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“Boosting Africa’s transformation through education, science, technology, and innovation.”

19 February 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



United Nations Economic Commission for Africa organized the Africa Business Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on February 19, 2024. “The goal of Africa Business forum is to promote ongoing dialogue between the private and public sectors in Africa to accelerate collective efforts towards realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: the Africa We Want, of the Africa Union.”

The 2024 African business forum held with the theme “Boosting Africa’s Transformation Through Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation”. This year’s theme aligned with the African Union’s priority agenda and theme of the year, which is education. Education is Africa Union’s theme for the year 2024. The forum focused on discussing the importance of Technology, Innovation, and Education in Africa. Moreover, the event took place few weeks earlier to the Africa head of states /Ministerial meeting held in Addis Ababa, early this month. According to Mr. Claver Gatete (UNECA’s Executive Secretary) technology and innovation plays a pivotal role in achieving the agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. He also added that investment in science, technology, and innovation is vital for Africa to boost employment, increase productivity, and to enhance Africa’s economic competitiveness. Africa has made some progress in some areas of technological advancements. However, when compared to Africa’s need for economic transformation, its progress in technology adoption and innovation is still stagnant. The need for technology adoption and innovation is enormous. Hence, dialogues on digital technology, innovation, and on how to create global cooperation is important. The forum is aimed at creating the platform and actionable cooperations. The cooperation agreement signed between Google and UNECA during the event is a good example of such actionable collaboration to walk the talk. Parallel to the event Google and ECA signed an agreement to “foster and accelerate digital transformation in Africa”.

The major objective of the forum was to provide a multi-stakeholder platform for exchange of views among public and private sector stakeholders. The forum showcased examples of 5 transboundary initiatives representing the 5 regions that are operational and making an impact. Company representative pitched their business and how they are “making a developmental impact across Africa’s borders and possibly beyond; how emerging technologies are changing the landscape of the start-up ecosystem”. Moreover, the panelists highlighted “the types of bottlenecks start-ups face in scaling products and services, including those related to financing or investment”.



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Government officials and representatives from different African countries reaffirmed their roles and commitment to the acceleration of education, science, technology, and innovation in their respective countries' economic transformation endeavors. Companies such as: Google, Dangote Group, Flutterwave, eKitabu, iZola (Health AI Start up), Partech Africa, and Transsion Holding Investment participated in the panel discussion, pitched their activities and ambitions related to technology and innovation and ripple benefits on education and industrialization in Africa.

The forum pointed out that African economies need innovation, science, and technology to transform their economies and various economic sectors. Investment, Finance, global cooperation, and developing bankable projects is important and get to action to realize Africa lead innovation and adopt AI to solve various challenges Africa face in various sectors.

- [African Business Forum 2024 - YouTube](#)
- [ECA and Google Sign Agreement to Foster and Accelerate Digital Transformation in Africa | Events | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa \(uneca.org\)](#)