



The Investment Climate Facility for Africa

**THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE
FACILITY FOR AFRICA**
Partners In Building the Future



November 2014 Newsletter:

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Foreword from Our CEO

2014 saw unprecedented growth and development across Africa. ICF has been working hard to help African countries improve their business environment so they can take advantage of this growth.

As we end the year, ICF would like to take this opportunity to thank our donors, African Governments and private sector partners who helped make 2014 a success.

We look forward to your continued support and wish you all the best for the year ahead.

William Asiko - CEO of ICF Africa



Index

ICF's 2014 Footprint

[READ](#)

ICF Activity Map of 2014 in Review



Rwanda

[READ](#)

Mauritius

[READ](#)

Senegal

[READ](#)

More ICF News

African Financial Markets offer significant development drivers

[READ](#)

ICF Facts

[READ](#)

In Next Month's Edition...

[READ](#)

ICF's 2014 Footprint



Reflecting on the past year, ICF has been involved in 28 ongoing projects, spanning 19 countries across the African continent. Of these projects, five were started in 2014. These include the second phase of the Mali Alternative Dispute Resolution project, the South Africa Municipal Capacity Development project, and the Seychelles Public-Private Partnership project.

Seven projects were completed in 2014. These include the Kigali Construction Permit project, the Mauritius Modernization of the Registrar of Companies project, and the Senegal Modernization of Tax Payer Services project. The completed projects will have a significant impact on the investment climate in each of the countries involved.

ICF strongly believes that the underpinning success of these projects is based on the strong leadership and commitment of Government partners to see lasting changes in their countries. ICF commends this commitment and encourages other Governments to follow suite so they can lay the foundation that enables the private sector to contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction in their countries.

[BACK TO INDEX PAGE](#)

ICF Activity of 2014 in Review



Rwanda Kigali Construction Permit

ICF worked with the Government of Rwanda to enable the City of Kigali to provide better services to the private sector and members of the public. The project has implemented a web-based information management system for the full construction permit process cycle.

The Construction Permit Management Information System (CPMIS) enables the full construction permit process to be done online: from application and submission of necessary requirements to approval and delivery of the permit. The system covers construction and

other related permits (e.g. occupation, renovation, change of use, transformation, and permit to construct a fence) issued by the City of Kigali district offices and the City One Stop Centre.

The project has successfully implemented the web-based CPMIS for the full construction permit process cycle, from submission to issuance. As a result, the number of visits needed to the authorities for both residential and commercial projects have been reduced from 7-10 to a maximum of 3. Additionally, the entire Construction Permit process is legally required to take no more than 20 days.



Mauritius Registrar of Companies

ICF is working with the Government of Mauritius to introduce an electronic document management system for business registration. This will help reduce the time for registration and filing of statutory information and improve the quality of data for the Government and the public. The project will establish a call centre to enhance customer service to the public. It will also build the capacity of Registrar of Companies staff and share knowledge with other African countries.

The aim is to reduce the time it takes to register a company from half a day to half an hour, the time to file returns from 14 to 8 days, and delivery of certified copies from 2 - 3 days to same day delivery.



Senegal Modernization of Tax Administration

ICF is working with the Government of Senegal to introduce a new legal framework that will streamline regulatory and administrative tax procedures in order to increase transparency, and reduce time and cost for tax administration. The project will automate existing administrative processes and digitise tax records. The project is expected to reduce the time for processing corporate taxes and VAT refunds from 175 days to a maximum of 30 days. Declaration and paying of taxes will only take 15 minutes instead of 2 days.

[BACK TO INDEX PAGE](#)

African Financial Markets Offer Significant Development Drivers

In less than five years, Africa has risen to become the second most attractive investment destination in the world, tied with Asia, this according to the Ernst & Young 2014 Africa attractiveness survey.

Given Africa's prospects, investors are searching for viable ways to enter the African market and financial markets could be the answer.

Financial markets in Africa have traditionally depended on banking systems, however, having undergone considerable change, commodities and stock exchanges are playing an increasingly important role. This is because these types of markets not only provide an avenue for foreign investors but also serve to foster growth in the countries in which they operate.

Economic growth often depends on access to resources and financial markets, such as stock exchanges, create the opportunities to do so, explained Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya when welcoming delegates to the African Securities Exchanges Association (ASEA) Conference, which took place in Nairobi from 23rd to 25th November.

Financial markets offer many opportunities for small investors and enable access to funds in both the public and private sectors.

It is important to note that stock exchanges on the continent are not new, for example the oldest, Casablanca Stock Exchange of Morocco, was founded in 1929. What is new, are the projects that facilitate financial literacy around these markets. For example, in December 2013, the Casablanca Stock Exchange joined Mundiapolis University in Morocco to establish a trading room in the University for the benefit of financial engineering students.

Currently, ICF is supporting the Tunis Stock Exchange (TSE), a small yet effective entity, to increase awareness among the public and local investors of the opportunities offered by the TSE.

The project has undertaken several initiatives to promote stock literacy and enhance professional skills in Tunisia. It has trained more than 100 professionals in financial stock market literacy as well as 70 journalists. It ran two online stock market simulation games to enable the public to learn how stock trading works. In addition to this, the TSE is sharing its awareness raising experience and knowledge with other French-speaking countries in Africa. The success of these initiatives are illustrated by the 12 Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) that were registered in 2013 compared to two in 2012 and one in 2011.

However, stock exchanges are not the only financial markets that are making headway on the continent. Commodity exchanges provide an efficient, risk-free and transparent trading platform that disseminates market information to all stakeholders.

The Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX), established in 2008, has partnered with ICF to create a modern online commodity trading platform that will increase stakeholders' access to commodity trading in Ethiopia. Capacity building and awareness raising will be a key component of this project to ensure more people participate in, and therefore reap the rewards from, commodity trading.

As examples of the ECX and TSE have illustrated, financial markets and the education drives around them, have the capacity to be key significant drivers of economic and societal development on the continent.

Providing people with financial market skills and building stock exchange capacities will give people and businesses access to the financial resources that are needed as stepping stones to greater levels of development that will, as Aig-Imoukhuede puts it, change the continent's economic narrative from "Africa Rising" to "Africa has arrived".

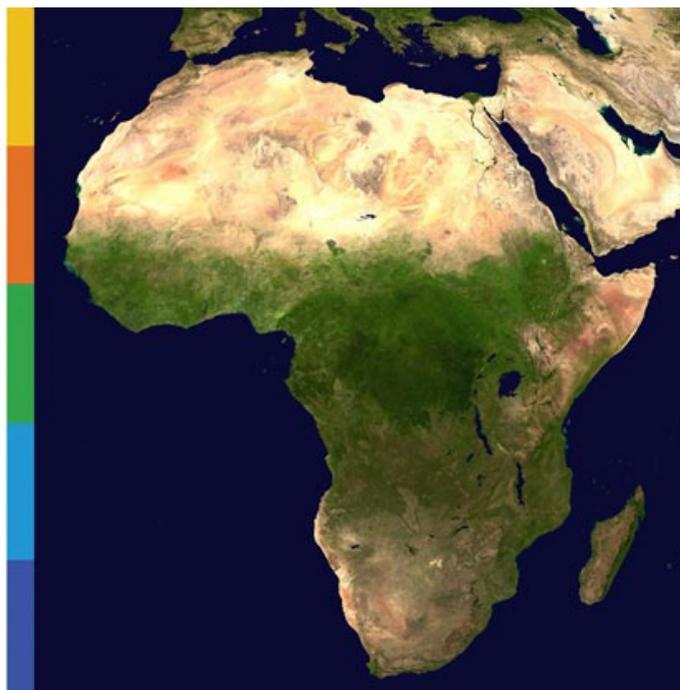
[BACK TO INDEX PAGE](#)

ICF Facts

**DID YOU
KNOW** 

ICF partnered
with 19 African
countries in 2014.

ICF 



[BACK TO INDEX PAGE](#)

In Next Month's Edition...

Focusing on ICF

2015 presents major opportunities for investment and development across Africa. In next month's newsletter, we will look at the origins of ICF and how it works with governments and the private sector to facilitate improvements in the investment climate across the continent.

[BACK TO INDEX PAGE](#)