By Omer Redi and Sophia Nesri

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (November 27, 2018): The innovative PIDA Job Creation Toolkit is a key tool that unlocks finances and other resources for infrastructure development.

This, according to Mr. Symerre Grey-Johnson, Head of Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade at the NEPAD Agency during the soft launch of the PIDA Job Creation Toolkit, who emphasized that the information generated by the Toolkit will help convince stakeholders including financiers and development partners on the benefits of a certain project to society at the construction phase.

"The Job Creation Toolkit is anchored on the Declaration by African leaders at their July 2017 AU Summit during which they called for focus on technical, technological, overall job creation and youth employment matters through infrastructure development projects across Africa,"Mr. Grey-Johnson stated.

In a practical demonstration of the Toolkit, Mr. Simbini Tichakunda, Energy Infrastructure Expert at the NEPAD Agency, explained how this unique toolkit will allow project developers, implementers and promoters to make profound estimations on labour market effects of infrastructure projects and provide guidance on how to increase and optimize these labour market effects.

The discussion brought forward targeted job creation interventions, which can be implemented during the entire project’s life cycle and specifically during the project preparation process, for example for the NEPAD Service Delivery Mechanism.

The Job creation toolkit is expected to be officially launched at the next AU Summit in Addis Ababa in February 2019.
By Doreen Chilumbu

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (November 27, 2018): POWER pools have just emerged as a key feature of shared infrastructure in Africa.

Experts say these shared infrastructures could bolster regional integration and are a pre-requisite for unleashing Africa’s growth potential.

An example of the shared infrastructure is the Ruzizi III hydropower Dam, which is part of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and involves Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda.

Providing an update on the project at PIDA 2018, Managing Director of the organization for the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), Mr. Charles Vumbi Mbenza says the project will strengthen regional economic integration through the creation of an electricity market. Once completed the project will double Burundi’s current total capacity while Rwanda’s will increase by half.

The DRC’s share will contribute to raising supply in the Eastern Africa region not currently connected to the interconnected network.

AfDB’s representative Jacques Moulot says the project will promote trans-boundary sharing of resources like water.

In 2015, AfDB approved US$ 138 million of loans and grants to finance the Ruzizi III Hydropower Plant Project.

“The financing will help the construction of a run-of-river dam straddling the Ruzizi River between the DRC and Rwanda, as well as a 147 MW power plant and distribution station,” Mr Moulot says.

New facilities like Ruzizi III provide an independent source of green energy, helping the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi to meet their growing energy needs.

All three countries have been experiencing difficulties in meeting the demand for electricity, due to over a decade without major energy infrastructure investments while their populations and economic activity have continued to grow.

By ensuring reliable and affordable electric power, the Ruzizi III Hydropower Plant Project will increase the region’s access to electricity by 300% thereby contributing to the sustainable socio-economic transformation of the region.

As a regional project, the electricity generated will also feed into the East African Power Pool (EAPP).

“The financing will help the construction of a run-of-river dam straddling the Ruzizi River between the DRC and Rwanda, as well as a 147 MW power plant and distribution station.”
Move Africa Logistics Dialogue-Connecting Markets, People, Goods and Services

By Wilfred Ewaleifoh

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (November 27, 2018): It takes an average of five hours for a truck to cross the border at Kazungula border post between Zambia and Botswana.

Now that is one of the major obstacles to doing business in Africa, which the Traffic Light System under NEPAD’s Move Africa seeks to sort out.

The mention of traffic light creates the mental picture of the equipment installed on streets for controlling traffic.

However, within the framework of NEPAD’s Move Africa, it refers to an index for measuring performance at transport corridors in the continent.

The Traffic Light System uses ten key indicators ranging from level of infrastructure to border agencies co-operation to assess the processing of persons and goods at border posts.

At a focus session on Move Africa Logistics Dialogue at the on-going 2018 PIDA Week, NEPAD CEO, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, said it is not just about the numbers but what they are saying which will be used to unlock the challenges at the border.

Dr. Mayaki says the traffic light system will be critical to the success of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.

Jubilee Hamwala of the Zambian Revenue Authority says the Traffic Light System is already helping her with trade facilitation at three border posts in her country.

Project Manager of MoveAfrica, Ms. Kisa Nkhoma in an extensive presentation on the Traffic Light System, says it is being tried out at four border posts on the North-South Corridor.

Mr. Adama Deen, Special Advisor to the NEPAD CEO and Project Manager Highway Speed Rail in another presentation said two pilots of the high-speed freight and railways are to be rolled out by 2023 as instructed by African leaders.

On the Trans African Highway Project now tagged African Regional Transport Infrastructure, ARTI, Deen says 12 thousand missing links have to be upgraded to meet minimal standards.

The Traffic Light System, High Speed Freight and Railway as well as the Trans Saharan Highway will form the backbone of MoveAfrica that is aimed at connecting markets, people, goods and services which as the NEPAD CEO Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki likes to say will unite Africa for a more beneficial experience.
LAPSSET PARTNERING COUNTRIES URGED TO STEP UP INVESTMENT EFFORTS

By Baboloki Semele

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, 27 November 2018: Governments of Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan have been urged to increase their investments in infrastructure development to attract private players to the infrastructure sector that has a 180 billion US dollars deficit.

The call was made this morning, 27 November 2018 by the head of Kenya NEPAD agency Daniel Osio when making deliberations at the ongoing PIDA week commemoration.

He was speaking during the showcase of the LAPSSET corridor, where he said some basic infrastructure has been built. He further noted that the construction of any of LAPSSET’s main components (ports, pipelines, roads, railways) has yet to begin.

He commended the Kenya government for making the corridor a flagship of Kenya national vision 2030, and urged South Sudan and Ethiopia to do so, in order to accelerate the project.

The seven key infrastructure project components of the LAPSSET Corridor Program require substantial amounts of resources with a budget estimate of US$24.5 billion, in construction costs.

It is estimated that Lamu Port with its 22 berths alone will cost approximately US$3.1 billion, the Railway US$7.1 billion while the crude oil pipeline will cost a further estimate of US$3 billion for Lamu to Lokichar trunk line alone. Once completed, the LAPSSET railway will connect to West Africa’s Douala–Lagos–Cotonou–Abidjan Corridor, running through Cameroon, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire respectively.

Experts deliberating at the PIDA week 2018 showcase of the projects says the LAPSSET project is one of the major contributions to the African Union’s regional integration vision of a peaceful, prosperous and fully integrated continent by 2063.

During the 2015 AU General Assembly, African leaders endorsed the project under the AU’s Presidential Infrastructure Championship Initiative (PICI). Admission into PICI signals that a project is critical to the continent’s regional integration aspiration. At the onset, Kenya received financial assurances from foreign private investors. However, Brazil, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Qatar and South Korea, though they promised to fund the project, failed to fulfil their commitments. This forced Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan to agree to use domestic resources to finance their respective parts of the project.

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@NEPAD_Agency
@AU_IED
@_AfricanUnion

#PIDAWEek2018
West Africa shows firm political commitment to cross regional super highway

By Omer Redi

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (November 27, 2018): Leaders of West African countries along the cross-regional super highway corridor project in the region have shown remarkably firm political commitment for the realisation of the project, an infrastructure expert said on Tuesday.

Mr. Peter Ofori Asumadu, Infrastructure Technical Expert at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Infrastructure Department, made the remark while responding to questions at a session on the Abidjan Lagos and Praia Dakar Abidjan corridors on the sideline of PIDA Week 2018 taking place in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

He was addressing a question about the level of the political will and commitment of countries for the project during a discussion after presentation to showcase this flagship project of the AU’s Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

He stated that by according to the necessary supra-national mandate to the Abidjan – Lagos Corridor Management Authority (ALCoMA) and by working on the segments of the corridors in their respective countries allowing to eventually be managed by ALCoMA, countries along the corridor and their leadership have reaffirmed their political commitments for the realisation of the project.

A flagship PIDA project driven with the “One Road - One Vision” motto of the ALCoMA, the Abidjan Lagos Corridor and Praia Dakar Abidjan Corridor is a mega cross-regional road project that is expected to speed up socio-economic and political integration in the ECOWAS region. It is also an important element of the road infrastructure linkage between West and East Africa and the rest of the regions in the continent as envisioned by both PIDA’s blueprint for infrastructure transformation in Africa for the period 2012-2040, and African Union’s Agenda 2063.

According to Lydie Ehouman, Principal Transport Economist with the African Development Bank (AfDB), 80% of trade activities in West Africa takes place on the corridor.

“This is why we say it is doable, it makes it easier for implementation,” she said explaining that the project is feasible based on the current realities on the ground of the countries along the corridor.

The AfDB is the major financier of the project preparation making it a key player in the realisation of this project.

African Union Commission Director for Infrastructure and Energy, Mr. Cheikh Bedda highlighted the need to transform this corridor into a smart one and urged the importance of connecting rural areas through an integrated approach.

ALCoMA is working on ways to attract various sources of financing including the private sector to involve in the construction of this super highway.

Private sector may be reluctant to invest on the project hence ALCoMA is working on a public-private partnership (PPP) regime to be applied in the entire region to attract private sector financing for the project in every country, it was learnt at the session.

Realising Africa’s Integration through Smart Infrastructure and Good Governance

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TRANSFORMING AFRICA
Finance, Environmental assessments stalling progress on some PIDA Projects

By Sally Nyakanyanga

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (November 27, 2018): The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) implementing partners for the Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme, Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya (ZTK) Power Interconnector Project and Blue Nile Energy corridor have cited lack of funding as a contributing factor to the slow progress of the project.

Clement Chiwele, Chief Engineer for the ZTK Power Interconnector project, said though construction of ZTK power interconnector is going on, the Zambian section still has challenges with funding.

“Tanzania and Kenya have already secured funding for the last section of the project except for Zambia,” Chiwele said.

An Environmental Impact Assessment report is also to be submitted on the impact of the Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme on the Taita Falcon bird, a habitat of the Gorge, which is facing extinction as well as effects on the white water rafting.

“This has been stalling progress but we have since done three ongoing studies and expecting the project to take off by September 2019 after submitting the report,” says Crispen Munodawafa, the Chief Executive of the Zambezi Authority.

The Director of Infrastructure and Logistics, Mr. Jean Baptiste Mutabazi, from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) on the sidelines of the meeting said, “What is interesting for me is just having energy produced for instance at Batoka Gorge and sold in other countries in Africa.”

Mutabazi highlighted that the interconnections are not there currently but the ZTK Power Interconnector is linking the regional Powerpool to ensure an exchange of energy goes to Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania and East of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

For the Blue Nile Energy Corridor interconnection, agreements are to be finalized by 2019.

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