Hwange district.

Subject to contract and appropriate standard and quality coal testing, South Mining has in principle agreed to purchase an anticipated minimum of 30,000 mt of raw coal per month from Monaf

Pricing of the offtake remains subject to contract, negotiation and prevailing market conditions however on present assumptions a sale price of between US\$45 and US\$55 per mt of raw coal, and between US\$70 and US\$80 per mt of washed coal, is anticipated.

As previously outlined, upon entering a formal offtake contract, Contango expects to enter into a contract mining arrangement to minimise CAPEX – based on discussions the Company envisages the proposed offtake with South Mining would provide significant cashflow to Contango.

The company expects to enter into a formal offtake agreement ahead of the anticipated commissioning of Lubu in the Q4 2020.

Carl Esprey, executive director of Contango Holdings, said, “This LOI with South Mining is highly encouraging and an important demonstration of the significant demand for high quality coking coal in Southern Africa.”

BLACK ROCK PROGRESSES ON FCI NEGOTIATIONS

Tanzanian graphite developer Black Rock Mining announced that it has progressed formal negotiations to resolve the structure and nature of the free carried interest (FCI) with the Tanzanian government. Formal negotiations have commenced and a draft framework agreement (DFA), as prepared by the Tanzanian government, has been received by Black Rock. The DFA is currently being reviewed.

At the date of this announcement, the company is unable to provide any indication as to if or when these negotiations will be successfully concluded. This development follows other recent milestones achieved with the completion of the resettlement action plan (RAP) field activities, initiation of due diligence by TIB Development Bank, and the signing of a strategic alliance and development MoU with POSCO. Development of the Mahenge Graphite project is expected to provide significant economic and social benefits for Tanzania driven by the creation of full-time jobs, direct contribution to the Tanzanian economy, and new opportunities for Tanzanian businesses including ports, rail and power supply. Black Rock is focused on resolving the FCI agreement with the Tanzanian government, which is a critical step in achieving financing conditions precedent.

► BRIEFS

Restart of operations at Rukwa coal project



The first shipment of coal is expected soon.

Edenville Energy has announced commencement of operations at Rukwa Coal project in Tanzania. It reported a minimal damage to the mine area from the protracted rainy season, which finished while the mine was closed due to COVID-19 pandemic. Until Edenville's new strategic partner Infrastructure Logistics Tanzania Limited (ILTL) completes its mobilisation activities, Edenville will continue to act as operator. The ILTL is likely to start its operations from 1 September.

Providing strategic support in small-scale mining



RCS Global will provide critical implementation activities.

The Responsible Minerals Initiative and RCS Global Group have announced a strategic partnership to scale their existing improvement efforts in the production of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) cobalt in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This partnership will enable the programme to be expanded to additional mine sites to achieve broad-based systemic impact, and to support development initiatives and policymaking.

Ivanhoe Mines pairs up with China's CNMC in Africa

Ivanhoe Mines has entered into a strategic partnership agreement with China Nonferrous Metal Mining (CNMC) to jointly examine exploration, development and acquisition of mineral projects, as well as production, smelting and logistics opportunities in Africa.

Among CNMC's diverse portfolio of projects is the Lualaba copper smelter near the city of Kolwezi in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which began commercial operations earlier this year. Lualaba is the first modern, large, pyro-metallurgical copper smelter built in DRC and is located about 45km from Ivanhoe Mines' Kamoa-Kakula copper JV.

CNMC has begun operations at the Deziwa copper-cobalt mine, a JV with Gécamines – the DRC's state mining company.

"The strategic partnership with CNMC will provide significant opportunities for collaboration on mineral exploration, mine planning, development and acquisition of mineral projects, logistics and smelting – beginning with examining the synergies between the operations currently owned by our two companies," said Robert Friedland, Ivanhoe co-chairperson.

Wang Tongzhou, chairman of CNMC, stated, "This year, the COVID-19 pandemic has engulfed the world and greatly impacted mining companies. In these challenging times, the need to work together is more pressing than ever. Building on the opportunities created by this agreement and championing the mutually beneficial alliance, I believe that the core projects of each of our companies will soon be realized. I also believe that this agreement will create new opportunities for cooperation, so that more projects can be successfully implemented in the future."

Marna Cloete, president of Ivanhoe Mines, commented; "The team at Kamoa-Kakula has done a stellar job of keeping the development of the Kakula Copper Mine ahead of schedule, and we are confident in the team's ability to successfully complete the remaining phases of construction and commissioning, and bring Kakula into production less than a year from now."



CaZhang Jinjun, CNMC's vice-president, and Peter Zhou, executive vice-president and chief representative china of Ivanhoe Mines, exchange a gift after signing the strategic partnership agreement.

SIGNING OF BINDING TERM SHEET FOR SALE OF KILIMAPESA GOLD

Goldplat, the AIM quoted gold producer, with international gold recovery operations located in South Africa and Ghana and an underground mining operation in Kenya, has announced the signing of a binding term sheet between its subsidiary Gold Mineral Resources and Mayflower Capital Investments for the sale of 100 per cent of the share capital of Kilimapesa Gold.

Kilimapesa owns the assets and licences of the Kenyan underground mining operation. Under the binding term sheet, GMR has conditionally agreed to sell Kilimapesa to Mayflower for an initial consideration of US\$1,500,000 to be satisfied by the issue of shares to that value in Mayflower.

In addition, GMR is entitled to receive a one per cent net smelter royalty on future production from Kilimapesa capped at US\$1,500,000.

Mayflower has separately entered into an agreement under which it will assign its rights and obligations under the term sheet to a company listed on the London Stock Exchange (UKco), which will, subject to the appropriate regulatory and shareholder approvals seek to complete the acquisition and raise a minimum US\$4,000,000 of funding for the development of Kilimapesa's operations. GMR is supportive of Mayflower's plans and strategies for the Kilimapesa operations and has agreed to escrow its shares in Mayflower/UKco for a minimum 12 months period, while Mayflower completes the recapitalisation and recommencement of the gold mining and processing operations.

Mayflower is paying a US\$50,000 non-refundable exclusivity fee under the binding term sheet. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, the formal agreements envisaged in the term sheet must be entered into before 30 September 2020.

ORION MINERALS RAISES US\$6.2MN CAPITAL

Orion Minerals (ORN) has announced a US\$6.2mn capital raising to progress its development-ready Prieska Copper-Zinc project in South Africa. Approximately 365mn shares will be issued to investors at a price of 1.7 cents each to raise the capital. The placement will be undertaken in two phases with phase one issuing 346mn shares to raise US\$5.9mn. Subject to shareholder approval, phase two will issue 19mn shares to raise the remaining US\$300,000. This is subject to foreign investment review board (FIRB) approval. The company will seek the required shareholder approvals at its general meeting scheduled for September 2020. In addition, Tembo Capital has confirmed its subscription for US\$2.1mn worth of shares at an issue price of US\$0.017 each. The issue of shares to Tembo Capital is subject to shareholder and FIRB approval. The company intends to utilise the money for Prieska Copper-Zinc Project and for general working capital purposes.

BRIEFS

Update on Zaranou Gold project in Côte d'Ivoire



High-grade drilling results at gold project.

IronRidge Resources has reported high-grade drilling results from the ongoing second phase drilling programme at the Ebilassokro and Ehuasso targets, both within the Zaranou Gold project area in Côte d'Ivoire. The license borders with Ghana and is along strike from significant operating gold mines including Chirano (5mn oz), Bibiani (5.5mn oz) and Ahafo (17mn oz). Hole ZARCO013 confirms down-dip extension of high-grade mineralisation intersected in hole ZARCO009.

Lead production takes a hit in first quarter of 2020



COVID-19 restrictions impact mining activity.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the mining industry in the first half of 2020, and continues to do so, stated GlobalData, a data and analytics company. Overall global lead mine production declined by 3.4 per cent in the Q1 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. Global lead production is expected to decline by 5.2 per cent to 4.5 million tonnes in 2020. This was primarily due to the decline in production in China, India and Kazakhstan.

In search for fresh water, the right data can change lives

How new technology and innovative approaches with Seequent are revolutionising the search for freshwater – above and below ground.

Water security is a topic that has increasingly concerned academia, government and NGOs in recent years – with good cause. Climate change, burgeoning populations, increasing supply costs, and shifting lifestyles have all placed pressure on this critical resource.

This is especially true in Africa. In 2018, Cape Town narrowly averted “day zero” – a day the city was expected to run dry – and similar events are occurring around the world. Seequent sees water security inextricably linked to society’s continued growth and prosperity.

Efficiently managing groundwater resources has taken a step change forward compared to just a few years ago. The combination of modern airborne geophysics, the recycling of pre-existing geophysics (e.g. from oil and gas exploration) and new technology solutions means that a far better overview and management of potential groundwater sources can be achieved at lower costs, and more quickly.

The airborne hunt for clues

Drilling is challenging. It can be difficult, slow, expensive and comes with many environmental concerns. That is why the practice of using geophysics and remote sensing to rapidly cover a survey area has considerable appeal, and its adoption has been growing significantly in recent years. Electromagnetic (EM) surveys can be done from the air, to cover large areas (of 50 or 100 sq km) with absolutely no ground access required, as well as give a fast turnaround on 3D models of the



Airborne EM surveys can cover large areas and give a fast turnaround on 3D models of the subsurface.

Image Credit: Seequent

subsurface, meaning better-informed decisions, more quickly.

Seequent solutions provide the capability for cutting edge inversion of airborne EM surveys, straightforward implementation in hydrogeological modelling software and a way to define saltwater intrusion problems.

Helping Somalia towards water security

In Somalia, less than 45 per cent of the population has access to safe drinking water. At the same time, the country has been the focus of various oil and gas exploration campaigns. Shifting from oil to water is a relatively small step. Seequent customer Ruden AS is making the shift happen with the innovative Search Model solution.

Chief financial officer and project manager Helene Ruden said, “We are applying the Search Model

approach to a project in Somalia supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to assess the deep groundwater potential on a national scale. Seequent’s Leapfrog is helping combine all sorts of data to create an overview of the subsurface. Its versatility greatly increases the ability to combine different datasets in a reliable, precise and convenient way.”

Getting the data to give up its answers

Seequent provides tools that support team efforts for building, maintaining, and communicating the hydrogeological models to help identify where water and good well locations are. However, these models only tell part of the story and do not allow for the management of the aquifer system over time. For that, a groundwater model is needed.

Leapfrog software can easily

translate a hydrogeological model into a Modflow model and visualise the results. This gives a reliable analysis of the sustainable yield and an enhanced tool for defining well placement and recharge area protection.

Since groundwater conditions change all the time, it is important that updating water table analyses, adding wells, revising water quality maps and more, are all straightforward. The implicit modelling at the heart of Leapfrog is designed specifically for easy analysis and maintenance. Seequent Central helps keep track of these changes so they can be confidently shared with – and easily understood by – stakeholders, who are increasingly demanding clearer and more transparent explanations around this essential resource. ■

Technologies to boost mine dewatering market

As mining operations resume across Africa, dewatering technology continues to improve, which should be a boon to the global market in this often-lucrative sector.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

Water management for mines offers opportunities to innovative companies.

New technology will be a driving force in ensuring continued growth in the mine dewatering sector globally.

According to a MarketWatch report on the global dewatering sector from June 2020, the outlook is promising as mining operations restart and seek to reach pre-pandemic levels of production.

The report found that over the next five years, the dewatering pump market will register a 7.2 per cent CAGR in terms of revenue worldwide. This translates to the global market size predicted to reach US\$4,420mn by 2024, from US\$2,910mn in 2019.

It will be the innovation-led companies that will thrive as economies around the world reopen for business, the report found.

Frequent acquisitions and strategic alliances adopted as the major strategies by players who are keen to increase their industry

presence. Pump manufacturers can take advantage of this situation by reinforcing their production units and supply-chains to avoid any delay in production turn-around-times and lead times.

Mining remains vital to the sector's ongoing growth and success. The dewatering pump market is primarily driven by strong industrialisation and increasing urbanization and increasing demand from mining and sludge treatment industry, according to the report. Delivering bespoke, client-

focused solutions will stand many companies in good stead in the months and years ahead.

"There is no one-size-fits-all approach to dewatering. It can be an expensive and complex challenge, which is why we deliver bespoke strategies that are cost-effective and manageable," said Ian Ross, global product manager for dewatering, Weir Minerals. "From designing and implementing a unified, fully-automated dewatering system in Czech Republic to delivering a dewatering system to withstand high

wind speeds and tropical storms in Africa, we rarely meet a challenge we cannot overcome."

Mali's Kobada Gold Project is an example of an opportunity for dewatering solutions. In regard to water management, raw water supply will be achieved by a combination of raw water abstraction from the Niger River, and supplementary water supply from the eight open pit outer perimeter dewatering boreholes.

The water from these supplies will be stored in a newly constructed 20,000 cu/m raw water buffer dam located mid-way between the process plant and the Niger River. The process plant shall feature additional water storage facilities in terms of a 3,500 cu/m raw water pond, a 10,600 cu/m process water pond and a 4,500 cu/m stormwater pond, respectively. Process water will be supplied by pumping supernatant water back from the tailings storage facility. ■

“There is no one-size-fits-all approach to dewatering. It can be an expensive and complex challenge.”

IAN ROSS, GLOBAL PRODUCT MANAGER FOR DEWATERING, WEIR MINERALS

Overcoming a rough time for diamond mines

The diamond sector of the mining industry has felt the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic but operators are looking ahead, optimistic that the sparkle can return. Georgia Lewis reports.



Image Credit: Adobe Stock

African diamond operators are looking for new opportunities and ways to improve.

Diamond mining companies across the world are reporting a slowdown in sales as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Alrosa, for example, which has operations in Angola posted total sales of polished and rough diamonds for January 2020 at US\$405mn but for July, this was down to US\$35.8mn.

But Alrosa deputy CEO, Evgeny Agureev, noted in a statement that the company “would continue doing everything needed to reach the market supply and demand balance as soon as possible.”

One innovation that Alrosa is keen to continue is online diamond sales, which the company pioneered last year. Another online sale was held in August, while still allowing potential buyers to inspect the diamonds in person with social distancing measures in place.

“Though digital tenders and auctions do not replace traditional

model of diamond trade, however, they offer additional opportunities for our clients interested in purchasing relevant diamond categories,” said Mr Agureev.

Petra Diamonds, which has mines in South Africa and Tanzania, reported a downturn as a result of the pandemic with a cancellation of tenders for May and June. However, significant inventory build was reported to June 30, despite reduced production levels.

Petra Diamonds is looking ahead with plans that extend well into the longer term, with Project 2022.

According to a company statement, this project has “resulted in the implementation of various initiatives which have eliminated or mitigated the impact of bottlenecks in the production processes of the various mines, resulting in the increased throughput recorded for FY 2020, prior to the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The focus of Project 2022 includes a “sustainable optimisation of the company’s cost structure during this period of reduced revenue generation,” the statement said.

Elsewhere in Africa, there has

been a push to improve the standards at artisanal and small-scale diamond mines in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire. The World Diamond Council (WDC) has applauded a programme initiated by the De Beers Group’s GemFair initiative, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Mano River Union (MRU) to train operators across these countries on improving standards for health and safety, environmental stewardship, ethical sourcing standards and diamond valuation.

“It is projects like these that demonstrate the capacity of the Kimberley Process and its partners to go beyond the traditional scope of conflict prevention, by also building real grass-roots capacity and economic opportunity in the countries where diamonds are mined,” said Edward Asscher, president of the WDC. ■

“ Though digital tenders and auctions do not replace traditional diamond trade, they offer additional opportunities for clients.”

EVGENY AGUREEV, DEPUTY CEO, ALROSA

Liugong excavators on the rise

The 970E has a 4.3m³ standard bucket capacity.

Image Credit: Liugong



Liugong has been manufacturing excavators since the 1990s. Its wide range of product line vary from 3.8 tons to 90 tons operating weight.

Most recently Liugong announced their 40,000 machines presently active on the field with more than half a billion of working hours. The wide range of their products include zero tail and compact excavators, medium size excavators from 20 tons to 30 tons with standard and long arm options and finally heavy-duty models ranging from 36-90 tons.

Liugong introduced its 945E and

950E model excavators in 2016. It was the first of Liugong's big size excavators to be introduced to the Sub-Saharan Africa market, with an average of 50 tons operating weight. The following year the 970E made its debut in platinum mining in South Africa and was the biggest size Liugong excavator available and was regarded as the front runner of this class until 990F was introduced to the Sub-Saharan Africa market until the end of 2020.

In recent years, the 950E and 970E took a leading role in Liugong's product range in the mining industry, increasing their market presence in gold, coal and platinum mines. Liugong's joint venture with Cummins Engines in 2013 helped the engine production for Liugong, increased efficiency and its parts management for their global operations. The 950E model equipped with a QSM11 type Cummins Engine reaches upto a

400hp gross engine power, with an EGR cooling sytem and Cummins patented VGTTM turbocharger ,which continuously varies the airflow boost to match the engine rpm and load demand for optimal performance. The advanced hydraulic system, with proven negative flow hydraulics, optimises the main control valve and the cylinders improves the speed of the front-end working equipment, while cutting down on the hydraulic system's damper loss, leading to better working efficiency.

The 970E has a 481hp Cummins QSX15 engine and a 4.3m³ standard bucket capacity, extendable for lighter material handling such as coal. However, Liugong's largest class range, also has a flexible operating weight between 36 and 70 tons. In early 2019, Liugong rolled out the 990F, with a 90 tons operating weight, which was powered by a Cummins EFI engine, with a rated power of 447 kW, combined with a 5.6m³ bucket, making it one of the few models available in the market. ■

The 950E is important to many mining operations.



Image Credit: Liugong

What will the mine of the future look like?

John Lewis, managing director, Aggreko Africa, shares his vision for the mining industry.



African mines are getting deeper and more remote, requiring appropriate solutions.

Image Credit: Adobe Stock

The mining sector's challenges have been exacerbated by the pandemic and emphasised by the global economic downturn, putting the sector under immense pressure to reinvent and reignite its vision of the future, innovating for a more profitable, productive tomorrow. This is not an easy task.

Mining has its own set of unique hurdles to overcome. The first of these is safety. Mining can be dangerous and as the mines become deeper, the dangers become more inherent. Organisations must put stringent safety protocols in place to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of its people. It must ensure ongoing energy availability – dips and drops in power availability can not only impact productivity but can have potentially catastrophic consequences. A consistent and reliable power supply is critical.

This is further complicated by the increasing need for capital to allow for investment into more robust and reliable power and technology solutions. This is one sector that

needs the potential of digital and transformation and the reliability of advanced energy technology to innovate and thrive. However, capital is in short supply, particularly now with volatile commodity prices and a global economy reeling in shock.

It is easy to look at the future with a sense of impending doom. The obstacles require extensive investment and foresight along with a commitment to more sustainable and dynamic infrastructure. However, this does not mean that they are impossible to overcome – already some mines have managed to leapfrog the challenges to create long-term solutions.

Nevsun in Eritrea needed to cut power costs to profitably convert its gold mining operations in copper and zinc, reduce fuel costs due to volatile prices and did not want to commit to a long-term solar contract to resolve power issues. Instead, they invested in an integrated solar/thermal hybrid solution. The Aggreko solution

wrapped the future-forward technology capabilities of solar and thermal power into a sustainable bundle. Cutting-edge software and hardware ensured the mine had access to a reliable, manageable source of power that reduced costs.

Investing in digital and technology is investing in lower-cost operations that deliver higher efficiency. This is fundamental to building the mine of the future. Nevsun cut CAPEX from the outset with their investment, and they did not need upfront costs for the solar plant which has allowed for them to conserve their capital for operations and to reduce the amount spent on diesel. This has cut carbon emissions by 10,000 tonnes annually.

The mining sector is known for its ability to overcome obstacles and adapt to change. That is why it is possible to define and discuss the mine of the future – the sector is always looking at how to shift legacy issues and reshape its potential.

Mines are becoming increasingly deep and remote. Many mines are now based in rural areas with

limited infrastructure and difficult working conditions. Managers have had to find ways to managing heat, energy, and services. Cooling, access to resilient energy solutions, and reliable alternative energy sources have become critical to ensuring long-term success. Enter scalable solutions that can balance energy, cooling requirements, and access to services with demand and in alignment with mining needs. These use top of the range technology to ensure that mines have the correct ventilation and cooling facilities, as well as consistent power. Aggreko has worked closely with engineers and developers on solutions to address these unique requirements.

The mining sector is not interested in excessive capital expenditure, needs sustainable solutions, and is more focused on results than promises. That is why the mine of the future is not one built on a foundation of fluffy ideas but on solutions that have proven results, measurable deliverables, and that have already saved money. ■

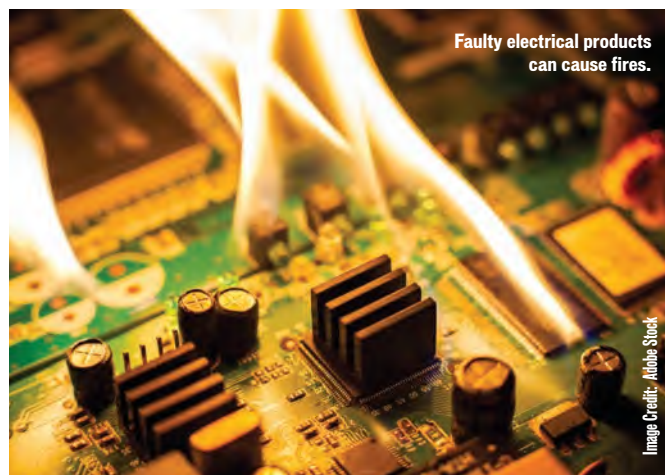
Protecting against the dangers of non-compliant products

Simon T. Bircham, chair, BEAMA Anti-Counterfeit Working Group, and brand protection manager, EATON Electrical Sector EMEA, advises on how to safeguard against counterfeit and non-compliant electrical products, which can cause fires, electrocution, loss of property and even loss of life.

The proliferation of counterfeit products and the growth in non-compliant look-alike products are a major concern within the electrical industry, according to Simon T. Bircham.

“Power distribution products such as Miniature Circuit Breakers (MCBs), Moulded Case Circuit Breakers (MCCBs) and Residual Current Circuit Breakers (RCCBs) are designed to protect buildings and the people inside them. They are the result of decades of research and development, and ongoing evolution, as well as the establishment of important safety standards and rigorous testing. Unfortunately, when it comes to counterfeit copies and non-compliant look-alikes, we can't be sure they will live up to these standards and function properly. If these counterfeit and non-compliant look-alikes are installed in homes, commercial or industrial buildings then they may lead to fires, electrocution, loss of property and sadly even loss of life.”

Discussing the difference between counterfeit and non-compliant look-alike electrical products, he explained, “Non-compliant look-alike electrical products do not meet



the necessary safety standards designed to protect people and property, making them highly dangerous. These sub-standard non-compliant products are also often made to look like well-known brand products but are either unbranded or marked with an unfamiliar name; or use a similar sounding name to the original genuine product. Often sold at a much lower price than compliant products, the intent is to deceive the buyer into thinking they are purchasing safe product. “Counterfeiters take this one step further through the unauthorised representation of a registered

trademark on products that are identical or similar to the products of the genuine manufacturer. The intent is to deceive the purchaser into believing they are buying original products; however, counterfeit electrical products are also often found to be non-compliant, putting building owners and users at risk.” Counterfeiters typically use substandard materials, often miss out critical components or provide no testing, so they offer little safety protection, he adds.

So, how can responsible companies safeguard against non-compliant look-alike products?

“First, check the general quality of the product,” Bircham advises. “Look out for poor moulding, excess material and rough edges. Poor quality printing, poorly aligned markings and miss-spelling are indicators of suspect product, as are visible corrosion and discolouration of metal components. Check if the product has the correct markings for the type of product. Also consider the selling channel; the weight of the product (lightweight product can be an indication of missing components); whether the documentation is in order; and if the product is being sold second hand, in which case there is no way of knowing the condition of the internal components.”

“If you are a building owner or specifier, always insist on and specify genuine products. If you are an installer or contractor always buy genuine products through authorised distributors; and if in any doubt check with the original brand owner first.”

BEAMA's Anti-Counterfeit Working Group (ACWG) takes action to reduce the proliferation of counterfeit electrical products in China, the Middle East and Africa. ■

www.beama.org.uk

Advertiser's Index

Balkrishna Industries Ltd	51	Rock Plant (Kenya) Ltd	12
Kohler SDMO	52	Spedag Interfreight AG	25
Metalgalante S.p.A.	15	Volvo Construction Equipment AB.....	2
Nuba Screening Media S.L.	17	Wilhelm Layher GmbH & Co. KG	41

Is this the insurance industry's new normal?

Travys Wilkins, executive director, SureStart, explains how the African insurance industry can adapt and diversify to uncertain times while still meeting the needs of its customers.



Digital solutions are coming into their own in the African insurance industry.

When the government first announced a national lockdown back in March, countless businesses were left scrambling to make working from home work. Sure, distributed work was probably on the cards for many of these companies but being forced to enable your entire team to work remotely in a matter of days is easier said than done.

A 2017 report from McKinsey & Company, which focused on digital disruption in insurance, stated that CEOs cannot simply “sanction” digital transformation; they need to communicate their digital strategy with the company and then outline why it’s important to make the changes they’re planning to make. But when a global pandemic strikes, there isn’t much time to have these conversations. You need to act and adapt. And you need to do so as quickly as possible.

At SureStart, as a digital-first

business, we were lucky because we could make the transition to distance work fairly simply. But beyond the nuts and bolts of digitising and keeping things running internally, we’ve also seen a shift in consumer buying behaviour. Where insurance was traditionally sold via a broker face-to-face, social distancing measures mean that customers have had to get comfortable with buying insurance via digital channels.

This is where things could get tricky for the industry. For the most part, customers don’t buy insurance; they’re sold insurance. But in an online world, the onus is on the customer to seek things out. Until there is a mind shift on the consumer side – towards buying insurance, not being sold insurance – it’s likely that we’ll soon see a move back to pre-COVID norms. But this doesn’t mean that insurers should hold off on using this

opportunity to leverage digital to automate and streamline their processes. In fact, I’d argue that the “new normal” will be a more hybrid model, with outbound staff complemented by digital channels.

This is especially important when it comes to client support staff.

Something a lot of people have struggled with during the lockdown is uncertainty. The businesses that have been open and transparent with their customers, those who have communicated effectively, are the ones who will come out of this looking good. If your advisors, call centre agents and brokers aren’t able to communicate with customers face-to-face, you need to make sure that there are other channels in place so that your clients aren’t left in the dark.

According to a recent Deloitte report, modern insurers need to understand that traditional principles don’t hold the same value as they used to. If insurers want to

drive the disruption needed to stay relevant among consumers who expect seamless experiences at every touch point, they need to embrace a new approach.

Our shift to remote work happened fairly easily but that doesn’t mean that our lockdown experience has been hurdle free. We’ve seen losses due to product exposure in travel and entertainment, which emphasises the importance of product and distribution diversification.

Winston Churchill once said that you should never waste a crisis and I think this sentiment is especially true today. Businesses must use this situation to better prepare for the future. When you have the right solutions, technologies and strategies in place, it’s easier to adapt when things aren’t going according to plan. ■

www.SureStart.co.za

A LONG WAY TOGETHER



WHEREVER YOU ARE, BKT IS WITH YOU

No matter how challenging your needs, BKT is with you offering an extensive product portfolio for every field such as agriculture, OTR and industrial applications.

BKT provides concrete, reliable and high-quality solutions to your requests and working needs.

Wherever you are, BKT is with you.



GROWING TOGETHER


bkt-tires.com

For info:
africa@bkt-tires.com

THE NEW POWER PRODUCT LINE

OPTIMIZED SOLUTIONS FOR STANDBY APPLICATIONS



The new KOHLER range provides the optimized solution for standby applications, with all best selling features packaged together. The easy and quick-to-install product meets requirements for good value for money and reliability while streamlining costs.

kohler-sdmo.com



KOHLER®
SDMO®