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Traveler

Jedi Bukachi and Reinhild Ernst

Date

27.04.2017 – 28.04.2017

Destination

Berlin, Germany

Purpose and expectations

To attend the 'Future of the Rural World' conference in Berlin, organized by BMZ and the German G20 Presidency.

Persons met/participants

Patrick Herlant (EC), David Hegwood (USAID), Sean M. Jones (USAID), Prof. Regina Birner (University of Hohenheim), Koen de Marteau (Crop Trust), Iris Krebber (DFID), Nichola Dyer and Yasmine Acheampong (GAFSP Fund), Annelene Bremer and Ellen Funch (BMZ), several colleagues of the GIZ G500 unit

Background

The topic of rural youth has been a longstanding thematic area of the Platform under the theme "Gender and youth". Recognizing that different marginalized groups face different experiences and are uniquely disadvantaged, the topic of youth began to emerge more independently from Gender in 2016, and is now viewed more from a rural transformation lens. This is because rural – urban migration of the youth in search for better opportunities brings about structural changes in the rural space, and to create jobs and opportunities both on and off farm is now a major challenge for development actors.

The conference, which had a strong focus on innovation and employment, included the finalization of the [Berlin Charter on Creating Opportunities for the Young Generation in the Rural World](#).

Future of the Rural World Conference

Opening addresses and Keynote

The German Minister for economic cooperation and development set the tone by outlining that agricultural transformation, climate smart agriculture, energy shifts, investments in nutrition, fair trade, gender equality and fair pricing policies are all innovative investments which in turn contribute to peace and development. He stressed the importance G20 countries to end hunger and made clear that the 4 billion needed is achievable, considering that some countries high military spending shows that funds exist. He used the example of the [Marshall plan with Africa](#), to describe a scenario of partnership with Africa which allows for strengthened expenditure, private investments and fair trade among others. Thereafter, the Chief of Staff of the German chancellery and federal minister for special tasks agreed, and added that using digitalisation, innovation and entrepreneurial ideas effectively can overcome the lack of opportunities for youth in agriculture.



The Keynote, offered by Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of AfDB, commended the inspiring leadership of Germany, seen in their commitment to the [G20 Compact with Africa](#). He focused strongly on insecurity in Africa, affirming that a lack of jobs and opportunities for the youth contributes to their participation in extremism on the continent. Furthermore, he stressed that agriculture should be approached as a business, which is what the [Enable Youth Programme](#) of the AfDB is supporting. In order to ensure women are not left behind, the AfDB's [Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa](#) looks to close the gender finance gap with US \$3-billion fund that will be available through the AfDB's non-concessional window. And finally on the topic of famine, he called for investments to end hunger and malnutrition, emphasizing that "If you have stunted children today, you will have stunted economies tomorrow". AfDB has designed and will be launching its "Say No to Famine" initiative to address immediate, medium and long-term resilience building in South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Nigeria. "The future of Africa is in the hands of African leaders. They should be held accountable for development in rural areas".

As part of the opening session, four rural youth (Paulina Selepe from Lesotho, Krishna Kumar from India, Julia Wäger from Germany and Modest Dayato from Benin) briefly presented their start-up experiences. They emphasised that young people need the help of international actors, but they themselves also know what they are doing and want to be in the driver seat. Only by adapting education programmes, offering microfinance, ensuring rural – urban infrastructure and promoting local innovation can the youth make the most of their ventures, grow their businesses and create jobs for others.

Panels

Jobs Jobs Jobs – but who does what?

Dagmar Wöhl (German Parliamentarian)

When it comes to private sector, we should not only focus on the big players but enable thriving SMEs so as to create jobs. The value chain must remain in Africa from field to supermarket, so that Africa can benefit from value addition and job creation.

Dr. Mo Ibrahim (Mo Ibrahim Foundation)

Good governance stands on four legs; Rule of law, Sustainable economic investment, Human development and Human rights. Mo Ibrahim foundation has an [index on good governance](#) measuring this in 54 African countries. "Nobody invests in conflict areas."

Development assistance is on the margin. African governments themselves are the ones who will spearhead development and change Africa's reputation issue so that investors feel comfortable. Government focus needs to shift to rural development; however politicians are often only interested in the convenient areas, and turn only to rural briefly when they want to garner votes. Only two percent of the young people study agriculture in Africa. This needs to be changed. Better job opportunities in rural areas and agricultural business have to be created. The higher the education the less are the chances to find a job. Mining does not create jobs. Growth in Africa does not correlate with job creation. Africa losses much more money due to tax evasion, mispricing and corruption than ODA spent on the whole continent.



Prof Muhammad Yunus (Grameen Bank)

We are not job seekers, we are job creators. Venture capital from Grameen allows social businesses to invest and young people to unleash their creative capacities. Banks for the poor are still needed. Entrepreneurship needs support - especially young entrepreneurs.

Tony Elumelu (Tony Elumelu Foundation)

Compared to big businesses, SMEs create more jobs. There is a need to build capacities and then offer funding for ventures. We are creating a vicious cycle of poverty if we keep isolating young entrepreneurs. Work more directly with the people.

Prof Klaus Lutz (BayWa AG)

Good governance is the most important of all. Furthermore we cannot export German approaches to Africa, everything needs to be adapted.

Youth employment in rural areas, a G20 perspective

Prof Xiaoyun Li (China Agricultural University)

The economic benefit of moving to urban areas is not clear. Even in developed nations, young people do not want to work in rural areas. The issue is socio – cultural. Provide urban cultures in rural areas.

Nachilala Nkombo (ONE)

The G20 should focus on women’s participation in the agricultural sector, to make it a win – win. Some immediate needs in order to encourage the youth in agriculture are increased role models in the agricultural sector, as well as having assured markets for products.

Dr Ibrahim Mayaki (NEPAD)

CAADP discovered a disconnect between economic and agricultural policies, which Malabo now looks to close. Regional level strategies are the optimal solution. Furthermore, smallholder farmers are part of the private sector.

Thomas Silberhorn (German Parliamentary State Secretary)

Fair trade should not end at the point of primary production. We need value chains in Africa. One of the challenges with rural development is that hunger is worst where food is grown.

Amarjeet Sinha (Ministry of Rural Development, India)

Donor policies are often designed for supporting poor farmers. There should be a greater focus on middle income farmers, they have a higher potential to create jobs and economic development in rural areas.

Voices against hunger

A discussion on the current famine in East Africa took place, alongside the presentation of “Voices against hunger” by the books authors. Some key points were to have a better balance between the low hanging fruits and the long term priorities, because drought in Africa is not new. What is new is knowing what needs to be done yet not getting it done. The UN Security Council has not been effective, and now the G20 must take the initiative. “We cannot wait for disasters to happen and then mobilise money.” What is needed is proper planning.

Next steps

The secretariat will look to reference the charter whenever possible, in order to increase support and follow up of its commitments.