



**One Africa Initiatives**

Review 3.0

Topic:

**ENHANCED HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX: PATHWAY TO  
AFRICA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Presented on:

**11 May, 2020**

By:

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NIGERIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE, VATICAN**



Born on 15 August 1956, Ambassador (Gen) Godwin George Umo OON attended all the necessary schools culminating in his admission into the Nigerian Defence Academy in 1975, from where he was commissioned Second Lieutenant into the Nigerian Army in 1977. Ambassador Umo rose to become the Commander Corps of Signals, with the rank of Major General. Prior to being the Commander Corps of Signals, the Ambassador (then a Colonel), was the Commander of the ECOMOG Signals Command from 1996-1999 during the Wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau. He attended the University of Ife (Obafemi Awolowo University), where he read Electronics and Telecoms Engineering. Umo has had practical factory work experience at the ERICSSONS Communications facilities in Kista, Sweden, as well as exposure to other forms of training at the Université de Benin, Togo, Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Badagry; and Governance and Management Systems Institute, UK, to mention a few. His work experiences include equipment and systems testing and verification in India, South Africa, Australia, the UK, Israel and Sweden. Ambassador Umo is an avid Tennis player who originated, over 40 years ago, the “Agwo System” of play, now popularly employed by professional Tennis stars. He has a Masters degree in Strategic Studies from the University of Ibadan. He was appointed the Ambassador of Nigeria to the Holy See in 2017.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Before delving into the discourse of today, let me acknowledge the immense contributions of Dr Ike Nelieku on Leadership and Dr Muiyiwa Bamgbose on Education. Those presentations brought to the fore the many areas of urgent intervention if Africa is to make progress as a Continent. I would not fail to acknowledge the ingenuity in Engr Tim Akano for packaging this pan-African Forum together; and it is hoped that it would help us arrive at the envisaged destination. Now, to the matter of the moment.

2. The twin issues of growth and development in Africa have continued to dominate academic and non-academic discourses, in an apparent realization by everyone that the survival of the African continent depends, to a large extent, on the duo. What may not, however, be visible to everyone are those actions that are needed to ensure the realization of the dream. This short discourse therefore sets to argue that the pathway to Africa's Economic Growth and Sustainable Development derives from enhancing the Human Capital Index (HCI). This is because the critical primers of HCI are Health (SDG3) and Education (SDG4), the absence of which in the continental growth and development calculus would simply lead to stagnation.

3. The Forum comprises very seasoned intellectuals and practitioners, as well as young members that can be referred to as the future Leaders of Africa. Consequently, and for the benefit of the last category of Forum members, some conceptual clarifications shall be made. Thereafter, the paper will look at measures instituted in the past, and the current ones, all aimed at lifting Africa out of economic and development doldrums. Whilst assessing the level of success or failure of the instituted measures, a critical examination of the components of such measures would be made to ascertain their suitability, in the first place, for the ailments.

It would also be appropriate to identify the challenges that thwarted the full or satisfactory realization of the objectives. Some of those impediments, for instance, informed the UN to review the 8-point Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and replace them with a 17-point Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a target date of 2030 to attain the goals. The year 2030 is some 10 years from now, coupled with the COVID-19 disruptions in the world economy and other spheres of life, is 2030 still realistic? This question is necessary because Africa needs to attain these goals more than any other continent, and given the domino effect of the Coronavirus Pandemic on the entire world, Africa cannot be insulated. So what fast-paced solution can be put in place to avert economic and development crises in Africa? The solution cannot be one; but the Human Capital Index (HCI) may just help. So, to get this discourse to its destination, the paper will be patterned after the scope that follows.

## SCOPE

4. The paper intends to meet its objectives using the following broad guidelines:
  - a. Some Conceptual Clarifications.
  - b. Previous Efforts aimed at improving Africa's Human Development Index (HDI).
  - c. Impacts on Economic Growth and Development.
  - d. Recourse to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
  - e. The Bali 2018 Paradigm Shift.
  - f. Significance of Human Capital Index.
  - g. The Way Forward.

## CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

### MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

5. Like earlier mentioned, some conceptual clarifications will be made to provide a level-playing field to all Forum members. Instituted in 2000, the 8-point Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were part of the international efforts to improve the wellbeing of the citizens of the world. They were envisaged to produce the most successful anti-poverty agenda for sustainable development by the year 2015. Surprisingly though, the time frame was backdated to 1990, clear 10 years before the actual declaration.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

6. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the *Global Goals*, were adopted by the UN member States in 2015 as a universal call for action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. They are 17 integrated goals.

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

7. The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistic composite index of life expectancy, education and per capita income, which are used to rank countries into 4 tiers of human development – Very High, High, Medium and Low. Besides some 10 odd African countries that are in the Medium bracket, the rest, including Nigeria, are in the Low human development fold.

### HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX

The Human Capital Index (HCI) is the statistical indicator of estimating human development in each nation. It comprises Life Expectancy Index, Education Index and Income. The HCI measures which countries are best in mobilizing the economic and professional potentials of its citizens. First published by the IMF and World Bank in October 2018, in Bali, Indonesia, the scale ranges from 0-1, where 1 is the maximum potential. Algeria and Kenya had the highest potential in Africa 0.52, while Chad with 0.29 led the rear with Nigeria at 0.34.

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

8. Economic Growth is the increase in the production of economic goods and services over a period of time and it is influenced by human resources, physical capital, natural resources and technology. The take-home here is that Economic Growth is propelled by population growth and labour productivity.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9. Many scholars and organizations have defined Sustainable Development, including the Bruntland Commission, but a simple definition would suffice. Sustainable Development is the development that satisfies the needs of the present, without compromising the capacity of the future generations, guaranteeing the balance between Economic Growth, care for the environment and social wellbeing. In a nutshell, it is a commitment to social progress, environment balance and economic growth.

### **PREVIOUS EFFORTS AIMED AT IMPROVING AFRICA'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX**

10. Efforts at improving the wellbeing of African citizens have been a continuum, though at various degrees of success. Ten years to the advent of the current Millennium, the UN started working on the MDGs that would eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, among others, by 2015. Setting the start-time at 1990 was not realistic for Africans, that were passing through a very hectic economic travail and was most insensitive. Consequently, whereas, the developing world was able to meet the 80% and above benchmark, majority of African countries had nothing to show by the turn of 2015.

11. Indeed, the MDGs were supposed to improve the respective HDI of countries citizens; but African regions growth was well below the target. Then came the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) in 2010, which indicated the overall loss to human development due to inequality. It was a really tough nut to crack. While efforts were made to close the equality gaps at the international and regional levels, national demographic and cultural contradictions helped to widen the gaps.

12. Economist Hendrik Wolf, Howard Chong and Maximillian Auffhammer critiqued the HDI from the perspective of data error which led some countries to be misclassified. A review of the criticism in January 2010, saw to the systematic revision of the methods used for the calculation of HDI. This response did not assuage the likes of Salvatore Monni and Alessandro Spaventa who observed that the GDP squared against HDI did not reflect the true situation of things. It might therefore not be surprising that weakness of the parameters to indicate the true value of HDI led to Nigerians being the happiest humans on earth, contrary to Nigeria being classified as Low on the HDI, while Norway and Sweden with Very High classification were not so declared. It is therefore these and other challenges in justifying the HDI as a veritable method of measurement, perhaps, made the UNDP to move to the SDGs. One of such challenges was the unrealistic assessment matrix used in disregard of local situations in each country. For example, while Burkina Faso and Niger raised school enrollments from 20-60 percent, the countries were not applauded since they did not reach the expected 80% benchmark.

13. Development watchers observed the conditions set for the attainment of MDGs were made impossible to attain by African countries, as setting the same targets for all countries without taking into account their current states of development was an exercise designed to fail, *ab initio*. Watchers observed that progress made does not necessarily occur as a linear graph, which means improvements in people, across the entire human endeavours, occur at various rates in individual countries. In spite of all these challenges, African countries made progress towards achieving the MDGs, though Thirty Four out Forty Eight still got classified as least developed. To swim out of this drowning situation, the world came together to chart a new course through the SDGs.

14. The new paradigm shift (the SDGs) was preceded by a global survey that gathered the views of some 7million people around the world and has been described as the most inclusive. Countries now set their benchmarks they consider feasible to work towards. Money to finance development in Africa has always been a problem. With the withdrawal of some heavy financiers of the UN, African leaders have been thronging to China.

15. One of the panacea for Africa is to broaden its revenue base by improving tax collection systems, combat tax evasion and stop illicit financial flows. These are pretty tough measures to implement in Africa due to the near absence of production capacity and the indigence of the citizens. As for illicit financial flow, it can only work with the full cooperation of the international community. A recent assessment of the level of performance of the SDGs since they were kick-started in 2015, according to SDGs Centre for Africa, shows that minimum progress has been made; and in some cases there is complete stagnation. The report further states that more than half of the global poor (those earning less than \$1.99/day) inhabit Africa and that 1 out 3 Africans is at the risk of food insecurity. The only areas that Africa seems to be on track to achieving are SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG13 (Climate Actions) and SDG15 (Life on Land). The Centre foresees from available data, that poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, net school enrollment, access to electricity and drinking water will worsen. The Centre concluded that besides North Africa, other regions of Africa are unlikely to meet the SDGs and that Central Africa's case would require special attention.

16. What the preceding paragraph has clearly indicated should be a source of concern for Africans because the much-sought-after Economic Growth and Development may end up being a mirage.

## **IMPACTS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

17. The UNDP's Report claims that Africa's regions growth has been below the SDGs' target of 7%/Year and equally below the historical long-term average. The report further stated that sub-Saharan Africa's Regions growth dropped to 1.4% in 2016 largely due to various factors of globalization, which include: dwindling global trade, depressed commodity prices and climate conditions. As if these were not enough harm, population growth, impending infrastructure transformation and future productivity render social inclusion difficult, at the same time. Consequently, 28 African countries are categorized as Low Income and 37 as having Low Human Development.

18. More worrisome is the fact that the African child is still at the risk of a full, high quality education or decent health care. This former point was sufficiently showcased by the earlier presentation on the OAI Forum. Besides the poor education services in Africa, the health care is nothing to write home about. In a recent classification, 22 African countries had their HCI scores slightly above 0.4. The HCI measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18, given the risks of poor education and health that subsist in the country where the child resides. The HCI is designed to highlight how improvements in current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers, assuming the children born today experience, over the next 18 years, the educational opportunities and health risks that children in this age range currently face.

19. This paper insists that the 4 factors that influence Economic Growth must not be discountenanced. The human resources must be qualitative through proper education so that they can know how best to use the other resources namely: Physical Capital, Natural Resources and Technology to drive Economic Growth. Perhaps it might be necessary to emphasize that Economic Growth is driven by population growth (quality population) and Labour Productivity. African population is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050 but much of this will remain unemployed, underemployed and a curse unless something substantial is done to change the narrative. For Africa with substantial infrastructure failures and lack of basic amenities, governments, in conjunction with the private sector, have much greater scope for increasing growth rates if they could provide basic levels of education and infrastructure. Indeed, most productive growth and technological improvements, with a few exceptions, come from the private sector.

20. It is therefore expedient that Africa leverages technology for better learning and health outcomes because the economic future will be transformed, in ways never seen before, by technological changes. Technology undoubtedly offers new opportunities to accelerate progress towards the twin goals of eradicating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Technology opens up new pathways to sustainable, inclusive growth by building the foundations of digital economy, enhancing people's capacity and those of firms and institutions by employing technological solutions.

21. Whilst technology plays a critical part in economic growth, it would need finances to realize the objectives of improved economic growth and development; and that is where the private sector must partner with African governments and the multilateral development Banks. Such funds must focus on the Extremely Poor Countries, the Highly-Indebted Countries, the Low Income Countries of Africa and the Marginal Societies. In doing that, the disbursement of such funds must aim at closing access gaps to the marginalized in the society – the women and the Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs (SMEs). Women must be particularly favoured in the disbursement because a recent UN study shows that African women generate about 85% of GDP compared to women in the USA and the UK with percentages below 70%. All said and done, development must balance socio-economic and environmental sustainability.

## **RECOURSE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

22. A review of the MDGs in 2015 gave birth to the 17-point Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were intended to salvage and improve upon the little gains recorded by the MDGs. It was envisaged that the attainment of the said goals by 2030, will further improve the quality of life of world citizens. However, a recent UNDP review shows that there are serious problems that prevent even the assessment of progress. African countries are not data-compliant, even the few that are available are inconsistent and unhelpful.

23. Perhaps this situation prompted the IMF and the World Bank, in their annual Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2018, to decide to chart a new course of assessing countries progress mainly using SDG 3 and SDG 4.

## THE BALI 2018 PARADIGM SHIFT

24. The Bretton Woods institutions had a meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2018 attracting a record attendance with over 3000 delegates from UN member countries, including a galaxy of media representatives and more than 5000 participants representing various fields, from the private sector to the Banking Community, government and academic institutions. A gamut of issues, including global financing and economic issues, global economic outlook, poverty eradication and how effective aids granted to developing countries, were discussed. At the close of the meeting, the Development Committee of the conference came to the following points:

a. Economic growth remains strong but uneven and so were manufacturing and trade growth. Most of the reasons for downward slide of

global growth were said to include policy uncertainty, geopolitical developments, rising debt levels and currency volatility, amongst others.

b. The Committee therefore recommended that policies that support robust and inclusive economic growth, reduce risks and foster competitiveness, while strengthening fiscal sustainability and ensure financial resilience, must be instituted.

c. Debt vulnerabilities in Low-Income Countries, coupled with non- sustainable and opaque lending practices, were hampering the economic growth and development of these countries, which incidentally are largely African countries.

d. The report therefore recommended the building of the human capital in order to leverage technological advantages on jobs, improve the finance sector and influence other aspects of development. New skills and capabilities must have to be acquired, in the face of current Digital Disruption, to be able adapt to new realities and prosper.

25. Perhaps the issue of opaque lending practices should not be glossed over. Some African countries have demonstrated an uncomfortable penchant for taking loans without reading the finer lines of the agreement. Like Tanzanian President, John Magufuli, has observed recently, his predecessor signed a 99-year contract for China to develop and operate a strategic port in the country and that while the agreement subsists, no other ports shall be developed in Tanzania! A popular YouTube presenter would ask “*Africa, who did this to us?*”. Some loan agreements African countries enter into are not transparent. It must be reiterated that corruption has negative impacts on education and health, as well as economic growth and development. Though, Dreher and Gassbner (2013) theorized that corruption can act as lubricant of economic wheel, and in some cases have positive impact on economic growth, this writer disagrees. Corruption is the catalyst required to destroy a nation, a region or a continent.

26. Indeed, the various volatile security situations in many regions of Africa have seen some correlation between corruption and military expenditure, which implies that high level of corruption reduces economic growth. Besides this, corrupt countries are less attractive for genuine investors, and when they reluctantly do, they prefer Joint Ventures. In their study “*Corruption and the Shadow Economy*” Schneider and Buehn confirmed that the higher the degree of corruption, the lower the economic growth and development, measured by GDP/capita.

27. What, therefore, should African governments do in the light of these revelations? They must identify the causes of corruption and begin to eliminate them. Governments must play an important role in the modelling of anti-corruption policies, strengthen their public procurement

institutions with skilled workforce, as the absence of this in public procurement institutions presents a breeding ground for corruption. Furthermore, since it is now common knowledge that war, crises and even the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic create opportunity for corruption, the more African governments can create environments for peace, the less would be corruption.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX**

28. It was earlier pointed out that only Algeria and Kenya had above 0.5, actually 0.52, translating to 52% of productivity in those countries. Elsewhere in Africa the data range from 0.29 (Chad) to 0.4. While Algeria and Kenya are losing 48% of their income through not paying attention to human capital development, the rest of Africa are losing more. To, therefore, avert these losses, investment in HCI is inescapable. The higher the HCI, the more economic growth and development would improve, *ceretis paribus*.

29. All avenues of financial losses must therefore be blocked to enable resources to be channeled into the improvement of the HCI, wars and security crises must be averted, as those provide veritable grounds for corruption and disinvestment. Insurgencies in various parts of Africa will further lower African HCI.

30. So, where would the succor come from? Education and Health, which are the key components of the HCI. The HCI focuses on Child Survival, School Enrollment; Quality of Learning, Healthy Growth and Adult Survival. The human resources must be enhanced to utilize the Physical Capital, Natural Resources and technology. African governments cannot go it alone and would require collaborations with the private sector, not only to close the access gap to the marginalized of the society, but to empower women and SMEs for economic growth. If Africa intends to march forward in its quest for economic emancipation, robust policies that strengthen their economies must be instituted and corruption must be punished, and severely too.

## **CONCLUSION**

31. The HCI will not on its own improve the economic growth and development in Africa. Earlier presentations have shown that committed leadership that can drive the process would be required. In the presentation on Education, it was pointed out education in Africa, in its current state cannot get the continent out of the socio- economic doldrums it has found itself. The HCI, which is a catalyst for economic growth and development, is pivoted on education and health. These two indices from the recent IMF/World Bank report are great sources of worry. So, if education and health, which directly impact economic growth and development, are not given priority consideration, Africa stands the risk of being left behind.

32. The bulk of African countries are losing income ranging from 71% (Chad) to 48% (Algeria and Kenya) due to their inability to harness the abundant human resources for economic growth and development. The human capital achieves set goals, develop and remain innovative and that is why the OECD, in 2010, encouraged governments of advance economies to embrace policies to increase innovation and knowledge in products and services as an economic path to continued prosperity. Africa simply needs to key into enhanced HCI in order to realize its dream of economic growth and development.



## THE WAY FORWARD

33. It is settled that the current levels of HCI in African countries cannot bring about the economic growth and development the continent desperately requires. Africa will post a quarter of the world's population by 2050; but how many of these people are availed education and health, will determine whether or not the human resource would constitute a curse or a blessing. Consequently, Africa must come up with a policy framework that deliberately encourages less military and other non-essential spending. Granted that wars, conflicts and other security challenges have substantial impacts on the countries allocation of resources, as can be seen in the case of Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Somalia and Nigeria, most other countries, like Uganda, Namibia, Congo Republic and Madagascar cannot justify the high defence expenditures. All these resources would best have been used to improve education and health for Africans. See Table 1.

34. Talking about education in sub-Saharan Africa, whereas the recent report on Primary School completion rate stood at 55.3%, the Secondary School enrolment dropped to 31.2%. It is safe to extrapolate that the percentage that would proceed to tertiary institutions will even be worse. Without appropriate human capital driving the economies and developments in Africa, the continent would be in trouble. African governments must give education its pride of place. Since a healthy mind can only live in a healthy body, the issue of health care, right from the day the child is born till the child grows into adulthood, he or she must be provided with quality food and proper family support. Arguments about sources of fund will be quick to come to the fore, but, African countries could cut down on consumerism, preference for imported goods and services and with some commitment, the resources saved therefrom could be used to foot the education and health projects.

35. Africa's human capital must be properly built to explore the opportunities presented by evolving technologies. Not doing so could see Africa completely left behind. In doing so, Africa must encourage itself to look inwards and not to depend on external loans, most of which are not transparent. Schneider and Buehn insist that the higher the corruption, the lower the economic growth and development. Consequently, African leaders must abhor corruption and demonstrate their resolves to eradicate it by building strong public institutions that would investigate and punish corruption.

36. Wars, conflicts and security challenges have never provided a conducive environment for genuine businesses. Besides diverting the resources that would have contributed to the general wellbeing of the people, conflicts destabilize the polity. Conflict-resolution mechanism must therefore be employed to create conducive environment for investments.

37. African women have demonstrated their capability to contribute to the economic growth and development. They must be funded, appropriately, to do what they are suitable for - Small Scale Farming. A major component of health, as one of the two primers of HCI, is food and nutrition. Food and nutrition, taken together, plays a significant role in the wellbeing of the citizens. Indeed, good food and nutrition is a precursor of good health. According to GROWAFRICA, Africa holds possession of 60% of the world's arable land and has billions of dollars in investment potential. The projected population for Africa, by the year 2050, is 25% of the world's population. Though a large population is desirable to drive economic growth and development, such a population must be a healthy one. Food and nutrition can therefore not be ignored; and that is why emphasis must be placed on massive food production, employing technology and agricultural best practices.

Countries with least arable land like Israel are doing great in agriculture, which Africa could emulate. HCI could serve as the best mobilizers of the economic and professional potentials of African citizens, and should be leveraged.

Serial	Country	(AB) Annual Budget	(ME) Military Expenditure	Percentage ME/AB	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	Egypt	42bn	11.2bn	27%	High
2.	Kenya	15bn	0.12bn	8%	
3.	Nigeria	14bn	2.16bn	15.5%	High
4.	Ethiopia	12bn	0.35bn	29.2%	High
5.	Tunisia	9.4bn	0.56bn	6%	
6.	Sudan	8.2bn	2.8bn	34.6%	High
7.	Tanzania	7.9bn	0.23bn	2.9%	
8.	Côte d'Ivoire	7.2bn	0.56bn	7.8%	
9.	Botswana	5.6bn	0.45bn	8%	
10.	Cameroon	5.2bn	0.35bn	6.7%	
11.	Uganda	4.02bn	0.94bn	23.4%	High
12.	Namibia	3.97bn	0.51bn	12.8%	High
13.	Zimbabwe	3.6bn	0.1bn	2.8%	
14.	DRC	3.3bn	0.1bn	3.03%	
15.	Gabon	3.1bn	0.08bn	2.6%	
16.	Mali	3.07bn	0.07bn	2.3%	
17.	Mozambique	2.8bn	0.26bn	9.3%	
18.	Burkina Faso	2.7bn	0.13bn	4.8%	
19.	Congo Republic	2.52bn	0.71bn	28.2%	High
20.	Niger	1.7bn	0.36bn	21.2%	High
21.	Madagascar	1.3bn	0.16bn	12.3%	High
22.	Mauritania	1.25bn	0.05bn	4%	
23.	Chad	1.18bn	0.2bn	17%	High
24.	Sierra Leone	0.68bn	0.075bn	11%	High
25.	Liberia	0.63bn	0.013bn	2.06%	
26.	Somalia	0.26bn	0.06bn	23.1%	High
27.	CAR	0.23bn	0.02bn	8.7%	

**TABLE 1: AFRICA'S ANNUAL BUDGETS VS DEFENCE EXPENDITURES**

(CIA World Factbook 2016 and 2019)

## **Summary of the Presentation**

- The twin issues of growth and development in Africa have continued to dominate academic and non-academic discourses, in an apparent realization by everyone that the survival of the African continent depends, to a large extent, on the duo
- What may not, however, be visible to everyone are those actions that are needed to ensure the realization of the dream
- This short discourse therefore sets to argue that the pathway to Africa's Economic Growth and Sustainable Development derives from enhancing the Human Capital Index (HCI)
- This is because the critical primers of HCI are Health (SDG3) and Education (SDG4), the absence of which in the continental growth and development calculus would simply lead to stagnation.
- For the benefit of the last category of Forum members, some conceptual clarifications shall be made.
- Some challenges that thwarted the full or satisfactory realization of the objectives has informed the UN to review the 8-point Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 and replace them with a 17-point Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a target date of 2030 to attain the goals.
- Are these goals still realistic by 2030? The year 2030 is some 10 years from now, coupled with the COVID-19 disruptions in the world economy and other spheres of life.
- Given the domino effect of the Coronavirus Pandemic on the entire world, Africa cannot be insulated. So, what fast paced solution can be put in place to avert economic and development crises in Africa? The solution cannot be one; but the Human Capital Index (HCI) may just help.

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produce the most successful anti-poverty agenda for sustainable development by the year 2015. Surprisingly though, the time frame was backdated to 1990, clear 10 years before the actual declaration.

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- Consequently, whereas the developing world was able to meet the 80% and above benchmark, majority of African countries had nothing to show by the turn of 2015.
- MDGs were supposed to improve the respective HDI of countries citizens; but African regions growth was well below the target. Then came the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) in 2010, which indicated the overall loss to human development due to inequality.
- While efforts were made to close the equality gaps at the international and regional levels, national demographic and cultural contradictions helped to widen the gaps.
- Economist Hendrik Wolf, Howard Chong and Maximillian Auffhammer critiqued the HDI from the perspective of data error which led some countries to be misclassified.
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- Watchers observed that progress made does not necessarily occur as a linear graph, which means improvements in people, across the entire human endeavours, occur at various rates in individual countries.
- In spite of all these challenges, African countries made progress towards achieving the MDGs, though Thirty Four out Forty Eight still got classified as least developed.
- The new paradigm shift (the SDGs) was preceded by a global survey that gathered the views of some 7million people around the world and has been described as the most inclusive. Countries now set their benchmarks they consider feasible to work towards.
- Money to finance development in Africa has always been a problem. With the withdrawal of some heavy financiers of the UN, African leaders have been thronging to China.

- One of the panacea for Africa is to broaden its revenue base by improving tax collection systems, combat tax evasion and stop illicit financial flows. Illicit financial flow, it can only work with the full cooperation of the international community.
- A recent assessment of the level of performance of the SDGs since they were kick-started in 2015, according to SDGs Centre for Africa, shows that minimum progress has been made; and in some cases there is complete stagnation.
- The report further states that more than half of the global poor (those earning less than \$1.99/day) inhabit Africa and that 1 out of 3 Africans is at the risk of food insecurity.
- Areas that Africa seems to be on track to achieving are SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG13 (Climate Actions) and SDG15 (Life on Land).
- The Centre concluded that besides North Africa, other regions of Africa are unlikely to meet the SDGs and that Central Africa's case would require special attention.
- The above be a source of concern for Africans because the much-sought-after Economic Growth and Development may end up being a mirage.

## **IMPACTS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

- The UNDP's Report claims that Africa's regions growth has been below the SDGs' target of 7%/Year and equally below the historical long-term average. It further stated that that sub-Saharan Africa's Regions growth dropped to 1.4% in 2016 largely due to various factors such as;
  - Globalization, which include: dwindling global trade
  - Depressed commodity prices
  - Climate conditions
- Population growth, impending infrastructure transformation and future productivity render social inclusion difficult, at the same time.
- Consequently, 28 African countries are categorized as Low Income and 37 as having Low Human Development. More worrisome is the fact that the African child is still at the risk of a full, high quality education or decent health care.
- Besides the poor education services in Africa which was earlier presented on OAI forum, the health care is nothing to write home about.
- In a recent classification, 22 African countries had their HCI scores slightly above 0.4.
- The HCI measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18, given the risks of poor education and health that subsist in the country where the child resides.
- The HCI is designed to highlight how improvements in current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers, assuming the children born today experience, over the next 18 years, the educational opportunities and health risks that children in this age range currently face.

- This paper insists that the 4 factors that influence Economic Growth must not be discountenanced.
- The human resources must be qualitative through proper education so that they can know how best to use the other resources namely:
  - Physical Capital
  - Natural Resources
  - Technology to drive Economic Growth
- It is necessary to emphasize that Economic Growth is driven by population growth (quality population) and Labour Productivity.
- African population is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050 but much of this will remain unemployed, underemployed and a curse unless something substantial is done to change the narrative.
- For Africa with substantial infrastructure failures and lack of basic amenities, governments, in conjunction with the private sector, have much greater scope for increasing growth rates if they could provide basic levels of education and infrastructure. Indeed, most productive growth and technological improvements, with a few exceptions, come from the private sector.
- It is therefore expedient that Africa leverages technology for better learning and health outcomes because the economic future will be transformed, in ways never seen before, by technological changes. Technology undoubtedly offers new opportunities to accelerate progress towards the twin goals of eradicating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity.
- Technology opens up new pathways to sustainable, inclusive growth by building the foundations of digital economy, enhancing people's capacity and those of firms and institutions by employing technological solutions.
- Whilst technology plays a critical part in economic growth, it would need finances to realize the objectives of improved economic growth and development; and that is where the private sector must partner with African governments and the multilateral development Banks. The disbursement of such funds must aim at closing access gaps to the marginalized in the society – the women and the Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs (SMEs) by focusing on Extremely Poor Countries, the Highly-Indebted Countries, the Low Income Countries of Africa and the Marginal Societies.
- Women must be particularly favoured in the disbursement because a recent UN study shows that African women generate about 85% of GDP compared to women in the USA and the UK with percentages below 70%. All said and done, development must balance socio-economic and environmental sustainability.

## **RECOURSE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- A review of the MDGs in 2015 gave birth to the 17-point Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were intended to salvage and improve upon the little gains recorded by the MDGs. The goal was envisaged to be attained in 2030 to further improve the quality of life of world citizens.
- However, a recent UNDP review shows that there are serious problems that prevent even the assessment of progress.
- African countries are not data-compliant, and the few available are inconsistent and unhelpful.

- Perhaps this situation prompted the IMF and the World Bank, in their annual Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2018, to decide to chart a new course of assessing countries progress mainly using SDG 3 and SDG 4.

### **THE BALI 2018 PARADIGM SHIFT**

- The Bretton Woods Institutions had a meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2018 attracting a record attendance with over 3000 delegates from UN member countries, including a galaxy of media representatives and more than 5000 participants representing various fields, from the private sector to the Banking Community, government and academic institutions.
- A gamut of issues, including global financing and economic issues, global economic outlook, poverty eradication and how effective aids granted to developing countries, were discussed. At the close of the meeting, the Development Committee of the conference came to the following points:
  - ❖ Economic growth remains strong but uneven and so were manufacturing and trade growth. Most of the reasons for downward slide of global growth were said to include policy uncertainty, geopolitical developments, rising debt levels and currency volatility, amongst others.
  - ❖ The Committee therefore recommended that policies that support robust and inclusive economic growth, reduce risks and foster competitiveness, while strengthening fiscal sustainability and ensure financial resilience, must be instituted.
  - ❖ Debt vulnerabilities in Low-Income Countries, coupled with non sustainable and opaque lending practices, were hampering the economic growth and development of these countries, which incidentally are largely African countries.
  - ❖ The report therefore recommended the building of the human capital in order to leverage technological advantages on jobs, improve the finance sector and influence other aspects of development. New skills and capabilities must have to be acquired, in the face of current Digital Disruption, to be able adapt to new realities and prosper.
- ✓ Some African countries have demonstrated an uncomfortable penchant for taking loans without reading the finer lines of the agreement hence the issue of opaque lending practices should not be glossed over.
- ✓ It must be reiterated that corruption has negative impacts on education and health, as well as economic growth and development.
- ✓ Dreher and Gassbner (2013) theorized that corruption can act as lubricant of economic wheel, and in some cases have positive impact on economic growth, this writer disagrees. Corruption is the catalyst required to destroy a nation, a region or a continent.
- ✓ The various volatile security situations in many regions of Africa have seen some correlation between corruption and military expenditure, meaning that high level of corruption reduces economic growth.
- ✓ Besides the above, corrupt countries are less attractive for genuine investors, and when they reluctantly do, they prefer Joint Ventures.



- ✓ In their study “Corruption and the Shadow Economy” Schneider and Buehn confirmed that the higher the degree of corruption, the lower the economic growth and development, measured by GDP/capita.

### **What should African governments do in the light of these revelations?**

- ✓ They must identify the causes of corruption and begin to eliminate them
- ✓ They must play an important role in the modelling of anti-corruption policies
- ✓ They must strengthen their public procurement institutions with skilled workforce, as the absence of this in public procurement institutions presents a breeding ground for corruption
- ✓ Furthermore, since it is now common knowledge that war, crises and even the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic create opportunity for corruption, the more African governments can create environments for peace, the less would be corruption.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX**

- It was earlier pointed out that only Algeria and Kenya had above 0.5, actually 0.52, translating to 52% of productivity in those countries. Elsewhere in Africa the data range from 0.29 (Chad) to 0.4. While Algeria and Kenya are losing 48% of their income through not paying attention to human capital development, the rest of Africa are losing more.
- To, therefore, avert these losses, investment in HCI is inescapable. The higher the HCI, the more economic growth and development would improve, *ceretis paribus*.
- All avenues of financial losses must therefore be blocked to enable resources to be channeled into the improvement of the HCI
- Wars and security crises must be averted, as those provide veritable grounds for corruption and disinvestment

### **So, where would the succor come from?**

Education and Health, are the key components of the HCI

The HCI focuses on:

- Child Survival
  - School Enrollment
  - Quality of Learning
  - Healthy Growth
  - Adult Survival
- The human resources must be enhanced to utilize the Physical Capital, Natural Resources and technology
  - African governments cannot go it alone and would require collaborations with the private sector, not only to close the access gap to the marginalized of the society, but to empower women and SMEs for economic growth.

- If Africa intends to march forward in its quest for economic emancipation, robust policies that strengthen their economies must be instituted and corruption must be punished, and severely too.

## **CONCLUSION**

The HCI will not on its own improve the economic growth and development in Africa.

Earlier presentations have shown that committed leadership that can drive the process would be required. In the presentation on Education, it was pointed out education in Africa, in its current state cannot get the continent out of the socioeconomic doldrums it has found itself.

The HCI, which is a catalyst for economic growth and development, is pivoted on education and health

These two indices, education and health from the recent IMF/World Bank report are great sources of worry. So, if education and health, which directly impact economic growth and development, are not given priority consideration, Africa stands the risk of being left behind.

Bulk of African countries are losing income ranging from 71% (Chad) to 48% (Algeria and Kenya) due to their inability to harness the abundant human resources for economic growth and development.

The human capital achieves set goals, develop and remain innovative and that is why the OECD, in 2010, encouraged governments of advance economies to embrace policies to increase innovation and knowledge in products and services as an economic path to continued prosperity.

Africa simply needs to key into enhanced HCI in order to realize its dream of economic growth and development.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

It is settled that the current levels of HCI in African countries cannot bring about the economic growth and development the continent desperately requires.

Africa will post a quarter of the world's population by 2050; but how many of these people are availed education and health, will determine whether or not the human resource would constitute a curse or a blessing.

Africa must come up with a policy framework that deliberately encourages less military and other nonessential spending.

Granted that wars, conflicts and other security challenges have substantial impacts on the countries allocation of resources, as can be seen in the case of Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Somalia and Nigeria, most other countries, like Uganda, Namibia, Congo Republic and Madagascar cannot justify the high defence expenditures.

All these resources would best have been used to improve education and health for Africans.

Whereas the recent report on education in sub-Saharan Africa, Primary School completion rate stood at 55.3%, the Secondary School enrolment dropped to 31.2%. It is safe to extrapolate that the percentage that would proceed to tertiary institutions will even be worse.

African governments must give education its pride of place

Since a healthy mind can only live in a healthy body, the issue of health care, right from the day the child is born till the child grows into adulthood, he or she must be provided with quality food and proper family support

Arguments about sources of fund will be quick to come to the fore, but, African countries could cut down on consumerism, preference for imported goods and services and with some commitment, the resources saved therefore could be used to foot the education and health projects.

Africa's human capital must be properly built to explore the opportunities presented by evolving technologies.

Africa must encourage itself to look inwards and not to depend on external loans, most of which are not transparent. Schneider and Buehn insist that the higher the corruption, the lower the economic growth and development.

African leaders must abhor corruption and demonstrate their resolves to eradicate it by building strong public institutions that would investigate and punish corruption

Wars, conflicts and security challenges have never provided a conducive environment for genuine businesses. Besides diverting the resources that would have contributed to the general wellbeing of the people, conflicts destabilize the polity.

Conflict-resolution mechanism must therefore be employed to create conducive environment for investments.

African women have demonstrated their capability to contribute to the economic growth and development. They must be funded, appropriately, to do what they are suitable for - Small Scale Farming

A major component of health, as one of the two primers of HCI, is food and nutrition. Food and nutrition, taken together, plays a significant role in the wellbeing of the citizens.

According to GROWAFRICA, Africa holds possession of 60% of the world's arable land and has billions of dollars in investment potential.

The projected population for Africa, by the year 2050, is 25% of the world's population. Though a large population is desirable to drive economic growth and development, such a population must be a healthy one.

Food and nutrition should not be ignored; that is why emphasis must be placed on massive food production, employing technology and agricultural best practices.

Countries with least arable land like Israel are doing great in agriculture, which Africa could emulate. HCI could serve as the best mobilizers of the economic and professional potentials of African citizens, and should be leveraged.

Serial	Country	(AB) Annual Budget	(ME) Military Expenditure	Percentage ME/AB	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1.	Egypt	42bn	11.2bn	27%	High
2.	Kenya	15bn	0.12bn	8%	
3.	Nigeria	14bn	2.16bn	15.5%	High
4.	Ethiopia	12bn	0.35bn	29.2%	High
5.	Tunisia	9.4bn	0.56bn	6%	
6.	Sudan	8.2bn	2.8bn	34.6%	High
7.	Tanzania	7.9bn	0.23bn	2.9%	
8.	Côte d'Ivoire	7.2bn	0.56bn	7.8%	
9.	Botswana	5.6bn	0.45bn	8%	
10.	Cameroon	5.2bn	0.35bn	6.7%	
11.	Uganda	4.02bn	0.94bn	23.4%	High
12.	Namibia	3.97bn	0.51bn	12.8%	High
13.	Zimbabwe	3.6bn	0.1bn	2.8%	
14.	DRC	3.3bn	0.1bn	3.03%	
15.	Gabon	3.1bn	0.08bn	2.6%	
16.	Mali	3.07bn	0.07bn	2.3%	
17.	Mozambique	2.8bn	0.26bn	9.3%	
18.	Burkina Faso	2.7bn	0.13bn	4.8%	
19.	Congo Republic	2.52bn	0.71bn	28.2%	High
20.	Niger	1.7bn	0.36bn	21.2%	High
21.	Madagascar	1.3bn	0.16bn	12.3%	High
22.	Mauritania	1.25bn	0.05bn	4%	
23.	Chad	1.18bn	0.2bn	17%	High
24.	Sierra Leone	0.68bn	0.075bn	11%	High
25.	Liberia	0.63bn	0.013bn	2.06%	
26.	Somalia	0,26bn	0.06bn	23.1%	High
27.	CAR	0.23bn	0.02bn	8.7%	

**TABLE 1: AFRICA'S ANNUAL BUDGETS VS DEFENCE EXPENDITURES**

(CIA World Factbook 2016 and 2019)

## COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

### Mr. Gregory Ozegbe

In my opinion the Ambassador has hit the proverbial “nail on the head”. Referring to extensive research conducted by the UN and relevant statistics he isolates the major problems confronting Africa and proposes solutions without pulling punches. It’s the kind of logic and clear thinking one would expect from an engineer and a military man.

As a General in Nigeria’s armed forces his comments regarding the reduction of military expenditure are particularly pertinent and demonstrate a high level of integrity.

While conceding there is no single solution to averting economic and development crises he identifies at the outset the Human Capital Index (**HCI**) as the major driver of Africa’s Economic Growth and Sustainable Development because of its emphasis on Health and Education.

By referring to various UN programmes and agendas which were adjusted and modified over the years, to take into account and make allowances for Africa’s special circumstances, he demonstrates beyond doubt that very little progress has been made and that in some cases the situation worsened.

Obtaining money to finance projects has become more difficult as the usual finance providers began to withdraw and were replaced by China. Instead of being a panacea, this has introduced a new set of problems

The problem is further exacerbated by inefficient tax collection, tax evasion and illicit financial flows due to low or non-existent production capacity, poverty and lack of international cooperation needed to stem illicit financial flow.

As a result progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has been minimal and poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality rates, school enrollment, access to electricity and drinking water are likely to continue to deteriorate.

Throughout the presentation His Excellency repeats and stresses the negative impact of corruption and sums it up with the following powerful statement “ **Corruption is the catalyst required to destroy a nation, a region or a continent**” There is very little time left to stop and reverse the destruction.

The net impact on Human Capital Index has been disastrous resulting in low HCI scores with 22 African countries posting scores under 0.4, with some as low as 0.29!

*[The Human Capital Index – HCI -measures which countries are best in mobilizing the economic and professional potentials of its citizens. The scale ranges from 0 - 1, where 1 is the maximum.*

*Algeria and Kenya had the highest potential in Africa 0.52, while Chad with 0.29 led the rear with Nigeria at 0.34. Developed countries’ scores exceed 0.8]*

The writer proposes that Technology offers new opportunities to eradicate extreme poverty and to boost shared prosperity. And the finance necessary to realize the objectives of improved economic growth and development would originate from public private sector partnerships including multilateral development Banks.

He goes on to demonstrate the correlation between corruption and military expenditure, (please refer to the extended Table 1 below) concluding that high levels of corruption reduce economic growth as well as dissuade genuine investors.

Having identified corruption as major factor in the destruction of nations, the writer goes on to propose a number of remedial actions:

- African governments must identify the causes of corruption and begin to eliminate them. Governments must play an important role in the modelling of anti-corruption policies, strengthen their public procurement institutions with skilled workforce, as the absence of this in public procurement institutions presents a breeding ground for corruption.
- All avenues of financial losses must be blocked to enable resources to be channeled into the improvement of the HCI. Wars and security crises must be prevented, as those provide grounds for corruption.
- Education and Health as key components of the HCI must be significantly boosted above their current levels. Because governments can't do it alone, the process will require collaboration with the private sector. A cooperative effort to boost HCI and strong action against corruption will ensure that "Africa will march forward."
- To adequately cope with the current and future demand, African countries will have to do things differently and a good start would be to drastically reduce military and other non-essential expenditure. They will have to cut back on consumer, luxury and imported goods to free up money for education and health facilities to ensure that "healthy minds live in healthy bodies."
- Africa's Human Capital must be nurtured and enriched to take advantage of emerging technologies regardless of their origin. Rather than continue with the dependence on murky foreign loans and grants with their attached strings Africa must rather redirect its capital flow and start investing in its own backyard.
- Equally as importantly African leaders must take a strong stand against corruption and investigate and punish both the corruptors and those corrupted to ensure that its institutions and businesses are rid of this scourge.
- Disputes, conflicts and wars are anathema to investments and doing business. Effective conflict resolution methods must be developed and applied to ensure that disputes are prevented or resolved before they progress to destructive levels.
- African women have proven their high productivity and ability to enhance economic growth and development. They should be encouraged and adequately funded to develop industries such as small scale farming that would improve the continent's supply of food and raise nutritional standards thereby adding to the HCI.
- 60% of the world's arable land is in Africa which when coupled with its growing population and access to technology and modern agricultural and conservation practices all of which could be

channeled to produce the world's greatest agricultural industrial complex capable of feeding the continent and export its products to the rest of the world.

- Riding on the above comments by His Excellency, I conclude that none of the above remedial actions can be contemplated without a review of the African continent's existing infrastructure (\*) and a commitment to invest in serious upgrades!

Hence my chosen topic for my future presentation shall be Africa's Infrastructure needs:

Roads Transport, Communication, Water treatment, Waste treatment, Housing, Schools Universities, Clinics /Hospitals Commercial Industrial Social, Sporting & Recreational Facilities.

## **Jason Ternenge Gongul**

1. I carefully noticed the numbers communicating the military spend by country and will like to submit that the so called security votes has over the years served as a major conduit pipe for siphoning our common wealth. There was this popular saying that the implementation of security budgets should remain unquestionable. From local government chair persons through the highest ranking Executive members of the cabinet had an avenue to do away with sizeable chunks of the budget year in and out. Corruption has indeed been the major bane of economic development in Africa.

2. While other nations are having serious discussions about the environment and how to preserve it, having knowledge of the dangers an uncared for, physical environment can pose to man. Our continent is still overwhelmed by other basic fundamental needs of society and therefore only paying lip service to same. We have ministries of the environment today but most of it is just a way of government creating jobs for citizens without any meaningful engagement. The non-biodegradable materials, just to pick on a minute aspect of it, that is dumped in our environment on a daily basis which is piling up waiting only to find occasion to punish man for his actions or inactions today is scary. The faster we begin to curtail by a deliberate legislation to control this today, the better for our nations.

3. Some of the practical things that could be done is to gradually phase out the use of polyethylene bags and replace same with bags that are made of materials that are biodegradable in nature. Shopping malls should be compelled to invest in reusable bags made of biodegradable materials and encourage shoppers to always return same when they come shopping and put some form of incentive behind it to drive compliance.

4. Most if not all of tooth brushes come with handles that are made of materials quite harmful to our environment. Can we come up with a technology that blends the use of our chewing stick to produce environment friendly tooth brushes?

5. My final take will be on security as called out in the paper. I live in an estate here in Abuja where you have these sets of men and women crowd the entrance/exit way in and out of the estate asking for alms. I carefully observed that the population of children produced by this community keeps growing. These children are neither sent to school nor engaged in any meaningful trade other than support their parents to beg for alms for their sustenance. The question is where these children



end up. Some of these people have been around for over 20 years, this implies that some of the children are grown up and have left, the big question is to where? This may just be some quiet feeder avenues by way of personnel, to the insurgents that have troubled the continent for some years now and counting, which has had its negative impact on the economy. Our security intelligence is something that should be reassessed without bias.

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thanks Tim for the "Rapid Response". Your observation on Security Vote is apt. The exact things to be done with the allocation may not be for public consumption, but the fund must be accounted for.*

*Coming to the issue of environmental degradation, I would say that any development without environmental sustainability cannot be sustained. Everything must be done to preserve the environment- our common source of livelihood.*

*Like the paper says, the human capital has to be sufficiently developed to drive the growth and development processes. Some people will end up being technocrats, scientists, others, artisans; but whatever, everyone is coming to the table with something, the integral of which is positively impacting the economy. Where, however, some people are left behind in the human capital drive, such people would be looking for employment in the devil's workshop. If we would not like that to happen, we must "Leave Nobody Behind".*

**Dr. Ahmed Ghali Muhammed**

Your insight into the matter before the OAI Leadership vacuum has further put more challenges on our thoughts and prepared our minds to face the future leadership challenges with vigour and enthusiasm. A challenge that calls for collective approach on reaching the desired goal. Your Excellency, this idea should be promoted to the ears and minds of the African political leaders currently in the leadership positions to get set on the development of HCI/Human Capital Development Index (HCDI) for a defined period of time, say the next 20 years starting from 2020. By 2040, before the earmarked 2050 years, Africa HCDI would be able to meet up with the requirements for preferred socio-economic development and peaceful coexistence for equitable distributions of wealth across the continent. Well-informed, enlightened by all standards, well-educated with Africanist spirit in their worldview would come up with leadership requirements to institute the and implement the goal of achievement. These leaders would envisage political will to curb and contain corruption and its externalities. Your Excellency, I see you as one of the Guiding

Council of Wisdom for the OAI Leadership in the nearest future. We are, however, honoured and bless with you being a reliable assistance on this noble mission. We shall do our best to provide the necessary intellectual way forward for African countries.

### **Chris Adetoye**

There are a number of key take away for me. I shall outline them presently.

1. How are we measuring progress? Can the same benchmarks apply universally given the wide disparity in country and continental situations? Will a constant failure to bridge the gap not lead to development fatigue in Governments and people? How can Africa fashion out a set of benchmarks that takes in its own peculiar situation, such that progress can be more granular, better measured and therefore more aspirational and focused?
2. The projected population of Africa in 2050 is put at 2.5 billion people. That is about double what we have now (1.3 billion). Should this not be a major source of concern to all? Is it not time to start thinking of and pushing for a population control programme so that economic growth can at least match the rate of population growth? For until we get our economy to grow faster than our population, development will be elusive. Africa can take a lesson from China which imposed a one-child per couple policy decades ago to control its population growth while building up its economy. That policy has served it so well and contributed to why the country was able to reach an annual economic growth rate of 10% or more for more than 2 decades. Instructively, Nigeria made an attempt at this in the late 1980s with its 4-child per woman policy but even that flawed attempt was never enforced.
3. The author rightly points to the need to focus on education, health, corruption and conflict. In my considered view, these are the 4 major reasons why the continent is losing the cream of its young men and women to the developed world. OAI must prioritize ideas and solutions in these areas. Thankfully, we have had a fantastic contribution on Education. We must do same for the other 3. On conflicts, my sense is that too much effort has been on conflict resolution and too little on conflict prevention (which must necessarily start from the people). Its an area we may find a niche where we can make real and measurable impact.

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thanks Chris for your brilliant reactions to the discourse. Africa can chart its development milestones based on the HCI. African governments and their professionals had set a benchmark for good governance before, in the name of Peer-Review-Mechanism. Forget that none of the leaders, except the former Botswana President and Nelson Mandela, could claim the coveted Mo Ibrahim Prize that goes with it, at least there were parameters to work with. Africa can set those milestones and timelines within which to achieve graduated objectives.*

*Population explosion could be curtailed by proper sensitisation. There are religious and other cultural issues that may not approve of abortions.*

*I completely agree with you. Conflict prevention is less expensive to handle than conflict resolution. Good and inclusive governance will generally prevent conflict; but would African governments embrace good governance?*

### **Dare Lawal**

Any one will embrace good governance once there is enough incentive. Its all about interests. We need to understand human nature and what drives actions and cooperation. Incentives! Incentives!! Incentives!!!

### **Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thanks Dare, if improving the wellbeing of African citizens is not sufficient incentive to want to govern, I am just wondering what else could. All, the same, thanks for the input.*

*So, how would this line of thought help grow the Africa we are all yearning for? Governance without some degree of human kindness will be difficult for me to applaud.*

### **Adesina Bello**

I just want to make a few comments on the presentation thus;

1) The SDGs are no doubt worthy goals, but much as it is desirable to work with other world developmental players, Africa must not lose sight of the need to own its own Developmental Agenda that will recognize where we want to go and be at a definite timeline without being compromised by any diversionary and deliberately retrogressive forces and desperate saboteurs who daily make it a religious obligation to make sure Africa never recovers from the Lockdown imposed upon her by their exploitative and destructive ancestry.

Yes, there's need for Economic Developmental Plan, but not as authored by non-Africans. I'm yet to see a European Developmental Agenda being driven by non-Europeans, neither have I seen an

American Developmental Agenda being driven by non-American and much less a Chinese Developmental Agenda being driven by non-Chinese. The case of China is even worse as they've been once bitten, many times shy. This is why their Pan-Chinese aggressiveness now knows no opposition in their fast drive.

2) The erudite Ambassador noted that one of Africa's developmental challenges identified in the Report of Bali Conference of 2018 is

"Debt vulnerabilities in Low-Income Countries, coupled with non-sustainable and opaque lending practices were hampering the economic growth and development of these countries, which incidentally are largely African Countries."

This for me put paid to the general clamor that giving loans to African governments at servile terms and conditions is a big challenge. It is the highest level of slavery and neo-colonialism that European Banks house Africa's Foreign Reserve (wherever that idea might have originated from which fails to bring with it a reciprocal requirement of Africa housing any foreign reserve for Europe or America), yet give out a paltry sum to Africa from what belongs to Africa, yet at interest rate.

It pains me when some economic pundits argue that taking foreign loans is not the problem because according to them, such loans are cheaper and you're given a long moratorium period. The implication of their postulation is that they only limit their appraisal of the value of the loans to only short term monetary benefits, but oblivious of the long term foreign domination and dictatorial control of African Resources and Developmental Agenda which would be allowed to be steered in the direction in favour of the Lender's economic interest.

I want to risk positing that foreign lenders do not ply their trade for short term monetary profits, but for long term, even sometimes trans generational control and dominance of the borrower's national and natural resources the benefits of which far outweighs the short term monetary profits.

3) His Excellency also noted in paragraph 35 that

"... Africa will post a quarter of the world's population by 2050, but how many of these are availed education and health, will determine whether or not the human resource would constitute a curse or a blessing..."

On this point, I align myself with the content of paragraph 2 of @The Iconoclast above to the effect that as Africa is working to regulate her population growth, she is simultaneously working to make adequate provision for the future generations at a very healthy rate to balance out the two.

According to @The Iconoclast;

"The projected population of Africa in 2050 is put at 2.5 billion people. That is about double what we have now (1.3 billion). Should this not be a major source of concern to all? Is it not time to start thinking of and pushing for a population control programme so that economic growth can at least match the rate of population growth? For until we get our economy to grow faster than our population, development will be elusive. Africa can take a lesson from China which imposed a one-child per couple policy decades ago to control its population growth while building up its economy. That policy has served it so well and contributed to why the country was able to reach an annual economic growth rate of 10% or more for more than 2 decades. Instructively, Nigeria made an attempt at this in the late 1980s with its 4-child per woman policy but even that flawed attempt was never enforced. "

4) On the issue of Education as an element of the Human Capital Index, I believe that Dr. Muiyiwa's Paper on the future of Education in Africa has provided us with insight into the kind of education that is capable of taking Africa out of the wilderness into the promised land.

5) In the final analysis, can OAI begin to articulate some Developmental Agenda in line with one of Mr. Tim's poser on African development in Post Covid-19 era and creat an avenue or a Forum implementation of some of our recommendations can be made possible.

More grace to everybody on this Noble platform for all our efforts. May we live to see the Africa of our dream.

### **James Gbolagoke**

There is no doubt that this is a great paper with good recommendations. My challenge is that we seem to be looking at the role of only the government in the education and capital development of the citizens. We have not paid attention to the contributions of the people themselves.

For example how do we get the policies operating when nobody wants to sacrifice? What is the effect of the incessant refusal of our tertiary lecturers to work at the smallest excuse? There has been work stoppage by our lecturers for four months, five months or even six months in Nigeria in the past. How can you meet the educational standards under such situations?

How arewe as citizens of the countries in Africa believe in team work instead of the individualistic tendencies that seems to prevail? Is there no strategic program to deal with negotiation with government without disrupting the education system?

Unless we agree to address these challenges, we will always sabotage whatever policy that is put in place.

## **Kem**

The fundamental composite of the human capital index, to wit, education and health cannot be glossed over. Every effort must be deployed to ensure that every African child and youth has access to good and sound education and health care.

Ancillary to the above is that Africa must begin to attend to her need for food. The vast arable land must be fully cultivated.

Indeed as stated therein, economic growth and development are major indices to the survival of the African continent. The said indices can only be achieved if Africa enhances her human capital index.

The question that follows; is can Africa enhance her human capital index, ensure that all her inhabitants have access to sound education and good healthcare? The answer in my humble view is in the affirmative. If the recent lockdown in some African nations in a bid to stem the scourge of Covid 19 was achieved, then as it is fondly said "when there is a will, there will be a way"

Africa leaders and indeed every one of us must have the will or rather resolve to seek her good. This should begin to form national discourse and the love of Africa ingrained in everyone.

We must also channel the energy of the African youths to agriculture and all tertiary institution of agriculture must begin to deliver on improving the cultivation of the land (even with technology).

Every child must be given good education and we should stop 'lording' certificates over result. ( We have the laws including the African Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child, we must let the letters of the law become flesh).

As already stated, we must identify the causes of corruption and eliminate them.

## **Barrister Somoye**

I agree with you on Agriculture and food Security.

In my last visit to Israel 2 years ago, my host took me to his Charity school which he runs for disadvantaged students.

I was shocked to see the kind of space he provides for kitchen.

I asked him: "Chief Rabbai, how come the kitchen has the biggest space here more than any classroom and staff room"? He feeds the students twice a day

Tim, he said: "food is the most important component of education especially in the formative years . Children that are appropriately fed when they were young end up having higher mental magnitude than the malnourished children"

No wonder the Jewish are specially endowed in innovative thinking.

Therefore, if Africa must put a dent on underdevelopment , it has to start from the kitchen - when the children are young.

### **Raji Taiwo**

One of the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) is to achieve poverty free by 2030. It is no gainsaying that graphical structure of poverty level is on increase against the target goals, to worsen the situations, unexpected Covid19 pandemic came in with bigger hitches, the policy makers, scholars, economists and other stakeholders should be relentlessly working with the government to formulate policies and other related tools to crush the unsuitable situations, the roles of human capital development in this scheme cannot be overemphasized in Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Expenditure on health is part of investment as health is wealth. In setting our priorities for now, to checkmate famines /hungers African governments must give priorities , ready to assist agriculture value chain to be able to get out of the food insecurity. Our transportation system will require gradual overhaul least to say, I will like us to examine our relationships worldwide, are we doing well and happy now and possibly in the future, are the relationships impoverishes both our spirits and the bank accounts as a continent, are they directed towards genuine productiveness or adverse effects. Dear Africans, let us try and carry our water ourselves, each drop of it will be meaningful to us better.

### **Lekan Tewogbade**

I sincerely thank H.E Ambassador (Gen) Godwin George Ume for the depth of his presentation and the elucidation of the basic issues that are germane for a proper understanding of Human Capital Index (HCI) and its impact on Africa's economic growth and sustainable development.

Let me start by acknowledging that the gap between African Countries and the developed countries is very wide; bridging this gap would require visionary leadership which has been canvassed on this forum in the inaugural presentation on leadership by our eminent scholars Dr Ike Nelioka and other contributors.

That Africa ranks very low in HDI is one of the paradoxes of life given its human and natural resources. Some fundamental reasons need be taken into consideration to understand why African countries are presently occupying the lowest rung on the HDI ladder.

Human Development Index as a metric was created with the purpose of measuring the success of a country and its people through the dimensions of: 1. Wealth(Gross national income(GNI/per capita)-SDG 8.5

2.Education (mean years of schooling)-SDG4.5 and (expected years of schooling)-SDG 4.3

3.Health (life expectancy at birth)-SDG 3.

As further revealed in the presentation, Africa has performed poorly with Chad's 0.29 ranking lowest in HDI. However, recognition must be given for some little efforts made by African leaders especially in their attempt to meet the targets set on Sustainable Development Goals for an enhanced HDI

Africa cannot afford to put the entire world in the reverse gear of civilization and improved social well-being as this would constitute a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions given its projected population by the year 2050 of about 25% of the world population.

### **Recommendations for enhancing Human Development Index for African Countries**

1. Government support for start-up businesses and the vulnerable in the society to reduce unemployment and social unrest.

Economic vulnerability among the young contributes in so many ways to overall social instability that frustrates economic growth.It is very critical to improve the overall business environment and to support conditions that encourage start-ups to flourish.

Support and subsidies in Agriculture, Health and Education can be achieved through the following:

- Provision of credit facilities to farmers by specialized banks
- Supply of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer,quality seeds,equipment, etc
- Health insurance schemes to reduce the myriad of health challenges
- Direct cash transfer, free hospital cover and legal aid program for the elderly as seen in Kenya
- Provision of student loans,bursaries and scholarships.

The ease of doing business should be a priority in Africa

### **2. Increasing Tax Revenue**

In view of the global fall in the prices of commodities and the expected fallout of COVID 19,improvement in tax collection should be a matter of priority. This is also in line with pan-African goal of improving domestic resource mobilization which is set out in the African Union's Agenda 2063,the regional economic communities' strategic priorities, and the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs).

According to the 2019 annual publication of OECD,the average tax to GDP ratio for 26 African countries was 17.2% in 2017.This is below Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) average of 22.8% and the OECD average of 34.2%.Tax to GDP ratios ranged from 5.7% in Nigeria to 31.5%



in the Seychelles in 2017 with nearly three quarters of the countries falling between 11.0% and 22.0%.

In order to stem the tide of this disturbing trend, the following strategies therefore will lead to improvement in revenue generation for many of the African countries.

- a. A gradual shift away from direct taxes to indirect taxes which are easier to collect and difficult to avoid
  - b. A simplified system with a reduction in income taxes and expansion of the tax base
  - c. A streamlining of incentives to curb abuse often associated with such generous and ill-designed incentives and exemptions that fail to attract investment
  - d. Reform of Stamp Duties Act to increase the revenue generated from imposition of Stamp Duty on documents, contracts and agreements.
  - e. Taxing the informal sector which in most countries has escaped the tax net.
  - f. Increases in VAT and excise duties to raise revenue fairly and quickly
  - g. The use of technology to drive assessment, audit and collection processes
  - h. Engagement of all stakeholders for their cooperation and support
  - i. The political will to carry out comprehensive tax reforms
3. Accountability and Transparency

Corporate governance principles should be the guiding principles in all government institutions in order to deliver on their mandate and to avoid conflict of interest which has been the bane of quality governance. Money voted for critical infrastructural development in Education, Health and Environment must be properly utilized and leaders must be held accountable for budgeted funds.

### **Foodjah**

According to a wise saying "Health is wealth "and a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. In this view, Africa health system needs emergency upgrading in its framework. There should be an effective primary health care that can treat minor health issues like. Malaria, cold , ante Natal, child birth etc. This will reduce the load on general/specialist hospital.

Also, the hospital/clinic in Africa must be computerized such that we have accurate data and fast track the hospital services as we reduce the pain of the waiting patients where some even die in the process of opening manual file. Again, OAI should sponsor a bill "save life first "this should apply to all illness even patients with gun wounds. If we really value ourselves, we shall save life first before demanding payment etc. I believe being sick is beyond human control, so only the sick ones will visit hospital because drug isn't food and hospital is not a cinema. In addition, the trade medicine line must be inclusive in our health system. OAI can draft a framework that will re

orientate this traditional medicine. This will further assist inadequacies in our health sector and reduce the abuse of usage of trado herbs.

For us to improve both the development and growth, we need to increase the revenue generation in all African countries. This should be in tandem with our population growth. Many traders only do trading as just a means to survive daily. But, this can be converted to a sustaining business once government support this SMEs by registration, open business account, teaches them financial discipline , open social media accounts etc. All these will increase the revenue of informal sector and make it easier for government to generate more tax which is needed to fund budget.

But earning more money is not enough. Access to credit remains low in sub's Sahara Africa, where just a third of the adult population has a bank account. Here, the rise of mobile banking offers a lot of promise. In 2011, just 42 percent of Kenyans had access to bank accounts, but by 2014, 85 percent were using mobile money transfers. Some \$23 billion was transferred via mobile over the course of the year, equal to 42 percent of the country's GDP. And it's not just a payment tool. New innovations including Kenyas M-Shwari—a collaboration between the Commercial Bank of Africa and mobile network Safaricom that enables Kenyans to quickly open mobile money accounts complete with interest and deposit insurance—offer loans to budding entrepreneurs and the ability to save safely. In Cote d'Ivoire, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, more people have mobile money accounts than bank accounts. Just as geography and lack of funding for infrastructure led many African countries to skip landlines and go straight to mobile phones, technology has also enabled Africans to leapfrog decades of financial development in just a few years.

Africa needs to emphasize more on SABIFICATE where artisans, farmers, teachers , doctors etc are value for what they can offer to the society.

### **Sanusi Taofik**

The presenter really cut my attention from the start to the end of his scholarly article, more kudos to your elbow. Has opined by the presenters the pathway to Africas Economic Growth and Sustainable Development could be derived from enhancing the Human Capital Index (HCI) which is a function of two parameters as set out in the SDG3 and SDG4 as Health and Education respectively.

It was also identified by the presenter that the Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistic composite index of life expectancy, education and per capita income, which are used to rank

countries into 4 tiers of human development of Very High, High, Medium and Low, where most of the African countries fell into low category. In addition to the submission of the presenter, I assumed the ranked categories should include extreme low as African countries are really doing badly as compared to other developed western and American countries as well as the Asian counterparts. For instance, GDP (nominal) per capital as at 2017 revealed that African countries are not only stagnant economically but retarding in nature as the index showed \$727 (CAR), \$889 (DR Congo), \$1,663 (Togo), \$5,887 (Nigeria) as compared to \$128,647 (Qatar), \$107,641 (Luxembourg), \$94,105 (Singapore). This consequently showed a disturbing trend to the world benchmark recommended GDP (PPP) per capita of \$17,100 with Burundi – 4%, Niger – 6%, Liberia – 8% as compared to Macao – 675%, Brunei – 462%, Ireland 449% and so on (worldometer, 2020).

If this short analysis is anything to go by, Africa continent is in perpetual black out as HDI composite index mentioned above are just a mere abstract than reality in African context. Education for instance is in shamble as earlier discussed on this platform, as many of the well informed and educated African citizens ends up at the European and American shores. More so, health sector lack predominantly the needed common facilities let alone highly contemporary technological state of the see art equipment that can prove sustainability of the African health industry.

More importantly, African countries have been predominated with substandard service industry and minute manufacturing industries which could propel growth and development of the HDI. Thereby, they end up becoming dumping ground for virtually second-hand market for European and American used products.

Suggestions: (i) Establishment of manufacturing industries in every faceted of the African economy. (ii) Stricter regulations and policies to protect the indigenous and home manufacturing companies. (iii) Provision of enabling environment for the stakeholders in the every sphere of economic sectors. (iv) Price regulation and subsidy promotion rather than supply-demand price mechanism of the capitalist. (v) A forceful confrontation of corruption, which has remained the abrogation to economic freedom and entrepreneurship. A system that has clearly left Africa as one of the most deprived region in the world. If Africa is not purged of this monstrous venom, I'm afraid our pathway to Africa's Economic Growth and Sustainable Development remains hampered.

**Chux Mogbolu**

We are not paid for having a brain, we are paid for using it intelligently HCD is about preparing & developing man to use his brain for value creation. The clear message from the paper resonates with Bill Gates advise to the Fed Govt. of Nigeria – You cannot prioritize physical capital over human capital. People without roads, ports & factories can flourish. But, roads, ports & factories without skilled workers to build, maintain & manage them cant sustain an economy. Africa requires an urgent & fierce intervention on grey matter infrastructure development - HCD. Unarguably, there is a strong correlation between HCD & Economic growth. Africa will flourish when every African is able to thrive. Painfully, Africa measures poorly on all the SDGs set by UN, due for full achievement by 2030. How can Africa fast track the two prime drivers of HCD, Education & Health to unleash the much needed development & economic growth?

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Definition – hear the Gen. Sustainable Development is the development that satisfies the needs of the present, without compromising the capacity of the future generations, guaranteeing the balance between Economic Growth, care for the environment and social wellbeing. In a nutshell, it is a commitment to social progress, environment balance and economic growth. Quite apt. Lets close our eyes for one minute & introspect on where we will all be in 80yrs from now & what legacy the current generation would have bequeathed to Mother Africa.

### The Challenge

A report further states that more than half of the global poor (those earning less than \$1.99/day) inhabit Africa and that 1 out of 3 Africans is at the risk of food insecurity. The Centre foresees from available data, that poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, net school enrollment, access to electricity and drinking water will worsen. The Centre concluded that besides North Africa, other regions of Africa are unlikely to meet the SDGs and that Central Africas case would require special attention. What the preceding paragraph has clearly indicated should be a source of concern for Africans because the much-sought-after Economic Growth and Development may end up being a mirage. More worrisome is the fact that the African child is still at the risk of a full, high quality education or decent health care. Besides the poor education services in Africa, the health care is nothing to write home about. Scary, quite scary!

African population is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050 but much of this will remain unemployed, underemployed and a curse unless something substantial is done to change the

narrative. However, a recent UNDP review shows that there are serious problems that prevent even the assessment of progress. African countries are not data compliant, even the few that are available are inconsistent and unhelpful.

The ticket to progress, success & economic development parting Africa remains Data. Indeed, Data is life. Today, some global Organizations insist on making commercial presentation on Excel sheets. They do not want to get lost on the dazzling & the razzmatazz of Power Point. Business Managers want to clearly see the numbers & the Data behind the figures. On Data led biz & Govt decisions, Africa is still struggling to catch up with the rest of the world.

### **Corruption**

On corruption, Africa's greatest pandemic, the Peoples General gave an example with the President of Tanzania. Like Tanzanian President, John Magufuli, has observed recently, his predecessor signed a 99-year contract for China to develop and operate a strategic port in the country and that while the agreement subsists, no other ports shall be developed in Tanzania!. Embarrassing, that leader lost the sense of shame.

### **Conclusion**

Fast pace solution - Africa simply needs to key into enhanced HCI in order to realize its dream of economic growth and development. We appreciate the Guest Lecturer for linking up HCD with the earlier papers presented, Leadership & Education. At the end of the day, it is about the quality of our people that will make the difference. Africa must put in the shift, there is no other way. Singapore built their Human Capital through LKY, a visionary leader & the Country is flourishing. The huge budget on Military by some African Countries should be reduced by 50% & the saved 50% plus gains from sterilizing corruption should be deployed into enhancing Education & Health institutions. Africa must kill Malaria. This is a must win battle. Africa spends \$12b USD every year to treat & manage malaria (1.3% of Africa's GDP). Every 2 minutes, one child under 5yrs dies! In addition to the above, permit me to use the words of the former Gov of Imo State – Africa needs to create: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS.

**INDUSTRIES, INDUSTRIES, INDUSTRIES.**

The time to act is now. Received wisdom has it that there is no greater crime than loss of time

## **Peter Kolawole Obasa**

It is very clear from the lecture that the Sustainable Development Goals as assiduously assembled and packaged by UN experts, with everything that would enhance and ensure the development of African countries propelling them out of poverty, failed. The experts did a thorough job but the recipients were in no way ready for the experiment. In fact, they proved to be unwilling partners in the projects.

Among other obstacles, you identified education and corruption as stumbling blocks to progress. I totally agree with your summation and my contribution to this debate is targeted at corruption. It is the monster that consumes all our efforts at lifting up our peoples. You rightly said it should be punished.

I will not define corruption now, we should get to that destination hopefully. However, public resources are valuable to the extent to which they can be deployed to improve the wellbeing of the people. Beyond this, thy value becomes tenuous.

### **Instances of corruption**

1. Anyone who misapplies, misappropriates, or diverts public funds, is corrupt, he might even be described as a thief.
2. Anyone who sabotages any of our refineries with the aim of crippling them such that they become incapable of meeting our demands for refined petroleum products, so that he can continue to exploit his franchise to import products and collect subsidies, is corrupt.
3. Anyone who sabotages our local motor assembly plants so that he can continue to import foreign made cars and monopolise the market, is corrupt.
4. Anyone who employs his franchise to import rice thereby undermining local rice production, is corrupt.
5. Anyone who employs his powerful political position to obtain several plots of land in choice areas of the country, is corrupt.
6. Anyone who employs the power of his position to purchase public property at give away prices, is corrupt.
7. People who use their positions to award themselves outrageous salaries, allowances etc regardless of the country's financial straights, are corrupt.
8. People who insist on the use of borrowed hard currency to purchase for them foreign made cars for their official use, are corrupt.
9. People who collect several retirement benefits at the same time, are corrupt.

10. A judge who collects money or anything to pervert the course of justice, is corrupt.
11. A lecturer who penalizes a student for his failure to purchase his handouts, is corrupt.
12. Assembly and senate members who ask for gratification to execute duties for which they are paid, are corrupt.
13. Those who parceled the oil producing area into oil blocks giving such blocks to themselves, their friends or relations, are corrupt.
14. Anyone who subverts the electoral process making it impossible to conduct a free and fair election, is corrupt.

These will suffice for now. We cannot conduct an accurate census, we cannot conduct free and fair elections because we are corrupt. The primary problems are that most of us are hypocrites, liars, insincere, dishonest and are arrogantly selfish.

### **Where did we take the wrong turn?**

That is difficult to say with any degree of certainty. Suffice to recall that our traditional society was well organized. At the top was the local potentate. His word was law and he was hardly ever contradicted. He had his chiefs, aides and all. The individual knew full well his position in the scheme of things. The local yam seller could operate without directly supervising her business. She left her yams in groups of three or five by the roadside with the price indicated by the coin she also leaves on display. Buyers took what they needed and left the payment by the side of the coin. No body stole, each buyer paid in full. The seller returns in the evening to pick up his money. The ethical values of truth and honesty ran deep in the veins of the people.

That was how the traditional society operated and in matters of dispute resolution, you do not take an oath on the local god and default. The consequences were too grim to contemplate.

When the whites emerged on the scene, we still ran a good deal of our show in the old way. However, when the full reins of power were wrested from the local kings, real and full political power became vested in the colonial administration and a foreign religion supplanted our local deities. Things became diluted and we transited from local to modern.

At independence, we assumed full powers and then in the Regions, the Premiers became supreme commanders. Ethical values suffered some buffeting but did not collapse outright. The military came and then the deluge. By the time that the military withdrew, the ground had been prepared for the supremacy of the political party and the emergence of governors wielding vast powers and

presidents with little or no limitations. On the political terrain, it became everyone for himself with the entire country as our sporting object.

### **How do we remove this cancer?**

We should conduct a general house cleaning exercise.

For that purpose, we need:

- a) Honesty
- b) Sincerity
- c) Transparency
- d) Humility

1. We should design a new oath of office. This oath will underline the determination of the office holder to perform his duties diligently etc etc but will also spell out a train of disasters that should befall him should he stray from the path of rectitude. So help me God.

Every office holder from the President to the messenger shall be held bound.

2. Create a new asset declaration board the members of which will be sworn on the new oath.

Everybody from the President to the messenger shall declare his assets.

The new board shall be empowered to interrogate anyone on his assets. Sample questions: How did you finance the construction of your house x? Your account shows a balance of x amount, what are the sources of your wealth? Did you sell any of your property or livestock? Your tax returns? You are insolvent, why? etc.

In cases where the board has doubts, it can refer the case to a new investigation board fully sworn under the new oath.

What do we do with public officers who obviously are overloaded with possessions and cash?

Negotiate to relief him of a huge percentage of his luggage. If that fails, press charges. Set up a fast track tribunal made up of upright judges, who will be bound by the new oath. They will use the regular laws. Guilt at that level will attract the loss of almost all the luggage and a jail term.

### **Former public officers**

1. Use quasi- bench warrants to bring them before the asset declaration board.



2. They declare their assets. Then the interrogation leading to negotiations. Failure, refer to investigation board.

### **Next step**

The future should be secured should this system be pursued with the vigour and determination that it deserves.

Singapore needed just one trial of a corrupt officer to send a powerful message. Today, Singapore is free of corruption. Singapore runs like a well oiled engine firing on all cylinders in the rank of the developed countries, 100% success.

Nigeria tried a similar exercise in 1984. Nigeria was neither honest or sincere about the adventure. The military in power used the "wrongest" methods in their bid to punish corruption. They backdated new laws, 3 years, set up kangaroo courts, locked their captives in safes, tried them in vaults and declared verdict on parade grounds. It was a trial of corruption using absolutely corrupt methods to punish a few scape goats. It ended in a catastrophic failure.

In 1970, the "Economist" magazine, writing about Nigeria, made a prediction that of all economies in black Africa, Nigeria alone had the potential of becoming self sustaining in fifteen years, if well husbanded. By the calculation of the "Economist", Nigeria ought to have been where Singapore is today between 1985--1990. That is some 25/30 years ago. See how far we have strayed from the right course. It is time for a course correction.

### **How to begin**

Mr. President should spear the campaign. He should call the Service Chiefs and explain his mission. He should address the nation. He should address a joint houses of assembly and senate. Every patriotic Nigerian will support him. He should send a bill titled "General House Cleaning" to the house. It will be fast tracked into law in four weeks.

Then business begins.

Try this and see if God Almighty who loves Nigeria in a special way, will not assist. Read Nigeria's history from Lugard to this day, look carefully and lo you will see several ways in which God has manifested his love for this country.

### **Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Col PK OBASA(Rtd) was my Geography Master in the Nigerian Military School. He exudes the radiance of a professor and his encyclopedic knowledge of the subject of discourse is manifest. Thank you very much Sir.*

*It is my conviction that if corruption could be reduced to the figures of Estonia and that of Singapore, which you rightly cited, coupled with proper measures to detect and punish corruption, Africa would have been on a glorious path to economic and political restitution.*

### **Ajenifuja k. Ahmed**

The world is engulfed in crisis today because of world politics. So, every current & future leader must understand that "a disaster anywhere, is a disaster everywhere".

Again, mentorship, apprenticeship, internship are very key source of practical knowledge that needed to be valued & developed to fast track Africa HCI.

Lastly, opposition should not be about issuing press statements or countering government policies BUT do it right by offering a blueprint solution to the problems. However, OAI should be the 3rd force but not partisan in politics. We need to ensure henceforth, that emerging elected politicians must scale through rigorous campaign, encourage least 80% of elite cast their vote & hold leaders accountable according to their manifestoes and policies.

### **Christian Nwogwu**

#### **Introductory Remarks**

1. I join other reviewers to commend the Paper, on the above theme, of His Excellency, Ambassador, (General) G. G. Umo on Enhanced Human Capital Index: Pathway to Africa's Sustainable Development presented to OAI on May 11, 2020 (Otherwise, called The Paper, HCI Paper or HCI). The Paper is a masterpiece and well researched. It has taken its seat of prominence amongst the one on Leadership and the one on Education. To me, if the Paper on leadership is the engine; and the Paper on Education is the body then this Paper on HCI is the key. A lot would still depend on the skillfulness of the driver and the destination of purpose.
2. A while back on this platform, somebody posted the video of Michael. (I pray that same be reposted please). Michael, at a tender age, had gotten deep into weed smoking, gangsterism and bound to waste until Tony Rapu encountered him. As at the time of the video, Michael had been placed in school. He could now read, write and play lawn tennis. In practicable terms, this is

enhancing HCI. I found out that Michael was not a first with Rapu. There are hundreds of similar transformations. Some are currently in tertiary institutions and studying abroad after similar rescues.

3. For over two decades, our institution, Shechinah Business School (SBS) has been raising business owners, growing captains of commerce and grooming the employers, from the grassroots. It has been committed strides towards the development of human capital assets. Hence, I feel duty bound to contribute my little to Generals presentation as following:

### **The same education**

4. Education is an index of development. Some assert that the education that Africans received from colonial masters are part of the challenges of Africas underdevelopment. That is rather simplistic and in fact, self-defeatist. Is this not the same education received by other continents and nations, making strides, or variants of same? My guess is that education in its evolution predates current day civilization. Many nations have done great with the education received. What has Africa done with the same education while waiting to develop its own styled education?

5. Meanwhile, what, to me, is priority, is getting many more Africans to embrace the current education. Too many children are not yet in school and same for adults who have no access to education. There are drops out from school, who should be helped to get back to school. Collectively, this would enhance Africas HCI.

### **Application of Learning**

6. Government cannot do it all. Extracting value out of the abundant human resources is the real challenge. Somebody tell me why Societies of Engineers, respectively, across the continent, cannot present a common front to handle engineering and construction projects for their nations? There are rules, laws and hurdles placed on the pathway of foreigners. They still scale them. Foreigners reinvent and market themselves, make presentations, get rejected or accepted. Why should ours not do the same? In some cases, I think, it is indolence and leadership challenges and not the absence of human capital.

7. Why cant student bodies leverage youthful energies to press to construct feeder roads, fly-over bridges and constructions? These students are able to run unimaginable budgets to organize pageants or shows leading to nowhere. I am not certain that such fantasies would work elsewhere in the world. I also think that religious organisations and corporate establishments could be

approached to fund local content infrastructure for their respective communities as corporate social responsibilities (CSR).

### **Alternatives to formal education**

8. It bears reinforcing that apprenticeship, mentorship and internship provide good alternatives to formal education for the enhancement of HCI in Africa. I have met persons who admitted that the only education they got to read and write was through the Sunday School. I know religious organizations who are providing free trainings in leadership, management, entrepreneurship and more that could have been out of reach otherwise.

### **Slavery Mentality**

9. Much have been said about how the many centuries Africa was in slavery retarded Africas HCI. Africa should wake up. Africans were not the only enslaved people in the history of humanity. The Jews suffered centuries of slavery in Egypt and under subsequent empires. They have long thrown away their slavery mentality and are making waves in world economies. There would be very few nations that never tasted slavery.

### **The Correctional Centres**

10. Africans waste human capital in prisons. Criminals should be punished to protect society. What of those who were framed with cast-iron evidence to get them wasted? What of those awaiting trial for offences that if they had been convicted had served more time than demanded by Law? What of those awaiting trial and who would ultimately be found innocent and acquitted. Those are means of wasting human capital by default.

11. In my view, I hold some magistrates responsible for many awaiting trial cases. Whats the need of just adjourning a case, indeterminably, that the complainant had lost interest in, Investigating Police Officer never shows up and prosecutor is pursuing private programmes? The crowding at correctional centres is unimpressive and more cases gets added regularly.

### **Corruption**

12. A lot has been said about corruption. It depreciates Africas human capital index. Leaders corner to themselves funds that could be used for development to enhance Africas HCI. One late leader of one African nation died. Billions of dollars of looted funds, traced to him, are repatriated

again and again. What of other similar leaders who did not die but are walking freely with looted funds also in billions?

### **Coup**

13. A careful study of the coups would reveal that most of them were insider jobs. Persons who were army chiefs, seconds in command and trusted allies plot and overthrow erstwhile friends and co-leaders, in some cases, in cold blood. Those are at the top levels. What about deadly power plays at other levels? These act upon Africa's HCI to force it downwards.

### **The conquest syndrome**

14. Within a country or among countries, there may arise the tendency by a part to dominate others and subjugate them. The resources of one part of the nation are consumed, at will, by another part of the nation or class with total disregard to the origin of such resources. Political appointments are made disproportionately. It could be same for a community, where one part of the community thinks that divinity or nature has conferred upon it undue advantage or dominance to the utter disregard of one or more communities. Oftentimes, this comes with it - mutual distrusts amongst peoples. Some just assume that their worst is better than the best of the other(s). It can also trigger off inferiority complex and xenophobia. It may even trigger partial or full-blown wars that dissipates the human capital of that country or community.

### **Health**

15. The current public health challenge has shown that healthcare in many locations of Africa is a disaster. I have lost persons very close to me to this reckless health contraptions. Revamping healthcare in Africa cannot and should not be casual. This has become an emergency. Human capital assets are wasting by the minutes to this reckless abandon.

On the other hand, preventive medicine has always been better than cure. Hence, when people eat, first, and eat well, then the need to fall ill and visit the hospital would be minimized.

### **Politics**

16. The right people with the right mindset need to become politicians. Governance may not be all about winning an election. A good opposition can set a great HCI agenda for nation building

that could eventually find the opposition in power to ultimately implement.

### **Scaling down to micro**

17. There are numerous micro industries and micro industrialists in Africa. For now, most are subsistence in nature and delivery. Governments, corporations and non-governmental organisations can partner with these to grow them into big industries and ultimately multinationals that would solve unemployment, hunger and poverty for Africa.

### **Tax**

18. His Excellency, Ambassador Umo, made the point and quite agreeably that improvement in tax collection mechanisms in Africa, would help government to discharge more of her responsibilities and by extension improve the quality of life which would invariably impact positively on HCI.

### **Credits**

19. It bears reinforcing that absence of credit is very restrictive and limiting to upcoming businesses, particularly grassroots micro-enterprises and to tax derivatives. Our argument has been that credit should be to persons not holding employment what salaries are to workers – a right. My experience is that numerous micro-enterprises would jump start and run with credits as minimal as \$50. Fifty Dollars! With such many businesses would come more internally generated revenue for governance.

### **Patent**

20. Incorporation of companies and registration of patents, copyrights and trademarks should be made as matters of course by Governments of Africa. Clogs in the wheels of exportation of products and services should be removed to enable highly liberalised commerce which in turn would boost HCI for economic growth and sustainable human development.

### **Quality Assurance**

21. One is glad to hear that NAFDAC, in Nigeria, has reduced the cost of registration of products by 80%. Whats disturbing is why they had to wait this long to do this? High cost of registration has been battling production, entrepreneurship and by extension the HCI. Meanwhile, why shouldnt the registration for products manufactured by citizens be made absolutely free. Revenue would still

come to government coffers through direct and indirect taxation. It is ironic that foreigners are better funded to handle this quality assurance registrations for themselves and accordingly they keep getting traction in revenue generation, in our own economy.

### **Refining**

22. It is a paradox and reality that government struggles for years to refine petroleum products. On the other hand, I gather that some persons do refine same products illegally and do successfully market them. The law could be repositioned to recognize such refining as resourceful and a boost to HCI. A Commission could be established to regulate it. This is in the light of the fact that foreigners dictate almost all aspects of upstream and downstream activities in the oil and gas sector. Whats been said regarding oil gas is also applicable to mining and other natural resources.

### **One Africa Initiative (OAI)**

23. Then comes One Africa Initiative! It is without doubt that the cream of HCI concentrate in OAI, is exceptional. A lot of galvanizing has taking place and still taking place in OAI. This could be our chance. I have had no small concern regarding what significant impact OAI would ultimately make in Africa: with this roll call of intellectual and leadership resources. If OAI could get only one Michaeland give him a resourceful future, that, to me, would be immense in enhancing the HCI of Africa. If individual capacities of OAI memberships are built and enlarged to provide employment to just one additional person, respectively - that would be great for Africa. If each person on this platform can mentor just one undergraduate or person, like one of us is already mentoring six, that would be added value for Africas HCI.

### **OAI/Memberships Unique Spheres of Influence**

24. I harnessed from Generals Paper, that, I can do a lot by who I am, with what I have and from where I am. In essence, I do not necessarily have to wait for a President, Governor or Legislator to bring out the resourcefulness in people I engage with. Neither do I have to wait for religious organizations, corporations or institutions to add values to them.

25. I am persuaded that each person on this OAI platform has unique spheres of influence. Permit me to reiterate that after digesting General Umos Paper, I came to the comforting reassurance that if everyone who has what it takes to and does actually lift up another person, then, without more, the HCI of Africa shall be progressively impacted. That brings me back to OAI and her deliverables to increase the HCI of Africa. OAI, as an organisaton with every person on this

platform, has own unique spheres of influence. We can all jointly and individually commence the processes of boosting the HCI within our respective unique spheres of influence, which, cumulatively, would add up to enhancing the HCI of Africa.

### **OAI's Thursday Market Day**

26. Thursdays are OAI Market Days. This is an innovation by OAI's Convener and Coordinator, Tim. It was said to be borrowed from the Jewish tradition ensuring that Jewish moneys stay Jewish and keeps rotating among the Jews for as long as they could hold on to it. I do commend this Market Day highly. It has the potential to directly and indirectly deliver a favourable HCI to individual platform participants, their extensions and ultimately to Africa. In practice, I have found that selling is living and having people to sell to are vital. One or two persons have acknowledged doing some selling backstage. This, to me, is fine provided that the rule that OAI is not to be held responsible for outcomes of all sales, is kept firmly in view.

27. I also know, in practice that some do not have anything to sell. This, though, is usually apparent and not real. Even if real, then sell someone else's products or another's services ON TERMS. This OAI innovation, is a great micro-economic window, which I urge every member of the platform to leverage upon and see, how, in very practicable terms, this would systematically aggregate into enhanced human capital index, over time.

### **Developmental Goals**

28. General Umo clearly signaled, with his Paper, that it lies in my hands to make what I expect of the human beings around me into successes from failures. This is applicable to spouses, parenting, sporting, coaching, educating and leading. The inability, as shown by Umo, of African nations to meet up with the goals in either the 8-points millennium development goals or the 17-points sustainable development goals would, thus, eventually become past realities.

### **Conclusion**

29. David was at some point a fugitive on the run from Saul. Saul had condemned David to summary execution, if captured. 400 men who were distressed, discontented and debtors submitted themselves to David, on the run, for leadership. Like Chad, Nigeria and many other African nations, these men had low HCI. David transformed each man from distress, discontent and debt into becoming warrior, valiant and commander of wealth. David turned around the HCI of these



men for good uses to their nation. These men eventually teamed up with David to fund a major project of huge capital outlay, in their time, for their nation.

30. One definition has stood out in OAI conversations. This is that leadership is not just everything. Leadership is the only thing. Passionate and focused leadership could make the difference to enhance the HCI of African nations and to boost it. The enhancement of HCI for economic growth and sustainable development in Africa can actually accelerate. Preachers, like Pastor Bamgbose, inspire us that there is room for overtaking which delivers an assurance that the HCI of African nations can match that of the best in the world and ultimately overtake same.

### **Danso Darko**

You've touched on almost all angles that will help enhance our HCI.

I'm particularly attached to no.9 and 12.

That monster (corruption) and slavery mentality is greatly affecting us.

"I don't want under age to be my summary in OAI platform."\* - Igo Isaiah (OAI Assistant Secretary)

I therefore hold the following views on the paper

The subject of Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa has taken our attention for the last few days and i have observed keenly the comments from other pan africanists: they're comments are not just pressing but possible solutions to Africa's numerous economic crises.

Respectively, i would like to touch on the heading \*the way forward\* particularly no. 37 of the paper. Corruption will be my target.

That is ...

"Africa's human capital must be properly built to explore the opportunities presented by evolving technologies...Schneide and Buehn insist that the higher the corruption, the lower the economic growth and development..."\*

Focusing on how to do this👉👈, I realized that the \*MONSTER\* called \*CORRUPTION\* is still well and alive after many steps of abhorring it.

In Africa, whenever one is given the opportunity to serve, it's like he's given the opportunity to do bad(to be corrupt). Most of our leaders think about themselves alone, they don't care about the people, talk less of enhanced HCI for the people.

Africa has given birth to numerous selfish and corrupt leaders, and they're the same leaders mentoring the younger one's. \*How then do we welcome Economic growth and sustainable development???

Growing up from the hinterlands in Ghana, I came to accept corruption as a norm. This is because in every 8 out of 10 offices that you enter ,you'll gladly and openly be welcomed by corruption.

Africa for many years has experienced a total retrogression in our development due to corruption.

Mind you,we have everything it takes to enhance our HCI, but where are the managers?

Most of them are corrupt (selfish), hence underdeveloped continent. These always leads to the drops in Africa's HCI.

### **Effects of Corruption on Human Capital (HC)**

Corruption is generally considered to adversely influence human capital.

Many scholars discuss and stress the two key channels through which corruption affects human capital: its effects on the allocation and use of public budgets for education and its effects on the incentives of students and families to invest in human capital.

Let's check these

1. Corruption in our society alters the incentives of individuals to invest in productive human capital (Ehrlich & Lui, 1999; Pecorino, 1992).

I dare say corruption directly harms the labor quality of our companies, hence low HCI.

2. Corruption also induces a misallocation of talent; corruption lowers the returns of productive activities, rendering rent-seeking or corrupt activities relatively more attractive, thereby causing resources, including talent, to flow from productive activities to corrupt activities (Murphy, Shleifer, & Vishny, 1993)

3. Corrupt officials tend to have smaller budgets for education, health and social protection and larger budgets for fuel, defence and infrastructure as these officials can embezzle more funds, and it is more difficult to detect embezzlement in projects involving both more money and secrecy (Delavallade, 2006; Mauro, 1998; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993).

## **CONCLUSION**

Humbly, I want to conclude by suggesting to the house that until we change our mind(slavery & inferiority) and attitudes(corruption & selfishness) towards Africa development, Africa will never develop.

We must start to think differently to succeed in this Pan African project to pave way for our modernization and unity.

And finally, we must drive for the emergence of capable individuals with integrity into leadership positions. Young men and women in Africa must be properly train to \*avoid\* being victim of the temptations of the 5P's.

1st P=Power

2nd P=Property

3rd P=Prestige

4th P=Popularity

5th P=Pomposity

#May God Bless Africa.

#We Cannot Fail This Generation And The One Yet Unborn.

#United States Of Africa Is A Must.

#OAI: Africa Unity & Modernization Is Possible

## **Osibajo Festus**

After reading, I have asked pertinent questions from my economics teachers and industrialists around me and found out that the paper has addressed all concerns on the subject matter, nonetheless I have a few concerns and submissions.

The human capital index of an economy is made up of the human capital endowment of an average person multiplied by the number of individuals participating in the economy. The Index quantifies how countries are developing and deploying their human capital and tracks progress over time. This simply means that government has serious roles to play in ensuring that there is all round human development of every individual because it determines how the country is doing collectively. The role of governments is key to expanding the skillsets and education levels of a country's population. Some governments are actively involved in improving human capital by

offering higher education to people at no cost. These governments realize that the knowledge people gain through education helps develop an economy and boost economic growth. Workers with more education or better skills tend to have higher earnings, which, in turn, increase economic growth through additional consumer spending. The question now arises; what are the understanding, mindset and deliberate actions of our leaders concerning this important concept. Does it mean they don't have the clear understanding of what government entails or they are overshadowed with ephemeral things which can never transform to national growth and development. What are our indigenous and deliberate national development approaches outside the MDG/SDG? Though the MDG/SDG addressed fundamental issues regarding growth and development, but what are our own approaches to develop our people in making them productive?

Population growth and human capital index. Sincerely, how many are we? Are we really growing at 2.9% per annum? We have to get the issue of population right. There should be a robust national database upon which developmental plans are based. It is a fact that active population growth can enhance human capital index, especially young population like Africa, but reverse is the case because majority of this population are unemployed, underemployed or lack means of livelihood and therefore not contributing to national growth and development. People fighting hunger and poverty; how do we turn the situation around and make them productive before they can be accounted for as national growth index. How many are we and what the distribution of such population is. I think Africa lack basic information on population number and demography. If we don't really know how many we are, how do we plan for the present and future population? We need a robust database that we can quickly query to get information and solve problems. Also, the issue of continuous population growth is a concern; a man that cannot feed himself is married to two wives with many children. This should be well looked into. We cannot continue to expand into poverty and uncertainty.

Poverty eradication and youth empowerment programmes: critical analyses of all government interventions and poverty eradication programmes since 1999 shows inconsistency and inability to build humans as desired capital or investment that can translate to national growth development. It is believed that human capital was like any other type of capital; it could be invested in through education, training and enhanced benefits that will lead to an improvement in the quality and level of production. Human capital refers to the "skills, education, health, and training of individuals, it is capital because these skills or education are an integral part of us that is long-lasting, in the way

a machine, plant or factory lasts. Human capital is seen as a catalyst for development and if utilized properly could be used as a tool for eradicating poverty. The government has therefore for a very long period of time introduced programmes and policies geared towards alleviating poverty in the country. While some of these programmes and policies have made a little impact in this cause, others seem to have either been ineffective or even aggravating the situation. Some of these policies and programmes include, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution, the Directorate of Foods Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFFRI), the National Directorate for Employment (NDE), Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP), the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), SUREP and current N-power. These programmes are majorly palliatives and cannot totally build a young man into contribution to national goal. Government should be serious and engage economics that can design programmes and policies that can translate to national growth and development.

Bridging the gap of skills acquisition and industrial practice: there is doubt that there is a big gap between skills acquired in our tertiary institutions and the real industrial practice. To bridge this gap the Industrial Training Fund was established by Law in 1971 to promote, accelerate and encourage the acquisition of indigenous skills required in industry and commerce to meet the developmental needs of Nigeria. As part of its responsibilities, the ITF provides Direct Training, Vocational and Apprentice Training, Research and Consultancy Services, Reimbursement of up to 60% Levy paid by employers of labour registered with it, and administers the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). To what extent has ITF/SIWES achieved its core objectives regarding the human capital development through skills acquisition and apprenticeship?

The informal sector: The informal economy remains a problem when we discuss the prospects of economic development. It is perceived as a hindrance to economic progress because the informal sector does not pay taxes, does not include its employees in social insurance schemes and does little to offer labour law protections. Indeed, informal businesses are concentrated in low productivity sectors. They are, on average, smaller and hence less productive. They generate lower value added. They pay lower wages to their employees and do not train them. And the owners of informal businesses manage their firms less efficiently than their better educated formal sector counterparts. Feige (1981), defines the informal economy as all economic activity which, because of accounting conventions, non-reporting or under-reporting, escapes the social measurement apparatus, most notably the GNP accounts. Though, the market women, traders, motorcycle riders and commercial bus drivers pay token as taxes, but I doubt if this money is getting to government

cover. Their trade unions and associations are the one reaping the proceeds from them at the detriment of government. The informal sector is hence both a symptom of economic backwardness and a drag on economic development. But, can this apparent vicious circle be broken?

In many developing economies, the informal employment exceeds 60-70% (OECD, 2011) of employment outside agriculture and even more if agriculture is included. Countries such as Pakistan, the Philippines, Côte d'Ivoire or India struggle with large informal employment. Despite the economic progress registered in these countries, their level of informality far exceeds the threshold of 30% of GDP, which marks the threshold at which the gravity Centre of an economy becomes formal. It is likely that these and other countries will grow, while maintaining, what development economics calls, a dual economic structure — a growing modern formal sector and an informal sector that might remain stable in absolute terms but less important in relative terms over time. The informal sector dominates small commerce, neighborhood services, and those manufacturing industries that do not require heavy capital investments, modern technical equipment and are not engaged in international trade. It is likely that technological changes and benefits from international trading will slowly marginalize informal businesses, but the pace at which this will happen varies depending on the policy, cultural and institutional context. So, how could the informal sector be harnessed for greater productivity and economic development?

The issue of unemployment and lack of means of livelihood: Unemployment is a term referring to individuals who are employable and seeking a job but are unable to find a job.

This remains a challenge to in Africa human capital index with high rate of unemployment. What of those without relevant skills and education? There are some young people who don't have any means of livelihood. These are people who live from hand to mouth. They are either educationally disadvantaged or did not learn any trade. You find them resorting to smoking and all illicit acts. These people filled our streets roaming without any tangible economic activity. How do we capture them in human capital index development? Apprentice, artisans, out of school youths, domestic workers, Some of them at a time learn one trade or the other but couldn't just organize themselves into any small scale business.

Farmworkers/ rural agriculturists and human capital index: there is no doubt that Africa is populated with people who practices small scale agriculture. They feed their families and sell some

agricultural proceeds to meet other needs. These people are majorly rural dwellers, they don't pay any value added taxes as they sell directly to merchandants who come directly to their farm and buy from them. How do we capture these set of people in human capital development index?

Government corporations and human capital development: I really appreciate His Excellence, Ambassador Godwin Umo on his explicit explanation on the issue of corruption and other commentators, what of issue of wastage, duplication of efforts of some government owned corporations, redundancy and low turnover. Some of them have research department and opportunity for training home and abroad, how has these entire benefit African nations? Is it really through that government does not have business in business? The developed countries, how do they organized and manage their public corporations profitably? In Nigeria, government funds all institutions, parastatals and department, some that are generating fund are still funded and they remit lesser money than their total recurring expenditure. Sometimes, the internally generated revenues are used for internal maintenance. Systemic corruption has dwindled the fortune of our nations.

Tax payment and human capital index: in my secondary school, I was taught that government provides social infrastructure and amenities for citizens through tax payers money. But growing up reverse is the case. Our governors and local government leadership will wait until federal allocation comes and they share and wait till next month. From this allocation they siphon part, pay recurrent expenditures and borrow for capital projects. How many states in Nigeria for instance can generate revenue enough to take care of the state? This is systemic failure of leadership and poor perception of governance. This is a solid ground for corruption. We really need to start thinking outside the box and get out of this mess.

### **My conclusion and recommendation**

Deliberate national planning campaign that will take care of every index of growth. OAI can help to channel the course. The national plan should take care of every sector of the economy and the involvement of technocrats, professionals, visionaries and not politicians.

School of leadership and business: The earlier suggested OIA School of leadership should be upgraded to school of leadership and business. It is noteworthy that our leaders lack business skills in managing the enormous human and natural resources God has bequeathed to Africa.

The roles of our training institutions such as ITF/SIWES, NDE should be reviewed and modified to suite the present situations. The industrial skill gaps must be bridged through appropriate training and relevant skills acquisition.

Adoption and enforcement of population control measures such as two/four children policy.

Government intervention programmes and poverty eradication policies and programmes should be revised to meet standard of human capital development. All government programmes should be success driven and measurable. Every government programme should have specific target and must be known to the general public.

Make available public apprenticeship institution where one can easily learn sincere trade or vocation with government support to set up small scale or micro business.

The organized private sector should be narrowed down to capture the core informal sectors such as market women, traders, vehicle operators. Government should take charge and replace some notorious organizations such as National Union of Road and Transport Workers (NURTW) with appropriate scheme. Park Manager programme of governor Makinde in Oyo state can be adopted nationally.

Government should also reach out to rural agricultural workers through relevant programmes of rural development and agricultural extension programmes. This will upgrade them from substance level to small scale business and be able to capture them in human capital index.

Resuscitation of some abandoned government projects that can generate unlimited employment such as Ajaokuta Steel Industry.

There should be legislation compelling every local government and state to develop a comprehensive plan for generating revenue internally, own farm estates that is capable of feeding its people in the area of jurisdiction. This could be private and public partnership.

Robust budget for health and education with proper monitoring and appraisal.

OAI has come in such a time like this, we have role of advocacy, and relevant research like this should be made public. I don't have an iota of doubt that Africa will be great again!



### **Idowu Abiodun**

The solution to go by is generously welcome and I will add in the process of production of goods and services. Orientation of our African citizens in patronizing the domestic goods should be overemphasized.

Many would forego its own country products over foreigners' product oblivious to the implications it carries in the economy.

I look forward for more great topics like this from our leaders here. In it, our(youth) understanding increase.

### **Faruk C. Akaolisa**

The relationship between **leadership, education and human capital development** must be tied as a prerequisite for economic transformation and sustainable economic growth in Africa. Your paper highlights the opportunities and challenges that African countries face in making what would amount to a quantum leap in raising levels of human capital, and outlines some promising approaches to achieving those goals. They are summarized in the following keywords: \*Africa, leadership, human capital, education, health, science and technology.

H. E, permit me to comment from a layman's perspective; Africa's problems are more complex than we can imagine. Decolonized Africa has not yet achieved economic independence. One of the reasons for this failure is the inability to transform human resource potential to create wealth and sustainable economic growth. The biggest problem is that African political philosophy is not based on ethics and moral consciousness that values human progress as a sacred trust. The implications of the capitalist system in Africa have created an escalating pattern of inequality that will impoverish the vulnerable into the next century, if appropriate action is not taken urgently. Accumulation of wealth in one pole, at the same time leads to accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery in the other pole. It is doubtful whether the aggregate of the riches of the very rich are as large as part of the national wealth. The political leadership needs to recognize the principle that the political domain is the sphere of holy because it involves human lives which is holy. Therefore, engagement in politics may not be predicated on the false conventional wisdom that politics is a "dirty game", rather politics should be seen as a holy game that values human well-being.

The rise and fall of the African Kingdom and the subsequent destruction of African cultures and philosophy that were replaced by westernization in the aftermath of colonialism led to the collapse

of African society, making it difficult to mobilize the right attitude needed to promote the human development of its people. African culture is embedded in strong moral considerations, in contrast to what we see in modern African society where incessant lust for materialism has welded the highest form of man's inhumanity to man. Pre-colonial African culture has a system of various beliefs and customs that everyone ought to abide in order to avoid bringing curses on them and others. Adultery, stealing and other forms of immoral behavior are strongly discouraged and whenever a suspected offender denies a charge brought against him, he would be taken to a soothsayer or made to take an oath for proof of innocence. Fear of being stripped naked and taken round the community as in the case of stealing, adequately checks crime of all sorts. African proverbs and wise sayings have a rich repository of wisdom. The proverb warns African against evil conduct and therefore a major source of African wisdom and a valuable part of African heritage.

In the traditional African society, children were seen as social security and economic assets and parents took pride in having many, but in today's African society, children bring shame, agony and regret to their family.

His Excellency, the reason I emphasize the restoration of African values and culture is that values are an integral part of culture and culture determines the identity of people. The values that people hold are what set them apart. Human development enables people to participate in the development of their well-being. Social and health inequality and rising demographic pressure on limited food supplies have resulted in political and economic distortions and the pool of surplus workforce (youth) expected to be absorbed by future industrialization has been neglected. Your Excellency, I see a transmission of values in your success history with our own Col. Peter. I am sure that Papa Obasi will be proud of your achievement today, seeing that his effort and knowledge which he taught you at Nigeria Military School is not a waste. After years of concentrated hard work, Col. Peter became a successful teacher and Gen. (Amb) George, a successful student. This is the kind of productivity we want to see in the academic lifestyle of African children.

The main challenge is how to reform our educational system so that young graduates can acquire the set of skills needed to create jobs for themselves after school. How can we attract street youth and reintegrate them into mainstream economic activities. The story of Michael and Pastor Tony cited by Barrister Christian Wogu Nwogu is an interesting case study. We need more people like Pastor Tony to help harness the untapped potential of young people and help change street children

from beggars to food providers, from homeless to home builder- effectively utilizing the wealth of opportunities in agriculture and sports and technical enterprises. For Africa, achieving the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goal benchmark may look like shadow boxing given the current state of things. We must prioritize and focus on addressing the attitudinal challenges and engage three levels of reorientation if we are to achieve a new African era whose development is people-driven.

### **My recommendations for improving human capital development in Africa**

1. The government needs to improve social and health infrastructure and expand women's capabilities by improving their access to low-cost health care and small and medium enterprises
2. The OAI should advocate for good governance in Africa as a basis for building a sustainable human development
3. There a need for multi-level intervention across the education, health and security sectors
- 4- African rich people should be encouraged to invest in projects and programs that harness human development. The OAI needs to develop a reward model for patriotic Africans
4. As a matter of urgency, there is a need to participate in large-scale campaigns aimed at reviving the traditional values of lost African cultures. This is critical to mobilizing the right attitude, norms and correct moral standard behavior that can be useful in nation building
5. Build think tanks and visionary associates around political executives
6. Address the problem of \*conflict entrepreneurs\* in order to find a lasting solution to the threats of insecurity in Africa. The OAI should advocate for transparency in the fight against terrorism in Africa.
7. Encourage sectors potential and public-private partnerships as a critical enabler for economic growth and source of employment for the growing workforce in the region and improving its productivity and earnings
8. The economic recovery plan for Africa should prioritize governance reforms and the distribution system and put in place mechanisms to protect people and critical infrastructure from downside risks, including disease epidemics and political instability. We can see a fall from the outbreak of Ebola, coronavirus and rise of insurgencies
- 9 - Priority should be given to developing the capacities of young people. School cultism and street gangs has become an epidemic in our society and requires urgent action to mitigate the consequences. The effects of drug abuse and cultist activities among young people will hinder

efforts to improve human capital development. Intelligence gathering is essential to identify the political elites that finance and provide immunity to this cultist and drug cartels for the purpose of enriching themselves and satisfying their political interests, hence ruining the future of the youth. OAI should ultimately demand for justice.

10. Much emphasis and recommendations to tackle corruption have been outlined by our erudite compatriots on this platform. I acknowledge that serious action is needed against corrupt practices and institutional reforms to create conditions required to enhance the human capital development in Africa.

*\*ONE AFRICA INITIATIVES\** has a role to play.

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thanks Sir Akaolisa, for the brain-Sunami. All points you have elucidated are relevant to the realization of the Discourse's objectives. When it comes to ethical issues, I always insist that the Home is where it should all begin. They are 4 critical partners in the quest for moral rectitude viz: Home, School, Government and Religion.*

*If the parents lose the upbringing of their kids, and both the School and the Religious institutions cannot bring them back on track, the government will have very little to do except to institute correctional and punitive measures to deal with the situation.*

*Drug abuses, corruption and other deviant behaviours are the absence of parental control when the child is still malleable. Growing up hardened with these deviant behaviours, would be a herculean task to tackle. I guess that is why it's difficult to vomit a very palatable porridge.*

**Oladele Medupin**

Let me start by establishing the fact that Righteousness exalts a Nation but Sin is a reproach to Any People. In line with the preceding statement, the Bible also says that he who knows how to do well but refuses, to him it is Sin. So doing good to your neighbour irrespective of tribe, colour, gender, religion is key to enhancing human Capital Index of any Nation.

The greatest asset of any family, organization, and nation is their people (Human Capital). Having said, in my findings Human Capital Index (HCI) is directly proportional to the Moral values of a country; countries in the top 5 of HCI are also in the top 5 of Moral Values.

Hence, quality of life indicators; air quality, soil quality, natural conditions, shelter, urbanization, communication, nutrition, health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), economics, security, social leisure/recreation are in sync with HCI; Life expectancy, education, and Standard of living obtainable in any country.

### **Africa: Be Your Brother's Keeper**

One Africa Initiatives (OAI), mandate is so timely to fill the existing gap. Solidarity among the African brothers is critical to achieving Sustainable developmental goals, (SDG) there must be collaboration amongst them in the following sectors; Oil and Gas, Solid minerals, Health ( a good sign in the horizon is Madagascar's Covid-19 Organics), Education, Agriculture, Culture, Technology, Knowledge sharing etc.

Not only that, also in the fight against Corruption by building a robust anti-Corruption system as a common front against money laundering to Europe, Asia and America.

### **Non Compliant Africa: Data Collection and Analysis**

Referencing point 24 in your presentation, fundamentally data management is a big issue so, strategic investment in African Telcos to overcome the challenges of communication limitations, poor infrastructure, nomadic and displaced population and conflict zones.

### **Taking Ownership**

I beg to differ that westernization in the after math of colonization led to the collapse of African society if and if she had taken ownership of her culture, moral values without been deprived of the development that came during colonial rule and post colonial times. Just like what USA did by carving a niche for herself after Britain her former Colonial Master let go.

It is time for Africa to be intentional about her culture that is progressive and western culture too, Yes, reminds me of the abolition of the killing of twins by Mary Slessor, in Calabar, Nigeria.

Gone are the days when Outsiders will do for you as regards Sustainable Development Goals, what you ought to do for yourself. Africa Wake-Up! Because every other nation is scrambling for survival! Covid-19 War(Pandemic) is against every country.

Considering the vast potential of Human Capital in Africa which is being validated by immense contributions of Africans in the Diaspora, there is no better time. \*The Time is Now!\*

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thanks Sir Medupin for introducing another perspective into the Discourse. Anything that Africa can do to enhance its HCI would be welcome, since the HCI is a precursor of economic growth and sustainable development.*

*Once more, your contributions are appreciated.*

### **Itahan Iroro**

My singular view would be for Africa to own its many issues which ranges from inept leadership, to unbridled corruption by simply taking responsibility

Africa has never owned its problems, someone but Africa had to take the fall for the very existence of Africa as a continent. Any country, by inference individuals, who would ever become a force must own its problems. Whilst not trying to be too philosophical China is where it is today because it realized its challenges, owned them and worked on solving them by looking inward. The result is that almost everything we own and use today is made somewhere in China. Your phones, laptops, power banks, fridge, clothes etc are mainly from China.

Yet some 30 something years ago Nigeria had Aba made or Igbo made (Igbo is a tribe in Nigeria) the question is where are the Igbo made? What led to rise of china made and the almost decline of Igbo made? I use this example because they were a par to the extent that Igbo made was seen as original and china make was seen as fake. ( Note: this is with reference to the 1970s)

Again Africa has the major factors of productions in its favor which includes human resources; huge, energetic and youthful population which is the focal point of this discuss; and natural resources.

How is Africa unable to annex these resources? Why has Africa resorted to borrowing heavily from china instead of doing exactly what china did?

Africa's irresponsibility is seen in the state of its hospitals, schools and many more; yet instead of fixing these problems, Africa leaders took the easy way out and resorted to medical treatment abroad, sending their wards to ivory schools abroad, using everything foreign from cars to clothes to tooth picks!

Again the pandemic affords Africa another great opportunity of taking responsibility by fixing the basic amenities like schools, hospitals, power (emphasis on Nigeria) etc and hope Africa does the needful this time!

My earnest prayer is that our leaders in various strata are not waiting for the pandemic to pass so it can be business as usual.

Note: My thought flows mainly from Nigeria's numerous issues.

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Your reactions are anchored on leadership, corruption and the fear of taking the bull by the horns. Leadership is about solving problems but Africans seem to see it as an opportunity to "make it". Making it is connected to corruption and the purpose for electing such leadership is completely forgotten. So, the continent's economy and development are put in reverse gear. Hopefully, there will be a change of mindset to get the continent going again.*

Obayi Chikezie

We are playing down one aspect that can catapult Africa to the league of the great nations. Bar. Itohan Iraro alluded to the fact that in the 70s 'Igbo' or 'Aba' made products were rated as 'original' while China products were seen as 'fake'. Then the pertinent question, what led to the rise of China made and almost decline of Igbo made?. By extension, why has African products declined while foreign products are glorified?. The state of mind of we Africans are responsible for that.

Please I want you that is reading this piece to answer this question. How many of made in Africa products are you putting on, including the food you ate or about to eat?

Africa cannot favourably develop without the willingness of Africans to patronize African products. Please remember the policy of Isolationism of USA, Japan after the 2nd World war shut

itself from world politics, China of recent is fully embracing world market with a deliberate policy to conquer. What we need to understand is that the nationals of these countries love their products more than that of foreign country.

But in Africa the case is different. An average rich African will prefer his ward to school abroad or where at home, at a school dominated by foreign teachers than indigenous teachers.

We have the human capital, the resources, the market, etc but lack patronage. How can we embrace, promote and patronize home made products and services?.

We on this platform can initiate this change by demonstrating the use and consumption of made in Africa and encourage others to do the same.

We can do this by sponsoring legislations in different countries to promote home made goods. Of recent Nigeria banned the importation of foreign rice into the country. Today most Nigerians enjoy eating local rice. There is serious campaign to make a particular brand of cars made in Nigeria the official car of the government. Similar campaigns are ongoing in other countries. OAI should join such campaigns for that are the surest way to the sustenance of human capital development.

### **Adesola Ogunnaike**

My contribution centers largely on why African countries could not achieve the 8-point Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and may not achieved the 17-point Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that replaced it as well as the intentions of the Bali 2018 Paradigm Shift.

Today, African countries are disadvantaged and do not have much voice even in their own affairs. Please note that having voice in determining your affairs is different from having representations. Africans lack voice and impact in the formulation of policies and programs that directly affect them. People outside the continents who thinks they know Africa more than the Africans does policy formulation for us with wrong assumptions, data, measuring matrix etc., hence they continue pushing policies and programs that are not only unsustainable but pose very serious implementation challenges to African states. One example is the setting the start time of MDGs back to 1990 as of 2000 – Was this realistic for the African countries?



African countries that were already passing through a very hectic economic travail as compared to other continents that were better placed, Africa indeed was left out in the formulation of the MDGs, the SDGs and of course the Bali 2018 conference and the results from such exclusion are apparent. Tackling Africa Human Capital Index would require a thorough understanding of the African background, our cultures, our value systems, our ways of life etc. and come up with policies and programs that are in sync with these values systems to drive an inclusive Africa developmental initiative. We could see these in the growth patterns of all other continents. We as Africans cannot continue receiving what are programmed and dumped on us to implement. Our peculiarities which must be seriously considered and taken into considerations are;

1. Democracy – Does the current democratic systems in African countries reflects our background and value system?
2. Huge informal sector – Are we as a people taking advantage of our huge undocumented informal sector? Informal sector is about 70% of Africa economy.
3. Huge arable land and population – Why are we lacking in food and nutrition when we have huge population and vast arable land? Why are we not the food basket of the world?
4. Trading between African countries/Ease of doing business – What is the value of trade between African countries?
5. African Union (AU) – Compare African Union with European Union?
6. Loans and Aids – Are African countries not looking like beggars in the comity of nations? Imagine Russia, Saudi Arabia etc. convening conferences of 54 African countries?
7. Disruptive Thinking – Don't we need disruptive and unimaginable Africa peculiarities thinking?

While African countries cannot insulate themselves from the world, Africa growth agenda should reflect our peculiarities as a people and our growth trajectory and hope for the future. Policies and programs for Africa must be formulated, implemented, measure and review by Africans with the Bretton woods institutions and other multilateral agencies providing the needed back up.

African countries must have VOICE in the journey to their destiny.

**Response by:**

**H.E Amb. Gen. G.G Umo (Paper Presenter)**

*Thank you Sir for the very incisive contribution. Yes, Africans attended all the conferences on MDGs, SDGs and even the recent HCI; but whether or not they had active participation is another thing all together. You cannot have a Voice in a situation where you do not have what to say.*

*We also have to accept the data churned out on Africa with great discernment. A researcher in FAO, obviously working for some vested interest, submitted that there was a preponderance of obesity in Sub-saharan African countries due to the high consumption of Cassava and recommended Rice to stem the problem. Of course, there were Africans at that conference, including my humble self. Not surprisingly, no African spoke.*

*I challenged the researcher to justify the authenticity of her report by stating the countries she carried out her research. Guess what- Senegal and Liberia out of the 16 countries that make up West Africa!!!. How representative could her data be?*

*So many things I would have loved to say here, but, I am busy with other things. All the same, thank you immensely for the input.*

Bar. Christian Wogu

The writer considers that Africa's Economic Growth and Sustainable Development depends on enhancing the Human Capital Index (**HCI**) because of its emphasis on Health and Education.

He notes that the young members of the forum as future leaders will be involved in dealing with the ailments.

While there is no single solution to averting economic and development crises in Africa, enhancing the Human Capital Index (**HCI**) will help.

In the year 2000 (backdated to 1990) the UN instituted an ambitious 8-point Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**) agenda as part of an effort to improve the wellbeing of the citizens of the world. These did not provide a level playing field for all countries

Subsequently Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) were adopted by the UN member States in 2015 to protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. There were 17 goals.

The Human Capital Index (**HCI**) is the statistical indicator of estimating human development in each nation. It comprises Life Expectancy Index, Education Index and Income. Of the 4 tiers of human development – Very High, High, Medium and Low, about 10 African countries are in the Medium range while the rest, including Nigeria, are in the Low human development range.

Sustainable Development is the balanced development that satisfies the needs of present and future generations, guaranteeing a balance between Economic Growth, Care for the Environment and Social Well-being.

While the developing countries met 80% of the 2015 target the majority of African countries achieved nothing or very little.

In 2010 the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (**IHDI**), was introduced, which indicated the overall loss to human development due to inequality

Because of many anomalies and disagreements between economists, the UNDP in 2015 abandoned the MDG's and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDG's**).

These were deemed more equitable as they took into account differences between countries such as differing rates of development and so on.

**Before adopting the SDG's a survey was held involving 7 million people. These were** described as more inclusive and became feasible targets for countries to work towards.

Obtaining money to finance projects in Africa has always been a problem and as the usual finance providers began to withdraw they were replaced by China.

Major problems in broadening Africa's revenue base include inefficient tax collection, tax evasion and illicit financial flows due to low or non-existent production capacity, poverty and lack of international cooperation regarding illicit financial flow.

According to a recent assessment, progress towards achieving the SDG goals has been minimal and poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, school enrollment, access to electricity and drinking water are likely to worsen. It was concluded that besides North Africa, other regions of Africa are unlikely to meet the SDGs and that Central Africa would require special attention.

According to the UNDP's report, growth has been well below the SDG target due to globalization, which includes factors such as dwindling global trade, depressed commodity prices and climate conditions.

Additional factors include poor quality of education and health care that result in low HCI scores with 22 African countries posting scores under 0.4.

“The Human Capital Index – HCI - measures which countries are best in mobilizing the economic and professional potentials of its citizens. The scale ranges from 0 - 1, where 1 is the maximum. Algeria and Kenya had the highest potential in Africa 0.52, while Chad with 0.29 led the rear with Nigeria at 0.34.”

While Economic growth and Development “is driven by population growth (quality population) and Labour Productivity the African population is projected to reach 2.5 billion by 2050, most of whom will remain unemployed,”

The writer proposes that Technology offers new opportunities to eradicate extreme poverty and to boost shared prosperity. And the finance necessary to realize the objectives of improved economic growth and development would originate from public private sector partnerships including multilateral development Banks.

The writer suggests that “women must be particularly favoured in the disbursement because a recent UN study shows that African women generate about 85% of GDP compared to women in the USA and the UK with percentages below 70%.”

A major problem in assessing actual progress is that “African countries are not data compliant” and available data are often “inconsistent and unhelpful”. This led to the IMF and the World Bank, at a conference in Bali in 2018, to review their policies regarding SDG’s. (“The Bali Paradigm Shift”)

At the conference the Development Committee recommended “that policies that support robust and inclusive economic growth, reduce risks and foster competitiveness, while strengthening fiscal sustainability and ensure financial resilience, must be instituted.”

Debt vulnerability coupled with non-sustainable and opaque lending practices were hampering the economic growth and development.

The writer cites corruption as a major factor - “**..Corruption is the catalyst required to destroy a nation, a region or a continent** The committee recommended “the building of the human capital in order to leverage technological advantages on jobs, improve the finance sector and influence other aspects of development. New skills and capabilities must have to be acquired, in the face of current Digital Disruption, to be able adapt to new realities and prosper.”

The writer cites a correlation between corruption and military expenditure, thereby concluding that high levels of corruption reduce economic growth as well as dissuade genuine investors. Studies confirm “that the higher the degree of corruption, the lower the economic growth and development, measured by GDP/capita.”

Having identified corruption as a major factor in the destruction of nations, the writer goes on to propose remedial action that African governments should undertake embark on: “They must identify the causes of corruption and begin to eliminate them.

Governments must play an important role in the modelling of anti-corruption policies, Strengthen their public procurement institutions with skilled workforce, as the absence of this in public procurement institutions presents a breeding ground for corruption.

Since it is now common knowledge that war, crises and even the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic create opportunity for corruption, the more African governments can create environments for peace, the less would be corruption.”

Because the Human Capital Index is in effect a measure of a country’s productivity the low HCI in most African countries reflects the lost potential and opportunities in those countries.

As an example, Chad with an HCI of 0.29 is in reality foregoing 71% of its potential GNP! While Africa’s best performers (Algeria and Kenya) at 0.5 are giving up 50% of their GNP!

Having identified the major cause of an acceptably low African countries’ GNP, the writer rightly states: “All avenues of financial losses must therefore be blocked to enable resources to be channeled into the improvement of the HCI, wars and security crises must be averted, as those provide veritable grounds for corruption and disinvestment. Insurgencies in various parts of Africa will further lower African HCI.”

He then identifies Education and Health as key components of the HCI that must be significantly boosted above their current levels. Because governments can’t do it alone the process will require collaboration with the private sector. A cooperative effort to boost HCI and strong action against corruption will ensure that “Africa will march forward.”

It is unlikely that the low extremely low HCI levels prevailing in African countries will create the economic growth and development that the continent needs. At the current rate of population growth Africa will have 25% of the world’s population by 2050, placing further strain on education and health facilities. With only a portion of its potential Human Capital adequately educated and trained to drive economic growth the African continent will fall further behind the rest of the world.

To adequately cope with the current and future demand African countries will have to do things differently and a good start would be to drastically reduce military and other non-essential expenditure. They will have to cut back on consumer, luxury and imported goods to free up money for education and health facilities to ensure that “healthy minds live in healthy bodies.”

Africa’s Human Capital must be nurtured and enriched to take advantage of emerging technologies regardless of their origin. Rather than continue with the dependence on.

Murky foreign loans and grants with their attached strings Africa must rather redirect its capital flow and start investing in its own backyard.

Equally as importantly African leaders must take a strong stand against corruption and investigate and punish both the corruptors and those corrupted to ensure that its institutions and businesses are rid of this scourge.

Disputes, conflicts and wars are anathema to investments and doing business. Effective conflict resolution methods must be developed and applied to ensure that disputes are prevented or resolved before they progress to destructive intensities

African women have proven their high productivity and ability to enhance economic growth and development. They should be encouraged and adequately funded to develop industries such as small scale farming that would improve the continent's supply of food and raise nutritional standards thereby adding to the HCI.

60% of the world's arable land is in Africa which when coupled with its growing population and access to technology and modern agricultural and conservation practices all of which could be channeled to produce the world's greatest agricultural industrial complex capable of feeding the continent and exporting its products to the rest of the world.

Only a high level of HCI, redirection of capital flow and elimination of corruption will make this possible.

