West Africa is showing signs of a better future, but like many other regions in the world, rapid changes are challenging this optimism.

This special issue of the West Africa Trends newsletter looks back on the past 11 issues to re-examine the trends identified, reflect on them and try to weave them into bigger trends. Past issues focused on different topics of economic interest. We were looking for signals on the ground that are likely to grow in scale, geographic application and importance. We further proposed interventions to build more resilient lifestyles for poor people and communities in the region.

We have determined three trends

- Rising inequality in the midst of economic growth
- Growing youth population lacking opportunity
- Unexpected forces driving regional integration

In deciding on these stories, the newsletter team developed a visual word map to see key words captured in each issue and then reflect on what those key words were telling us. Some underlying themes started to emerge: the private sector, an emerging middle class, growing urbanization and the broader mobile connectivity. Other materials were also scanned to enrich these themes.

This publication is an output of the Rockefeller Searchlight Programme, a global network of 11 countries monitoring trends in Africa, Asia, Latin America and North America. Support materials have been produced to illustrate the monitoring by the Institute for the Future, called “Catalysts for Change”, which groups or individuals may use to build their own scenarios for change and develop action plans. This special issue is thus a broader dissemination tool to accompany those materials. It introduces our readers to the Searchlight network, offering new ways of using trends to inform their work. www.rockerfellerfoundation/what-we-do/research-records.

We hope that readers find the broad range of topics covered here stimulating and read the back issues to obtain more information on subjects of particular interest.
The purpose of this newsletter is to monitor trends across the West Africa region for policy makers, researchers and other decision makers in the international community.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter do not represent those of the Rockefeller Foundation.
However, innovations in communication technologies are showing potential to become levelers. Cell-phones are enabling poor farmers to access market information and banking services, while radio technologies are allowing nomads to gain access to education. As innovations gather pace, and new business models develop, many more opportunities will open for the poor.

At a wider regional level, intended and unintended forces are beginning to set the pace and nature of integration. Irreversible infrastructure commitments are creating new dependencies, while special interests that benefit from a lack of integration remain strong. As policy makers and politicians pontificate on integration, veering between action and inaction, the forces of change across the region control how people are choosing to live and work. The pendulum may therefore swing in unseen directions and eventually push policy makers to accept the actual outcomes on the ground. These sudden unpredictable forces: conflicts, political shifts, technology innovations and global economic instability require alert and adaptable policies from governments.

The message resounding in each issue thus far: emerging trends may be positive, benign or malignant but they often are game changers. That makes it important for researchers and policy makers interested in transformed futures to keep a watchful eye on those trends.

Table 1: Key trends captured in West Africa trends newsletter January-December 2011

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In many ways 2011 was the best of times and yet the worst of times for Africa. Africa as a whole became the “Lion on the move” and a rising star for its economic potential. But the benefits of recent growth have not trickled down to the majority. Issues of equity therefore gained prominence alongside the good news coming out of the region. A few countries such as Ghana are showing good prospects, but most countries in the region still lag in meeting MDGs goals.

The region contains “the poorest of the poor” in sub-Saharan Africa, with Sierra Leone and Liberia among the world’s ten poorest countries. The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria, accounts for over half of West Africa’s population, but poverty is endemic in the country, with nearly three-quarters of the people of Nigeria living on less than $1.25 a day, despite the vast oil wealth.
The economic prospects for the region remained positive throughout the year. The extractive sectors continued to boom, with new contracts and the potential for even richer discoveries. The region also continued to enjoy a mining boom as commodity prices remained high. In general, growth was broad-based as the private sector gained confidence, fueled by expansion in the telecommunications and banking industries. All this contributed to rapid growth and the establishment of a new middle class.

High global food prices saw foreign direct investment shift from extractives to agriculture, with prospects for opening new areas to boost food production. Remittances also remained strong, enlarging real estate investments and private equity funds, which became an increasingly important source of foreign inflows directed even to unconventional sectors like private health care. Even so, the poor and the vulnerable were least equipped to take advantage of these advancements.

Issues of inequality when handled poorly can become intractable as they assume ethnic and religious dimensions. This is being experienced in Nigeria in the current escalation of terrorist episodes and perpetrated by the sectarian group, Boko Haram. According to former federal minister Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, “Most of the apparent ethnic and religious crises in the north, and the youth violence and criminality in the south, can be linked to increasing economic inequality.”

The challenge is further worsened by the growing lack of trust in the government’s ability to address inequality, apparent in resistance to removing fuel subsidies that mostly benefit the rich in Nigeria and Ghana. In Nigeria, a national strike ensued because the poor do not trust the government’s ability to redirect the savings towards them. They believe that the few benefits that trickled to them through this flawed scheme is the best they can get.

So, understanding the emerging concerns about equity is important when developing an integrated strategy to help the poor and the vulnerable.

Agricultural land leases

The pressures of securing future food supplies and meeting the rising demand for biofuels, a result of western government mandates, saw foreign governments and firms seeking to lease land to grow food and biofuel crops in West Africa. Higher food prices also saw unconventional investors, such as private equity funds, starting to buy land, as the prospects for future profits from agriculture began to rise.

Most countries in the region have leased land or are in the process of doing so, a great controversy since activists fear that local people are losing their land rights in mostly secret deals between governments and foreign entities. There has been growing local and international criticism over Libya’s 250,000 acre land lease in Mali. It is claimed that local people have been displaced. There has also been criticism that it is immoral for Africa to grow food for others while the continent cannot feed itself.

There are some good reasons for these concerns, as the predominant land tenure system in the region is communal, often with the chief and the government holding land in trust for the people. Even where deals are more transparent, there is still a fear that local people lack the capacity to negotiate with sophisticated investors. Reports in a Ghanaian newspaper cited a case where a village lost much of its land in a poorly structured deal between the village chief and a Norwegian investor.

Governments have defended land leases, which they see as an opportunity to open land that poor farmers cannot use for agriculture, due to a lack of resources and other factors. On the controversial land lease by the Libyan government in Mali, Abou Sow, a government official, pointed that in the past 80 years only about 200,000 acres of the three million acres of land its agency controls, along the Niger River and its inland delta, has been irrigated. The government thus considers new investors a boon, “Even if you gave the population there the land, they do not have the means to develop it, nor does the state.”

However, investors always go for the low-hanging fruit first and this means land that is already opened. When poor farmers start facing disputes from more powerful companies, local officials and traditional authorities often disenfranchise the poor. Being open in land deals and involving civil society can reap the best of both worlds, allowing farmers to benefit from better infrastructure that comes with big investments. It also opens underused land and eases the global food crisis.

Fair share of extractive windfalls

The region is a leading producer of gold, and the rise in commodity prices brings to light unfair clauses in agreements made when the countries were in a poor bargaining position—in the aftermath of structural adjustments programmes in the 1990s. Mining companies paid little in taxes, having received long tax breaks, or in royalties. Government thus gained little, even as commodity prices soared.

Civil society groups and new governments are pressures for reviews of mining contracts. Ghana enacted a law to raise mining royalties from 3% to 5%. Guinea went so far as to cancel contracts, which the new incoming government felt were unfair. Governments in the region have also started amalgamating for greater share ownership of mines, with Guinea proposing a law to increase ownership to one-third from 15% and Mali seeking to raise state ownership from 20% to 30%. In return for lower tax rates for companies moving to this new regime.

Also getting more attention is the demand for local content in mining agreements. Governments in the region have expressed concern that ineffective development of downstream activities, with active involvement of local people, through local content and participation would contribute more to meeting development targets—and are enacting laws to increase local content. The Government of Ghana recently approved a policy framework to develop local capability to capture 40% local content across the whole oil and gas value chain by 2020.

The Nigeria Local Content Act will raise local participation in oil and gas from 40% to 70%, with Nigerians taking over jobs at every level, including the boards of companies. Under the new law, foreign oil companies will be required to train local workers, so that they can participate more fully in the sector, throwing out the excuse that specialized skills cannot be found locally.

The demands by civil society are also becoming more and more daring. In Guinea a gold mine was forced to close over demands by an adjoining village that the mining company supply them with electricity for free.

These developments, while welcomed by the general public, are also creating uncertainties. The industry usually makes high initial investments and then recovers them over a long period, so certainty about legislative and fiscal policies become paramount. Many civil society organizations are not well versed in the economics of mining (revenues are easier to see than sunk costs) and therefore do not appreciate the full implications of various demands on industry.

Furthermore, the laws may have a negative impact on the industry’s productivity. For instance in Nigeria, indigenous companies currently own about 37% of Nigerian licenses but only 4% have been developed. Many companies are simply farms for foreign owners. A balance needs to be struck to ensure that industry pays a fair share of the profits to the country where it extracts resources but also allows them to make a competitive return on their investment. Concerns over redress for environmental damage, health and safety also need to be adequately addressed.

“Mining contracts are now being reviewed due to pressure from civil society groups and governments.”

These concerns extend to disputes with small and artisanal mining companies, which employ close to 20 million people in the region and are seen by some as a strategic response to youth employment and rural development. But the artisanal mining industry is considered very unsafe. Meanwhile, government has been seen as supporting big mining companies, understandable since artisanal mining is hard to regulate and tax.

Urbanization and migration-induced inequities

Urbanization continued its rapid pace coupled with the rise of the private sector and subsequent a rise in the number of people defined as “middle class.” The return of highly skilled diaspora adds to this growing middle class.

The result has been mounting pressure on housing and affordable high-quality accommodation. Average rents continued to rise in the major cities. Slums have grown as the shortage of affordable housing continues to bite. The pressure is such that an average of
nearly a dozen people now live in a single dwelling in Accra. The inequity in housing is stark: slum dwellings rent at $10 per month, often in the same vicinity as apartments that cost over $5,000 a month.

Public infrastructure, has worsened as population density increased, leading to more traffic congestion in the cities. Private vehicles have increased congestion on the roads, almost stalling normal public transport (such as buses). Those on low incomes now use motorcycle taxis, which helps avoid congestion but takes its toll in lives lost on unsafe roads. Nigeria has special wards dedicated to motorcycle accident victims. The high number of vehicles on the road has also increased pollution.

Health: Can the poor benefit from private health care?
The growth in private health care has expanded access for patients and also offers more opportunity for doctors to work in better conditions in their home countries, stemming the brain drain. Philanthropic organizations, development partners and private equity funds are also investing in small and medium-size health care companies, such as health clinics and diagnostic centers. Collaboration between the government and the emerging private health sector has improved healthcare delivery. But the poor, removed from popular service locations, cannot afford even low fees and continue to experience poor health. Business models based on micro-lending are being developed to help low-income users. Micro-Clinic, a franchising organization in West Africa, uses microfinance lending to provide community health-care workers, nurses and doctors the opportunity to start clinics in rural areas. But health statistics in the region continue to be poor, with maternal health showing some of the world’s worst outcomes.

A growing counterfeit drug market is following the growth of private healthcare. The poor and vulnerable are more exposed to this problem as they served by micro-pharmacies that are hard to police. Poor consumers lack access to information about their health needs and so are easier to entice with fake drugs.

Private education widening gaps in provision?
The growing private investments in education will have important implications for whether poverty in childhood leads to poverty as an adult. A good education is still critical for gaining access to jobs and opportunities. Well-equipped private primary schools enable richer parents to prepare their children to compete more effectively for the best places in the limited number of elite public schools. But increasing prosperity for wealthy only increases choices for the wealthy, without reducing the pressure for placements on public schools, as the number of places available is far below what is needed.

There have, however, been commendable efforts at addressing inequalities. School-feeding programmes now allow children from poor families to stay in school longer, ensuring that they do not come to school hungry. Cash transfer programmes are also improving the attendance of girls in schools. And the innovative use of radio technologies is enabling educators to reach children from nomadic communities.

Infrastructure: Are developments pro-poor?
Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are now becoming an important part of solving the infrastructure puzzle, and many governments have set up specialized PPP units. But private participation necessarily means fees for service, so PPPs may be skewed to areas where the ability to pay exists, perhaps reducing the benefits of the poor.

Looking forward
A 2010 survey by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life revealed that 76% of people living in Sub-Saharan Africa believed that their life would be better in five years. The same survey revealed that Africans were more optimistic about their future than populations in other world regions. That view may still hold true for many countries in Africa, but dangers lurk. The popular uprisings in North Africa during the 2011 “Arab Spring,” were due to rising discontent among the poorest in those countries. Perhaps the “Sub-Saharan Spring” is also imminent, as optimism fades around the world in 2012.

Harsh realities have become apparent. Budget cuts are deepening in rich countries concerned about growing deficits and the impact of the Eurozone debt crisis. There will almost certainly be a significant reduction in aid flows to Africa in 2012 and beyond. Indeed, the recent trends to cut fuel subsidies in Ghana and Nigeria are a testimony of the pressures on governments.

Africa is at a watershed moment of both crisis and opportunity. Policy makers must quickly put their houses in order, increase transparency and accountability in all their dealings and select interventions to stimulate jobs and create new opportunities for the majority of their poorest citizens.
Growing Youth Population Lacking Opportunity

The majority of the populations in the West Africa region fall in the youth category (age 15–35), and this youth bulge is projected to persist for decades. It promises a demographic dividend to many countries—if the youth can acquire the skills they need to progress. But under current conditions, with few opportunities for upgrading skills, the dangers of youth restlessness that comes with idleness and frustration is very real, as in the Niger Delta and elsewhere in Nigeria.

Growing youth unemployment affects all states in the sub-region. Employment records in Senegal, Mali and Benin show that 100,000 freshly qualified youths arrive on the labour market every year. The Benin Ministry for Youth puts this figure at 30,000, while ILO estimates the annual number of young graduate entrants into the labour market in Mali at 100,000. The structural weakness and limited diversification of the sub-region’s economies prevents job creation in sufficient numbers to absorb the growing annual number of young entrants. Low literacy and other skill deficiencies further deny youth the opportunity to compete in increasingly global labour markets.

To address this challenge, governments in the region have...
developed wide-ranging activities and initiatives. A multi-pronged sectoral strategy, which includes increasing youth skills and participation in agriculture, is creating jobs targeted for youth and helping young people to start new enterprises.

**Improving education and skills development**

Skills development programmes are being targeted towards youths.

- Benin, Togo, Senegal and Mali are restructuring technical vocational education and training (TVET) systems to incorporate traditional apprenticeships, including certification mechanisms.
- Ghana has instituted the Industrial Skills Development Centre, through a public-private partnership to sponsor companies and disadvantaged young people.
- Vlisco Helmond B.V., a large Dutch textile manufacturer with 500 Ghana-based employees, and its Ghanaian subsidiary, TextStyles Ghana Ltd., initiated the project to develop the skills of unemployed Ghanaians.
- Mali has created the National Youth Employment Agency to develop and implement a programme to increase the employability of young graduates. This programme provides hands-on experience for young people in their prospective employment sectors, through internships and apprenticeships for 12 months.

**Jobs for youths**

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**Youth entrepreneurship**

Programmes have also been launched to help youths start their own enterprises. In Senegal, a non-profit organization created the Synapce Centre to provide entrepreneurship training for would-be entrepreneurs, running a 14-month promise programme to train youths on the practical aspects of entrepreneurship.

**Impact of interventions**

These responses to empower youths are having a significant impact and generating useful lessons to guide future initiatives.

- The Ghana Industrial Skills Development Centre shows that training institutions can get good results by establishing close ties with prospective employers and developing curricula with their inputs.
- Sierra Leone shows that youths presented with the right mix on the education ladder can develop their abilities regardless of their age.
- Senegal has implemented 3,226 public works programmes, creating more than 350,000 jobs albeit mostly temporary.
- In Mali, more than 10,000 young people participated in the internship programme between 2004 and 2010, with half the interns obtaining jobs.
- The entrepreneurship programme in Senegal has many promising graduates, and 18 of them are now entrepreneurs, creating 186 jobs for fellow youths.

**Looking ahead**

In the short term, governments should continue enacting legislation on youth education, job creation projects and a legal and financial framework to support youth self-employment. The spirit of entrepreneurship among young people should also be nurtured.

Further mechanisms to increase youth participation will engender greater faith in the system and increase the probability of success of any initiatives. Critical in developing ideas will be adopting an out-of-the-box approach to finding solutions.

- In developing the next generation of farmers an opportunity exists to change prevailing farming models and attitudes, which have pushed youths away from farming. Commercial farming models can be developed for university graduates to operate them. And young people can be organized into groups and helped to work on such farms.
- Informal institutions that develop skills mainly through apprenticeships with master craftsmen can be integrated with formal systems to give them a better image.
- Governments may reserve some sectors for youths to get useful work experience, as in rural feeder roads and reafforestation.
- Entrepreneurship development efforts for the youths should also be directed to sectors that resonate well with the youth, such as creative industries and green economy programmes.

**Increasing youth participation in agriculture**

The farm population in West Africa is ageing, and the poor image of agriculture as a vocation has made it unattractive to youths. There is now fear that cocoa production is threatened because ageing farmers are not being replaced. These fears, together with rural unemployment, have spurred governments in the sub-region to initiate youth in agriculture programmes. Youth in Agriculture Programs are being rolled out to motivate young people to appreciate farming as a profitable commercial venture.

- The Songhai Centre in Benin’s capital, Porto Novo, supported by IFAD has over the years built expertise in various forms of agricultural production and in transforming the lives of thousands of young West Africans with skills that turn them into agricultural entrepreneurs.
- Cadbury’s Cocoa Ambassador Program, made up of young talented students drawn from various tertiary institutions across the Ghanaian cocoa producing communities, seeks to change the negative perception youths have of farmers as uneducated, unskilled and physical laborers with extremely low economic returns. The programme offers career opportunities in research, environment, financial management, engineering and other technical areas for youths to explore.

**An emerging green economy?**

Developing green economies may provide an innovative new pathway for growth. But to tap into the potential offered by this new sector, Africa needs about US$675 billion by 2030. Becoming a green economy is difficult because of the time gap between short-term costs and long-term benefits, and the price gap between market prices and ecological prices. So, significant economic reforms are needed to jump-start the process. Moving to a green economy is therefore going to be a major challenge for the West Africa Region. Even so, some concerted efforts are under way.

- Several countries have set up national authorities to tap into opportunities offered through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). But only a few projects have come online, reflecting the limited capacity of countries to develop bankable projects. So, developing the capacity of technical staff in governments to design strategic plans and finding ways to bring small farmers into this framework can have important benefits, especially for the poor, who will bear the brunt of climate change given the greater dependence on natural resources.
- Renewable energy—especially in solar and domestic cooking fuels—is being pursued with various levels of success. Renewable energy entrepreneurs in the region are assembling solar panels, efficient cooking stoves and biogas digesters, supported by government subsidies to increase uptake. Challenges start with advocacy programmes to change attitudes of communities towards new energies. And subsidies for new technologies should increase uptake in appropriate ways. For instance subsidies for liquefied petroleum gas in Ghana have created gas shortages, as taxis shifted to using gas rather than petrol.
- Cities in the region have also started embracing the vision for a green economy. Abuja is creating a green city. Lagos has developed Bus Rapid Transit systems to reduce traffic. And Accra has an initiative for green buildings.
Unexpected Forces  
Driving Regional Integration

Regional integration in the West Africa region, has been a policy goal since independence, and a formal regional body ECOWAS (the Economic Community for West African States) has been in place since 1975 to accelerate the pace of integration. There is now free movement of people across the region—no passport is required. But the ideals of full economic union are far from being realized. In particular, the free movement of labour, goods and services has not materialized, and even agreed protocols for that ideal are regularly flouted at border crossings.

Even so, emerging regional agglomerations (hubs) are driving the migration of capital and skills—and thus the pace and nature of integration. There are also commitments for regional power stations and transport networks that will increase the inter-dependence between countries in ways previously unseen in the region. These new drivers are more likely to determine the direction and pace of regional integration than the many political treaties.
Emerging regional hubs?

Business hubs
National champions are now branching out to become regional multinationals, with banks at the forefront such as Ecobank. Global transnational corporations led by the telecommunications sector are also rapidly establishing regional operations, resulting in regional business hubs. Lagos is becoming the banking hub, while Accra is becoming the telecommunications hub.

Education hubs
The search for quality education is resulting in regional centres of excellence that are creating strong economic and cultural links.

Countries with well-organized educational systems tend to attract more resources, which helps them attract more investments in other areas. Knowledge-intensive industries such as ICTs tend to cluster around centres of knowledge, apparent in Accra, as more telecommunications companies locate their regional operations in Ghana.

Cultural hubs
The growth of a popular film industry in Nigeria, Nollywood, has captured the regional film market. The music industry is following suit and assuming a regional character. Personalities in the two industries have moved beyond their boundaries and become regional personalities. Regional cooperation on creative and cultural products now takes place with joint Nigeria-Ghana film and music productions.

Regional centres of excellence in creative content production are strengthening the industry by making available expertise and infrastructure to emerging content creators. There are also more apprenticeship opportunities for technical staff. These hubs will begin to have an important bearing on the direction and nature of integration, because creative arts and culture have the power to change the direction and nature of integration, because cultural hubs tend to attract more resources, which helps systems tend to attract more investments in other areas. Knowledge-intensive industries such as ICTs tend to cluster around centres of knowledge, apparent in Accra, as more telecommunications companies locate their regional operations in Ghana.

Irreversible infrastructure commitments
Shared energy infrastructure
Infrastructure commitments that will prove hard to unwind are being rolled out for shared power pools and shared gas pipelines. It is instructive to recall that European coal and steel industries were catalysts for the European Union. The central role of steel and coal in the reconstruction of Europe meant that the six founding countries became more dependent on each other for economic growth, making the move towards European integration irresistible.

In the same way the West Africa Power Pool and the West Africa Gas Project could play such a role in West Africa when they become fully operational. Energy and power are the keys to development, and the lack of electricity and sustainable power supplies is a significant factor in the lack of development in West Africa. When the generating stations are built along with the gas pipelines in the region, countries will depend more on each other, and the regional value of integration will be established in practice.

Each country will be able to exploit its comparative advantage. Guinea will produce hydroelectric power. Niger, with its vast uranium deposits, will generate nuclear energy. Nigeria will supply natural gas for thermal stations in ways that alleviate concerns about building the distribution infrastructure and finding markets. If other commitments especially in agriculture, mining and manufacturing can be made on the basis of reliable power, regional integration will accelerate as policy makers accede to the union because of events on the ground.

Renewed attention to river transport
Rivers have always been the natural corridors of trade and migration. Improving the transport capacity of the region’s many rivers will link them to other means of transport and accelerate integration. Opening rivers will offer new regional opportunities for the poor, especially to take goods to market. It will also provide access to cheaper goods from elsewhere in the region. Rivers can thus create new flows of trade and bring integration’s benefits to people previously excluded because of their remoteness.

Unintended consequences of national policies
The easy movement of people across the countries, coupled with uncoordinated national policies, can increase the hostilities that often arise from greater integration. Large numbers of new migrants are not always welcome in neighbouring countries, especially where illegal regional flows increase to exploit policy differences. Petrol subsidies in Nigeria create opportunities for smuggling petrol to neighbouring countries. The differences in cocoa policies between Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire often determine which way cocoa gets smuggled. And custom duties along the coast determine the smuggling routes, the ports of choice and the country destinations for illicit goods.

Many local enterprises are built on such illegal activities. Goods flow in all directions, creating a hive of activity along the transport corridors. Even the use of tariffs as a tool for developing certain sectors has been ineffective. For example, heavy tariffs imposed on imported rice to encourage growth of local rice production have been hampered by such activities.

Harmonizing policies across the region to eliminate arbitrage opportunities is likely to be defeated as the economies of Benin, Gambia and Niger have come to rely on income from smuggled goods. Many small businesses and especially women traders in markets in many West African cities also rely on these opportunities.

The West African citizen
Free movements of people are creating new dynamics, widening gaps between different groups of people who could be termed as West African citizens. Two groups now emerging are the new middle class and a growing underclass, uprooted from their homes through human trafficking.

The rise of the middle class
A rising middle class is accelerating the development of regional hubs and cities. Its greater disposable income and driving ambition for the upward mobility of their children are defining the growth and nature of regional educational hubs. The wealthier ones are buying second homes in neighbouring countries and making investments in the emerging hubs.

There is also a desire by this group to further expand opportunities for their children. Many anglophone students are now starting to take a first or second degrees in francophone countries and vice versa. This bodes well for the future of the region, often divided between anglophone and francophone communities across West Africa. This emerging group of economically stable, well-educated and bilingual young people may be bolder in living and working in different countries, navigating with greater ease and exploiting business opportunities with more fervour.

Human trafficking
Urbanization has spread across the region very quickly, causing labour shortages in rural areas. It has also created an unfortunate unintended effect in forced migration. Many victims are children, taken through abduction or lured by false pretences or being “given” by their families to people they believe will give them better lives. Those from poorer countries are taken to rural areas of neighbouring countries to work as agricultural labourers. And entrepreneurs, especially women traders, increasingly “adopt” poor children from rural areas as porters and hawkers of their wares in cities.
When trafficked children become adults in new countries, they are invisible to the social support systems and may never get proper legal rights due to their undocumented status. Côte d'Ivoire has over the years accumulated migrant workers who are not fully accepted as citizens by some sections of that society. The circumstances of their arrival and subsequent upbringing made it difficult for them to fully assimilate into mainstream life. At the same time many retain ambivalent loyalties, as they vaguely remember having been "given" or abducted at a young age. Their identity can at best be described as West African.

These two trends are reshaping the profiles of West African citizens at the two ends of the socioeconomic ladder. At one end are empowered citizens with education and resources to move freely—and at the other are disenfranchised citizens who live at the margins of their society.

The rise of the African church

Religion is also a strong integrative force in the region as local churches branch out to neighbouring countries and beyond, creating shared values that are distinctly African. Local churches branch out to neighbouring countries and foster a spirit of integration. This is a future possibility as the strength of the region and show a great degree of cooperation. It is not unusual for visiting foreign preachers to be hosted by the top local preachers and to hold joint conferences that fill national stadiums. This spirit of cross-border cooperation is creating very highly competitive personalities is sending strong messages to their followers in the region and fostering a spirit of integration.

What does this mean?

The final form of integration in the region is likely to differ from what the founding fathers of ECOWAS envisaged. On one hand, the arbitrage opportunities created by policy differences among states have created their own constituencies that are influential enough to slow any policy convergence. On the other, the success of the initiatives, such as energy infrastructure, are also likely to embolden governments to embark on even bolder actions.

The impact of regional integration on the poor will also be varied. Those who profit by exploiting opportunities in policy gaps, such as smugglers, will lose out when integration occurs. But the potential economic benefits that full integration offers are significantly greater. Without explicit policy provisions to protect the poor and vulnerable, the benefits of the whole will not automatically reach those most in need. More study is needed to assess the micro-impacts of regional integration.

Towards a regional extractive hub?

There is a strong trend towards leveraging extractive industries to create infrastructure by having mining concessions tied to the development of infrastructure, particularly railways and ports. This approach has been nationally focused and not necessarily efficient, as the location of mines in a country can mean that exporting through another country is the most efficient option. National sentiment usually mitigate against this approach, as people want to own all the resources. But recent developments show a shift in attitudes.

Guinea has yielded to the mining company, Vale, giving it rights to develop its iron ore resources and related export infrastructure through Liberia. This regional approach to mining infrastructure is more efficient and should be encouraged.

The next logical step is to develop a regional infrastructure and extractive resources. The proximity of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone offers them the chance to become a global iron mining, and processing hub. Many mining companies are active in the region, with expertise in different aspects of the mining value chain. AccelorMittal specializes in steel production, ArcelorMittal in mining and Vale in logistics.

If all three countries come together and develop a joint strategy, they can create a global steel production hub and thus provide an economic engine to deepen integration. This is a future possibility as the strength of the private sector rises in West Africa.

But the political economy of countries in the region does not favour such a shift, given the nationalist fervour that extractive industries excite in many states. Much more work is needed to engage all stakeholders in the discussion on why regional integration matters.
La libre circulation des personnes à travers les pays, couplée des politiques nationales non coordonnées, constituent l'intégration plus profonde. Toujours les bienvenus dans les pays voisins, en particulier de douane le long de la côte déterminent les itinéraires de illégales. Les flux de marchandises illicites dans toutes les En conséquence, l'utilisation des droits de douane comme exemple, les lourds tarifs imposés sur le riz importé pour encourager la croissance de la production locale de riz ont été entravés par de telles activités.

Toutefois, l'harmonisation des politiques dans la région de contrebande. Beaucoup de petites entreprises et en égale de ces opportunités. Identités Emergentes du Citoyen Ouest-Africaines sont, la nouvelle classe moyenne ainsi le moteur économique pour renforcer l'intégration. Il est vrai que l'économie politique des pays de la région n'est pas favorable à un tel changement, compte tenu de la

Amélioration du transport Depuis la nuit des temps, les rivières ont été les autoroutes du commerce. La prochaine étape logique est d'élaborer une approche régionale qui améliorera le transport de marchandises aux marchés. Le transport fluvial donne lieu à une forte tendance à tirer parti des industries extractives en vue de créer une infrastructure en ayant l'impact de cette évolution est le renforcement accru des relations économiques et culturelles actuelles entre pays. En outre, les pays mieux organisés avec des systèmes de l'information moderne comme les télécommunications ont des agglomérations (centres) régionales émergentes à mesure que les entreprises de télécommunications envisagent de déménager leurs opérations régionales vers le Nigeria et le Ghana, le centre de l'industrie cinématographique et musicale.

L'intégration régionale en Afrique de l'Ouest, a été une intention de politique depuis l'indépendance et la CEDEAO, organisme officiel régional (Communauté Economique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest) a été mise en place depuis 1975 pour accélérer le rythme de l'intégration. Il y a eu un certain nombre de succès et de progrès sur le terrain. Cependant, les idéaux affichés d'une union économique complète sont loin d'être réalisés. En particulier, la libre circulation des travailleurs, des biens et des services ne s'est pas concrétisée et même les protocoles d'accord pour régir la marche vers cet idéal sont régulièrement bafoués au passage des frontières.
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LE NUMÉRO SPÉCIAL 2011
BULLETIN D’INFORMATION DES TENDANCES EN AFRIQUE DE L’OUEST

POUR LA JEUNESSE

QU’EST-CE QUI DÉTERMINE L’AVENIR DES JEUNES EN AFRIQUE DE L’OUEST?

La majorité des populations de la région ouest-africaine sont comprises dans la catégorie des jeunes (15-35 ans). Il est estimé que cette explosion démographique des jeunes va persister pendant un certain nombre de décennies. Ceci promet un dividende démographique aux nombreux pays, si seulement les jeunes peuvent acquérir les compétences dont ils ont besoin pour progresser.

Toutefois, dans les conditions actuelles, où il y a peu de possibilités pour eux d’améliorer leurs compétences, le danger que pose la nervosité qui vient avec l’oisiveté et la frustration est bien réel. Les signes d’un tel scénario se font déjà voir dans le delta du Niger et ailleurs au Nigeria.

Le chômage des jeunes est un problème croissant et touche tous les États de la sous-région. Les fichiers de demandeurs d’emploi au Sénégal, au Mali et au Bénin montrent que plusieurs jeunes

DE LOUEST
JEUNES EN AFRIQUE
L’AVENIR DES
DÉTERMINE
QU’EST-C’EST A QUI

JEUNESSE
En dehors de l'entreprise privée, des organisations philantrophiques et d'entreprises de soins de santé, telles que les cliniques de santé et les centres de diagnostic. Une coalition de teneurs émergents de santé privés a également contribué à améliorer l'accès aux soins de santé.

Mais les pauvres qui restent éloignés des centres de soins de santé communautaires laissent la possibilité d'établir des cliniques dans les zones rurales. Un marché de faux médicaments sans cesse croissant est exposé à ce problème car ils sont servis par des micro-pharmacies qui sont difficiles à surveiller. Les consommateurs qui l'utilisent deviennent de plus en plus vulnérables à la résorption de médicaments dangereux. Un certain nombre de produits de santé contrefaits, qui ont été achetés sur le marché noir par des médecins et des pharmaciens, ont été rapportés.

Une bonne éducation est toujours un élément essentiel dans l'accès aux emplois et aux opportunités. Il y a maintenant plus de écoles primaires privées que publics, qui permettent aux nantis de préparer leurs enfants à l'avenir. Le retour des personnes de la diaspora hautement qualifiées gonflent les rangs de la classe moyenne en Afrique, y compris l'île de Madagascar. Les infrastructures publiques se sont détériorées au fur et à mesure que l'urbanisation s'est poursuivie à un rythme rapide en même temps que l'essor du secteur privé et la hausse subtile des coûts de la vie, ce qui a limité l'accès au transport public. Les personnes aux revenus plus élevés, qui ont accès aux véhicules particuliers, ont aggravé l'embouteillage sur les routes, ce qui presque a entièrement bloqué les systèmes normaux de transport. Les richesses rendues disponibles par le marché de l'immobilier ont attiré de nombreux investisseurs, qui ont cherché à maximiser leurs rendements en investissant dans des appartements à prix abordable et un hébergement de haute qualité. Les loyers moyens ont continué d'augmenter au détriment de ceux à basse moyenne.

Les plus riches et les plus puissants ont maintenant choisi d'utiliser les taxis modernes, qui aident à éviter l'embouteillage, mais cette réponse rapide a eu pour conséquences logiques la perte en vies mortelles. Les soulèvements populaires en Afrique du Nord au cours de 2011 connus sous le nom de « printemps arabe » ont été les résultats spécifiques d'un mécontentement grandissant dans leur maison, qui a ensuite dû trouver une solution rapide. D'autres initiatives ont considéré les gouvernements comme soutien aux grandes entreprises, mais les perspectives d'avenir sont maintenant préoccupées par les déficits croissants et l'utilisation novatrice des technologies radiophoniques aide les éducateurs à toucher les enfants des communautés les plus éloignées.
Le gouvernement du Ghana a récemment approuvé un plan visant à augmenter le contenu local dans les activités extractives. Les contrats miniers sont en cours de révision en raison de la pression de la part des groupes de la société civile et des fonctionnaires qui s'opposent à l'aliénation des terres. Les contrats miniers sont également considérés comme un moyen d'ouvrir des terres cultivables pour les agriculteurs, comme l'a souligné un membre du gouvernement du Ghana.

Certaines sociétés minières ont cédé des terres à des groupes de la société civile et des fonctionnaires pour des activités extractives, créant ainsi des incertitudes dans l'industrie. Les indemnisations ne sont pas toujours bien assurées et les locaux ne disposent pas de la capacité de négocier avec les investisseurs. Les inégalités économiques croissantes peuvent être liées à ces problèmes de répartition de l'aubaine extractive.


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DÉFIS D'ÉQUITÉ INÉGALITÉ CROISSANTE
AU MILIEU D'UN ESSOR ÉCONOMIQUE

Quelles perspectives d'avenir pour les pauvres et vulnérables dans une Afrique de l'Ouest en développement ?

La région continue à bénéficier d'un boom pétrolier alors que les prix des produits de base demeurent élevés. En général la région a connu une croissance globale en même temps que la confiance s'instaurait dans le secteur privé à cause des expansions dans les secteurs des télécommunications et de la banque. Ces facteurs ont contribué à la croissance rapide et à l'établissement d'une nouvelle classe moyenne. Les prix élevés des denrées alimentaires ont attiré des investissements directs étrangers, diversifiant ainsi les secteurs traditionnels des industries extractives au profit de l'agriculture, avec des perspectives de mise en valeur de nouvelles terres en vue de stimuler la production alimentaire.

Les envois de fonds restaient élevés et les fonds d'Equité Privés (PE), qui sont devenus source de plus en plus importante de capitaux étrangers destinés aux secteurs encore plus conventionnels, tels les soins de santé privés. Malgré tout cela, les pauvres et les vulnérables : De mille manières l'an 2011 était à la fois le meilleur et le pire moment pour l'Afrique. L'ensemble de l'Afrique, en termes de potentiel économique est devenu « un lion en marche » et une étoile montante. Toutefois la majorité n'a pas bénéficié des avantages de la récente croissance. C'est ainsi que, parallèlement aux bonnes nouvelles en provenance de la région, des problèmes liés à l'équité prennent de l'ampleur.

A l'exception de quelques pays tels que le Ghana qui font montre de bonnes perspectives, la majorité des pays de la région sont en retard sur la réalisation des OMG. La région englobe « les plus pauvres des pauvres » de l'Afrique Subsaharienne dont la Sierra Léone et le Libéria figurent parmi les dix premiers pays les plus pauvres du monde. Le Nigeria, pays le plus peuplé d'Afrique, représente la moitié de la population Africaine. Toutefois, la pauvreté y étant pérenne malgré la grosse richesse pétrolière du Nigeria, presque les trois quarts de sa population vivent en dessous de $1.25 par jour. Cependant les perspectives économiques de la région sont restées positives toute l'année. Les secteurs extractifs...
Les forces subites, imprévues: conflits, changements politiques, technologie, innovation et instabilité économique exigent l'alerte et des politiques adaptables par les gouvernements. Nous en sommes conscients que les tendances émergentes revêtent de l'importance; elles peuvent être positives, bénignes ou malignes, mais souvent elles changent la donne. Il incombe donc aux chercheurs et décideurs qui s'intéressent au futur d'être très vigilants vis-à-vis des tendances émergentes.


Tableau 1:

1. ÉDITORIAL
2. Premieres tendances
3. Cinq indicateurs d'émergence
4. L'intégration régionale
5. Le capital durable

Les textes sont organisés dans un tableau pour faciliter la lecture.

**ÉDITORIAL**

**Premières tendances**

**Cinq indicateurs d'émergence**

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Les textes sont organisés dans un tableau pour faciliter la lecture.
La Fondation Rockefeller soutient la recherche sur les tendances en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Le but de ce bulletin d'information est de surveiller les tendances dans la région Ouest-Africaine pour les décideurs, les chercheurs et d'autres décideurs de la communauté internationale.

Avertissement : Les opinions exprimées dans ce bulletin ne représentent pas celles de la Fondation Rockefeller.
L'Afrique de l'Ouest montre des signes d'un avenir meilleur et, comme beaucoup d'autres régions du monde, il y a l'émergence de mutations rapides, qui remènent en cause cet optimisme.

Ce numéro spécial du bulletin d'informations des Tendances en Afrique de l'Ouest, passe en rétrospectif les onze derniers numéros en vue de réexaminer les tendances identifiées, d'y réfléchir et d'essayer de tisser les signaux recueillis dans un ensemble de tendances plus élargi.

Dans les numéros précédents nous nous sommes concentrés sur de différents sujets d'intérêt économique. Nous scrutons le terrain en vue de trouver les signaux avant-gardistes, qui sont susceptibles de prendre de l'ampleur, de l'importance et d'exiger une application géographique croissante.

Nous avons en outre proposé des interventions qui peuvent aider à construire un mode de vie plus souple pour les personnes et les communautés de la région vivant dans la pauvreté.

Le processus de prise de décision relative à ces titres consiste à impliquer l'équipe du bulletin dans l'élaboration d'une carte visuelle de mots pour voir les mots clés saisis dans chaque titre et puis dans une réflexion sur ce que ces mots clés nous disaient. Certains thèmes sous-jacents ont commencé à émerger ; ceux-ci comprennent: le secteur privé, une classe moyenne émergente, l'urbanisation croissante et l'impact de la connectivité mobile en pleine essor. Des matériaux supplémentaires ont également été scannés afin d'enrichir ces thèmes.

Cette publication est un produit du Rockefeller Searchlight Programme, un réseau mondial comportant 11 pays, qui suivent les tendances en Afrique, Asie, Amérique Latine et en Amérique du Nord. Du matériel de soutien a été produit pour illustrer le processus de suivi des tendances par l'Institut dénommé «catalyseurs pour le changement». Ce matériel peut être utilisé par des groupes ou individus désireux de créer leurs propres scénarios de changement et développer des plans d'action. Ce numéro spécial est donc un outil de diffusion plus large pour accompagner ce matériel et introduire nos lecteurs au réseau Searchlight, qui offre de nouvelles façons d'utiliser les tendances pour informer leur travail.

Nous espérons que nos lecteurs trouvent stimulant le large éventail de sujets abordés ici et qu'ils seront encouragés à lire les numéros précédents pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements sur tout sujet présentant un intérêt particulier.
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