Investing for Impact in Emerging and Frontier Markets

Tuesday, August 11, 2020

Webinar Panelists included:

- **Glenn Yago (Moderator)**, Senior Fellow/Founder, Financial Innovations Labs, Milken Institute; Senior Director, Milken Innovation Center—Jerusalem Institute
- **Bonnie Glick**, Deputy Administrator, US Agency for International Development
- **Amb. Gil Haskel**, Israel Agency for International Development and Cooperation (MASHAV)
- **Malado Kaba**, Former Minister of Economy and Finance, Republic of Guinea; Chair, Orabank Guinea
- **Strive Masiyiwa**, Founder and Executive Chairman, Econet
- **Weldon Turner**, COO, GigaWatt Global

The dual (health and economic) pandemic crisis that put the global economy into an induced coma increased an already acute urgency to address the challenges for sustainable growth in emerging and frontier markets. After World War II, 50 percent of the global GDP was in advanced industrial economies. Today, over 60 percent of global GDP is in these developing markets, and the overwhelming future of global economic growth is dependent upon their recovery.

Unequal gains from inadequate growth increases the incidence of systems risks and higher frequency of crises. The Milken Institute webinar, “Investing for Impact in Emerging and Frontier Markets,” addressed a central question: How do we transition from the pandemic crisis to a roaring decade of growth ahead? How can we combine digital technologies and innovative finance as accelerants for expansion towards a more inclusive and regenerative global economy?
The webinar participants discussed how to push the pedal to the metal of these financial and technology accelerators to pull out of a dive into a pandemic-triggered economic depression.

The webinar opened with presentations by USAID's deputy director, Bonnie Glick and the Israel Agency for International Cooperation and Development's Gil Haskel describing their two countries' recent MOU to take the next steps to build a culture of hope to solve these challenges.

Strive Masiyiwa, founder and chair of economic wireless and special envoy for the African Union on COVID-19 response, detailed the lessons learned from his work on telecommunications and how he has applied these to the work processes and technologies necessary for post-COVID-19 recovery.

Former economic and finance minister of Guinea and chair of Ora Bank, Malado Kaba, spoke about advancing digital disruption of the public sector to decrease time to market and create innovative breakthroughs to shape more sustainable markets.

Weldon Turner, COO of Gigawatt Global, shared his team’s work with Power Africa in transferring and adapting technology to energy and electrification needs, and how to accelerate electricity project pipeline development to meet the energy poverty challenges of the continent.

The webinar closed with a discussion of the need for pre-development and risk mitigation to build a project pipeline to scale, capacity building, and the usefulness of a tool kit (supply chain financing, blended finance, and innovative financial structures) to move toward technology and capital deployment for a post-pandemic recovery in these critical markets.