

January 2016 Newsletter:
**CONTINUED GROWTH IN AFRICA'S ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AS ICF APPROACHES
10 YEARS OF EXISTENCE**

**ICF to share its experiences at
U.S.-Africa Business Summit**

ICF's CEO, William Asiko, will share the organisation's experiences in improving Africa's business climate at the U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which takes place from 1 to 4 February 2016. On 4 February, Mr Asiko will be one of several panellists in a session called An International Perspective to Investing in Africa.

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**CCA to hold 10th U.S.-Africa
Business Summit in Addis Ababa**

The Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) is holding its tenth Biennial U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Held in Africa, for the first time in almost ten years, the event is attracting significant interest from key stakeholders. The Summit expects to bring together more than 1000 participants from Africa, the United States, Europe and beyond. These include government officials, business representatives, investors and decision makers interested in the growing opportunities in Africa.



FEBRUARY 1-4, 2016

**ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA**

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A Note From Our CEO

This is an exciting year for us as we are entering our ninth year of operation. The past years have enabled us to gather a wealth of experience in implementing investment climate reforms across Africa. We look forward to another successful year as we bring these experiences into our work with African governments and the private sector in removing obstacles to the business environment across the continent.

William Asiko - CEO of ICF Africa



Implementing Investment Climate Reforms Across Africa

In 2016, ICF will continue to assist African governments in making their business environment simple, attractive and conducive to businesses of all sizes. This includes simplifying business registration and licensing processes, securing property rights for businesses, making it easy for them to resolve commercial disputes and meet their tax obligations.



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Rwanda Business Lifecycle Project

This Project set out to improve the services that the Government of Rwanda provides to businesses at each stage of the business lifecycle. The objective was to remove red tape, thereby allowing businesses to spend less time and effort on meeting government obligations and instead to concentrate on their core businesses, with impacts on productivity, growth and job creation as the intended end results.

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ICF Activity Map: 2016 Portfolio

Our projects for 2016 continue to span different economic and business spheres. For example, this year we see property rights and contract enforcement projects in Cote D'Ivoire, Mali, Rwanda and Togo; business registration and licensing projects in Senegal and Tanzania; infrastructure facilitation projects in Cape Verde, Seychelles and Sierra Leone; taxation and customs projects in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Senegal; and financial markets projects in Ethiopia and Seychelles.



[VIEW MAP ONLINE](#)

ICF Chief Executive Officer To Speak At U.S.-Africa Business Summit In Ethiopia

William Asiko, the CEO of the Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF), will be speaking at the tenth Biennial US-Africa Business Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which takes place from 1 to 4 February 2016. It is the first time that the summit is being held in Addis Ababa.

Mr Asiko will be one of several panellists in a session called An International Perspective to Investing in Africa, which will take place on 4 February. Panellists in this session will provide their perspectives on their country's investment goals and strategies.

The US-Africa Business Summit brings together more than one thousand people from Africa, the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, including government officials, business representatives, investors and decisions makers.

Investing in Africa is widely acknowledged as becoming easier and more attractive to foreign investors, with increasing investment in transport, energy and power, due to a number of factors. These include Africa's more encouraging economic outlook, increased democratic governance and positive trade and investment policies. According to Deloitte, Africa's economies are expected to expand by 50 per cent over the next five years, with more than \$150 billion in investments expected to flow in annually.

This expected rise in investment flow is linked to Africa's rising middle class as well as the fact that it is the continent with the world's youngest population. This is expected to culminate in a huge demand



for a wide range of products and services when the current youth move into their productive years. In addition, the youth are becoming more educated and this is expected to create the world's largest global workforce by 2040.

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Implementing Investment Climate Reforms Across Africa

In 2016 we enter our ninth year of helping to foster a positive business environment across the African continent. At ICF we believe that the private sector plays a key role in boosting economic growth, through the production of goods and services, and distributing wealth through wage earning jobs – both of which are crucial in helping countries to develop and fight poverty.

For nearly a decade ICF has been working with African governments and the private sector to identify and remove obstacles in the business environment. This work has involved modernizing government systems, streamlining processes and procedures, and building the capacity of both the public and private sectors to enable them to function in modernized environments. During this time, ICF has gained a wealth of knowledge and experience in conducting business climate reforms in different parts of Africa. From west to east, Francophone to Lusophone, fragile state to emerging economies – ICF has worked with them all.



As we embark into 2016, we continue our work in business climate reforms, injecting the knowledge we have gained across the years into the projects we are currently implementing across the continent. Our work this year encompasses projects in the following six areas:

Business registration and licensing

Support in the business registration and licensing sector aims to make it easier for businesses to register their enterprises and obtain operating licenses quickly and cost effectively. We currently have business registration and licensing projects taking place in Senegal and Tanzania. The Senegal Construction Permits project aims to speed up the process of issuing construction permits in the region of Dakar, allowing people and businesses to get permits in 28 days instead of the current 90 days. The Tanzania Investment Window Project aims to make investment services, such as business registration and obtaining of various licenses, available online.

Taxation and customs

ICF support in the taxation area aims to make it easier for businesses to meet their tax obligations. We are currently working on the second phase of the Senegal Modernization of Tax Administration Project to streamline and automate tax administrative processes to help reduce time and costs associated with tax declarations. Under customs, we help governments to modernize their systems so



that businesses can clear their goods quickly at border entries. Current customs projects are on-going in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. While Burkina Faso and Ethiopia are both landlocked countries, Tanzania's coastline is home to the busy port of Dar es Salaam. The creation of efficient customs clearance procedures will help to encourage cross border trade and improve competitiveness in all countries.

Property rights and contract enforcement

Our work in the property rights and contract enforcement sector helps businesses to secure the rights to their assets and to resolve commercial disputes in a quick and transparent manner. Projects taking place in this area include those in Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Togo and the OHADA region. In Ivory Coast, Mali and Nigeria, we are helping to set up alternative dispute resolution mechanisms like arbitration and mediation courts. In Rwanda and Togo we are working to modernize their judiciaries by introducing case management systems and real time court reporting. In the OHADA region we are helping to harmonize business laws across the 17 OHADA member countries.

Financial markets

Support in the financial markets sector is aimed at improving the scope, services and access to these markets. Current projects are in Ethiopia and Seychelles. The Ethiopia Commodities Exchange Project is modernizing the Exchange by introducing electronic spot trading of commodities. The Seychelles Financial and Regulatory Capacity Support project aims to deepen the financial services sector by strengthening the oversight and regulatory regime.

Infrastructure facilitation

ICF support in the infrastructure facilitation area focuses on helping governments to create an enabling environment and regulatory framework for the private sector to participate in providing public infrastructure. Current projects in this area include work in Cape Verde, Seychelles and Sierra Leone. Project work in both Cape Verde and Seychelles is helping to set up public-private partnership frameworks to allow private sector participation in the provision of public services. The Sierra Leone Airport Transfer Project is working to provide safe and reliable transport between the capital city of Freetown and the international airport in Lungi, as a way to foster greater investments in the country.

Capacity building

Building the capacity of both the private and public sectors is crucial in fostering economic growth in Africa. The South Africa Municipal Capacity Building Project is helping to build the capacities of five municipal councils to enable them to improve the provision of basic services so that businesses are attracted to move into those areas and invest. The COMESA Local Sourcing Project is building sustainable sourcing partnerships between small businesses and large corporate companies by training local suppliers in six countries in global food standards.

This year we continue our work of helping to make it easier for both governments and the private sector to play their part in catalysing economic growth across the continent. Most importantly, this brings us to almost a decade of our history in implementing business climate reforms in Africa that are contributing towards an improved investment climate in the continent.

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Rwanda Business Lifecycle Project

A business goes through several stages of its life cycle, from inception to registration, expansion and finally closure. In each of these stages, businesses have to interact with various government institutions, like business registration bureaus and licensing bodies. The Rwanda Business Lifecycle Project set out to improve the services that the Government of Rwanda provides to businesses at each stage.

The objective was to remove red tape and make it easier for businesses to go through each lifecycle stage quickly and easily, thereby allowing the companies involved to spend less time and effort on required processes and instead concentrate on their core businesses.

The project has increased efficiencies in the electronic registration of businesses and mortgages. It has reduced the time taken to register a business and issue related certificates from two days to six hours. The business registration fee has been reduced from US\$33 to zero thanks to the electronic business registration system.

Banks and other financial institutions have been linked to the electronic mortgage registration system, thus allowing them to register mortgages from their premises without needing to physically go to the Registrar General's Office.

To simplify the process of issuing mortgages, the project linked up Rwanda's electronic land administration information system, which manages the country's land resources, to the mortgage system. Consequently, when a bank wants to issue a mortgage, it can use the mortgage registration system to access land information and thereby confirm whether or not a piece of land that has been presented as collateral is legitimate or not.

Lastly, the Rwanda Business Lifecycle Project established the practice of insolvency in the country by setting up effective insolvency regulations. The aim is to rescue financially viable companies that run into financial difficulties instead of closing them down in order to pay creditors. This practice has a more positive impact on economic productivity and job retention.

The improvement of the business lifecycle in Rwanda will have a significant impact on the economy. The ease of registering a business will encourage the growth of more enterprises in the country. More banks will have the confidence to extend credit, thus stimulating economic activity in general and the real estate industry in particular. Companies in Rwanda now also have more confidence that in times of potential crisis, the insolvency process that has now been established will focus on restructuring and saving the business where possible.



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In Next Month's Edition...

Doing Business in Africa

As the only pan-African body focused on improving the continent's investment climate, ICF has hands-on knowledge of what is required to conduct investment climate reforms across Africa. We bring you more next month on doing business in Africa, looking at practicalities as well as success stories that have evolved from our presence in 35 countries so far.

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Get involved in
improving the
investment
climate in
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ICF 

ICF Funding and Support

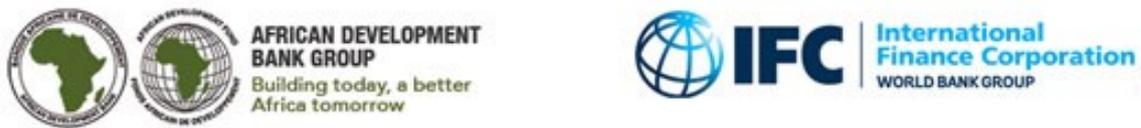
ICF provides a unique partnership between the private sector, African governments and development organisations to deliver a better investment climate for Africa. We continue to seek additional funds to enable us to increase the scope and impact of our work.

Development Partners

ICF receives support from the following governments:



And also from:



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ICF also receives support from the following companies:



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