

Addressing Global Health Security at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit

What is the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit?

It's the largest engagement a U.S. president has ever had with African leaders and governments. The [U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit](#) will bring together 50 heads of state, along with a range of U.S. and African civil society and business leaders, to discuss the future of Africa.

What issues will the Summit address?

The summit leader sessions will focus on topics such as trade and investment, peace and regional stability, and good governance. The signature events will address issues such as civil society, women's empowerment, global health, resilience and food security, and wildlife trafficking.

What will happen at the global health event?

The signature event on global health, *Investing in Health: Investing in Africa's Future*, will celebrate the global health successes Africa has already achieved and the progress still needed. More specifically, U.S. and African leaders will discuss:

Improving Global Health Security: Despite scientific advancements in health care, a reduction in the number of deaths caused by preventable diseases and increased interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields by young Africans, much remains to be done. The outbreaks of Ebola in West Africa and polio in Central Africa this past year illustrate that the threat of dangerous diseases is real for all countries that don't prioritize health security efforts. To improve global health security, countries around the world need to work together to monitor and quickly respond to outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Encouraging Science and Health Research: To promote science and health research, participants will discuss ways to share this responsibility with the private sector, train new leaders in the health and science fields, support local scientists in their research and integrate technology into research. Bolstering research capacity will enable Africa to play a larger role in the health-policy process and will promote economic development.

Achieving an AIDS-free generation: The United States and Africa have a strong and long-standing partnership toward achieving an AIDS-free generation. The [U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief \(PEPFAR\)](#), launched in 2003 by President George W. Bush and strengthened by President Obama, is the United States' commitment to this effort. The U.S. government has contributed more than \$52 billion to PEPFAR and other global AIDS programs through fiscal year 2013. Working together, the United States and Africa have distributed AIDS treatments to millions, saved millions of lives, built more secure families and helped stabilize fragile nations. This partnership is bringing African countries closer to achieving an AIDS-free generation.

Ending Preventable Maternal and Child Deaths: Ending preventable maternal and child deaths due to poor health care is within our reach. Worldwide, the annual number of maternal deaths between 1990 and 2010 dropped from 543,000 to 287,000, and the annual number of child deaths between 1990 and 2012 dropped from 12 million to 6.6 million. By helping African

nations develop more sustainable financing models for their health care systems, these numbers will continue to drop. Investing in the life expectancy of mothers and children will strengthen workforce productivity and the African economy as healthier and stronger people enter the workforce.

Why is this issue important to young African leaders?

In 2014, poor health continues to pose a tremendous challenge to development. By improving health security, encouraging science and health research, achieving an AIDS-free generation and ending preventable maternal and child deaths across the continent, African leaders can ensure a brighter future for Africa. And that's a future YALI Network members can help create.

Photo credit: Noor Khamis

Investing in Health: Investing in Africa's Future –Health Signature Event of the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit

Representatives from African nations and U.S. government agencies, members of Congress, leaders of multilateral and nongovernmental organizations, as well Mandela Washington Fellows met to discuss several areas of U.S.-Africa health partnerships. In light of the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, speakers urged ongoing investment in African nations' abilities to prevent, detect and contain diseases to bolster global health security.

Speakers also discussed the progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, noting that 6 million AIDS deaths have been averted since 2002, a trend that can be increased through focused efforts, integrated health systems and further investments. The vitality of health science and research partnerships was illustrated through the success in combating HIV/AIDS, with speakers stressing the need to invest in African nations' abilities to develop stable career paths for scientists to work in their native countries.

Finally, success in ending preventable child and maternal deaths is possible through focused attention on family planning interventions and the development of national strategies, targets and progress-tracking systems. In closing, [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell](#) stressed the importance of partnerships between nations and the sense of urgency underlying all the issues that were discussed.

[Focusing on Resilience and Food Security at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit](#)

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What will happen at the resilience and food security event?

The signature event, *Resilience and Food Security in a Changing Climate*, will focus on the intersection of climate change, food security and resilience while highlighting U.S.-Africa cooperation on initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture and Feed the Future.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Rajiv Shah and U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack will join African officials, civil society and business leaders, Washington Fellows and members of the U.S. Congress to discuss how climate change impacts food security and resilience in Africa and how key U.S. initiatives support the commitments of African leaders to bolster the resilience of individuals, communities and nations.

Why is this issue important to young African leaders?

The challenges of resilience and food security in a changing climate are of particular concern to counties in Africa where the majority of rural populations depend on farming for their livelihoods and where shocks and stresses like droughts are coming faster and harder. The recent drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa and Sahel underscore this concern.

When people are food secure they learn better, are healthier and more productive, and contribute more to their families and communities. When people know they can withstand the next inevitable shock, they can protect their livelihoods and develop their aspirations.

Building the resilience of the African people requires a comprehensive approach that includes expanding economic opportunities on and off farms, strengthening governance, investing in conflict and disaster risk management and building human capital through health and nutrition investments. It also requires building food security.

To do so, leaders can promote investment in agricultural research and infrastructure development. They can streamline border crossing procedures so food produced in areas of surplus can get to areas of need. They can encourage the next generation to pursue careers in agricultural and environmental science and technology.

Leaders can build the capacity of households and communities to adapt to climate shocks and other environmental, social, and economic disturbances to ensure a food secure and prosperous future for all Africans.

Photo credit: C. Schubert

“What was the outcome of the Resilience and Food Security in a Changing Climate Signature Event at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit?”

Joining [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) (USAID) Administrator Rajiv Shah at the U.S. Africa Leaders Summit, Judith Rodin, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, announced the \$100 million [Global Resilience Partnership](#), a new model for solving the complex and interrelated

challenges of the 21st century such as persistent and often extreme poverty, food insecurity and climate shocks. The partnership will address chronic vulnerabilities and enable communities and institutions to rebound quickly and effectively after environmental, social and economic disturbances.

Administrator Shah also announced that more than 1,300 fellowships and training opportunities in agriculture and nutrition will be available to young Africans. The training will contribute to climate-smart agriculture and reduce global hunger and poverty, he said. He urged African governments to encourage their youth to consider careers in agriculture and noted that U.S. and African leaders and companies have collectively committed more than \$8 billion in agriculture investments in Africa.

[Discussing Wildlife Trafficking at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit](#)

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What will happen at the wildlife trafficking event?

[U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell](#) will host several African presidents, U.S. government representatives, nongovernmental organization leaders and Washington Fellows in a conversation on combating wildlife trafficking.

During the event, African presidents are anticipated to share best practices and ways forward on countering the wildlife trafficking threat and inspiring youth to safeguard their natural heritage.

Why is this issue important to young African leaders?

Wildlife trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal enterprise. It threatens not only conservation efforts but also security and livelihoods.

From turtles to lions, countless species have been poached to the brink of extinction. More than 60 African elephants were slaughtered every day in 2012 to supply the illegal ivory trade. And in 2013, a record 1,004 rhinos across South Africa were poached for their keratin horns.

In addition to this environmental destruction, wildlife trafficking also undermines the rule of law, fuels corruption, jeopardizes economic development and contributes to the spread of disease. The

consequences are particularly devastating for African countries on the front lines of the poaching crisis, with increasingly well-armed poaching syndicates posing a significant challenge for African militaries, police forces, park rangers and community scouts.

The U.S. National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking outlines three ways the United States will work to combat wildlife trafficking: 1.) strengthening domestic and global enforcement; 2.) reducing global demand; and 3.) building international cooperation and partnerships.

Photo credit: Images of Africa Photobank/Alamy

“What was the outcome of the Combatting Wildlife Trafficking Signature Event at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit?”

During the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit’s “Dialogue on Combating Wildlife Trafficking” Signature Event, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell led a panel discussion of African heads of state (President Kikwete of Tanzania; President Pohamba of Namibia; President Ondimba of Gabon; President Gnassingbé of Togo) about the impacts of wildlife trafficking in their countries. Council on Foreign Relations President Richard Haass moderated a dialogue with the heads of state, who shared their ideas for what was needed to protect their wildlife. Best practices and next steps to address the trafficking of elephants, rhinoceroses and other endangered species include mobilizing youth, involving the community, seeking out innovative technology solutions, and working with governments in a multilateral effort. In 2014, the United States will invest more than \$60 million to combat wildlife trafficking, expand its efforts to reduce demand, strengthen law enforcement, and foster international cooperation.

IMF Chief Christine Lagarde on Leadership and Crisis Management

The following are excerpts of an interview by Lillian Cunningham published July 13 in the Washington Post.

Question: How do you define leadership?

Answer: To me, leadership is about encouraging people. It’s about stimulating them. It’s about enabling them to achieve what they can achieve — and to do that with a purpose.

Others would call it a “vision” but I’d rather use “purpose” because I think that everybody has a purpose in life and that when collectively people work together or practice sport together, they have a joint purpose.

Q: How have you transitioned between managing short-term and long-term challenges?

A: On dealing with [an IMF internal crisis and an external crisis when I arrived], it was a question of

making sure that everybody was on deck, prepared to deal with the issues and completely motivated by the mission of the fund — which is to make sure that we put all our expertise, our money, our technical assistance and our ability to advise together to fight the crisis and to procure some stability.

I have a theory that women are generally given space and appointed to jobs when the situation is tough. I've observed that in many instances. In times of crisis women eventually are called upon to sort out the mess, face the difficult issues and be completely focused on restoring the situation.

Q: Have you learned anything about your own leadership skills or weaknesses from leading during a time of crisis?

A: I learned that you can constantly improve and that you should not be shy about your views and about the direction that you believe is right.

I also learn constantly about how much people can achieve, how much they can give, how much they can go beyond themselves, step out of their comfort zone and give a lot more than they ever thought they would or that you ever expected them to do.

And it's a constant process to learn how much you should step in after having listened and how much the team you work with can exceed your expectations.

Q: Words that constantly come up in describing you are "charismatic," "presence," "ability to command a room." Do you have any advice on how to cultivate those traits?

A: It's a question of feeling confident about yourself — being reconciled with your own identity and your own body. ... The second step is about being honest and telling the truth.

Q: What's the best piece of leadership advice anyone's given you?

A: There's one encouragement that I was given once by my American father in the family I stayed with when I was 17. Whenever I had tough times he would say: "Don't let the [negative people] get you." [That means] Hang on with the work that you are doing and just don't give up.

Stand up.

Photo credit: AP Images

Crowdfunding Fuels Big Change

In 2010, a few friends got together in New York to create an online vehicle to raise money for their art projects. Their idea was that anyone could use the Internet to tell folks about their projects and invite people to fund those projects. In exchange, the donor would receive a good or service.

The result is [RocketHub](#), one of the world's top crowdfunding platforms. Since its creation, the RocketHub community has enabled more than 10,000 artists, scientists and entrepreneurs to raise millions of dollars in support of their creative projects and products.

"We are seeing major growth in entrepreneurship ... folks leveraging crowdfunding for business endeavors around the world. We are also seeing a lot of growth in social activities, programs and projects that individuals have developed to cause change in the world," said co-founder Jed Cohen, RocketHub's chief operating officer.

"We love to liberate ideas," said Brian Meece, another RocketHub co-founder. He said crowdfunding "harnesses communities and networks for funds, awareness and feedback. All are important to entrepreneurs."

RocketHub suggests that people looking for project funding begin by developing a story. "Tell us why this is important to you how what you are up to is going to change the world and your community. That goes a long way toward changing prospective contributors' emotional states. They are much more likely to open their wallets," Cohen said.

The next step is to develop a network of potential funders, starting with friends and family. "Those friends and family need to grow into friends of friends. ... It becomes RocketHub's responsibility to facilitate the expansion of your campaign beyond your immediate connections," Cohen said.

According to the RocketHub website, people turn to crowdfunding for different reasons. "Some people use it for straight fundraising for their project. Others use it for raising money, but focus more on getting people excited about their idea."

"It is a new take on an old idea. In ages past, art, research and inventions were often funded by patrons. The difference with crowdfunding is that you get smaller amounts from many patrons ... via the Internet.

"Modern social networking makes reaching out simple and virtually free," RocketHub says.

Cohen advises project originators to make a video of two minutes or less that tells the story of the project and to have a specific funding goal.

According to its website, RocketHub charges no upfront costs to post a project and only begins to charge a commission and credit card-processing fee as funding comes in.

RocketHub co-founder Alon Hillel-Tuch said, "Crowdfunding democratizes not only access to capital, it democratizes participation."

Photo credit: Marc Veraart

Meet the Fellows: Regina Agyare

Ghana, Business and Entrepreneurship, Dartmouth College

Regina Agyare is a software developer with eight years' work experience and a social entrepreneur with a passion for using technology to drive social change. She started a social enterprise called Soronko Solutions that uses basic mass technology to drive human potential and solve social problems.

Regina is currently helping small- and medium-scale enterprises in Ghana create visibility and grow their business with technology. She is also working on a program that will develop the next generation of innovators and problem solvers from the rural communities in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Ghana and across sub-Saharan Africa.

Regina is also working on how the disabled in Ghana can use technology to integrate better into their communities. Her story was featured in Lean In for Graduates by Sheryl Sandberg and Impatient Optimist by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. CNN featured her Tech Needs Girls Ghana project, which helps girls to code and create technology. Regina graduated from Ashesi University with a Bachelor of Science in computer science.

Upon completion of the Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, she intends to use the education, experience and network to continue with her work of using technology to drive social change and scale her social enterprise.

Photo credit: Regina Agyare

Meet the Fellows: Sekou Amadou Cissoko

Guinea, Business and Entrepreneurship, University of Notre Dame

Amadou "Chico" Cissoko is the founder of Making Africa a Continent of Innovators (MACI) and director of the Dare to Innovate movement. He is an expert in human development, agrotourism and agricultural marketing.

He has served as the director of marketing and commercialization for the integrated farm Fabik, the leading commercial farm in Guinea. Amadou is also founder of the first agrotourist site in Guinea, called the Vathaba.

After completing the Washington Fellowship, he plans to collaborate with the YALI Network to initiate a mass innovation initiative in Africa with a vision to create a culture and environment that fosters innovation, entrepreneurship and excellence in African societies, thus making every African an everyday innovator.

Photo credit: Sekou Amadou Cissoko

Meet the Fellows: Muluh Hilda Bih

Cameroon, Civic Leadership, University of California - Berkeley

Muluh Hilda Bih is a journalist with eight years of experience working with Cameroon's national radio and television service. In this capacity, she uses her voice and personal experience as a disabled person to champion the cause of women and persons with disabilities.

She also mentors young girls through the ESTHER Project, an initiative that she founded, by speaking at schools, churches and conferences throughout Cameroon.

Hilda holds a Bachelor of Science in journalism and mass communications from the University of Buea. Upon completion of the Washington Fellowship, she plans to use the knowledge acquired to empower other young women and disabled persons through workshops and seminars and continue to use mass media more efficiently to effect change in Cameroon.

Photo credit: Muluh Hilda Bih

Meet the Fellows: Danbala Garba

Nigeria, Public Management, Florida International University

Danbala Garba is a lawyer and human rights officer with over five years of experience working to promote the rights of prisoners in Nigeria. He provides lectures and training for staff at Nigerian prisons regarding the fair treatment of prisoners and also provides support and assistance to prison inmates on their rights.

Upon completion of the Washington Fellowship, Danbala plans to expand his awareness campaign to prisons throughout Nigeria and beyond by liaising with the prison authority at the highest level and continuing to assist prisoners in protecting their inalienable rights by helping them seek legal redress in cases of rights violations.

Photo credit: Danbala Garba

Meet the Fellows: Selma Margarida Fortes Neves

Cabo Verde, Business and Entrepreneurship, Dartmouth College

Selma Margarida Fortes Neves has over four years of experience working in community development and gender issues. She is currently the president of the Cooperative Women of Sal, an integrated project that provides training and empowerment for women heads of single-parent families. The project develops sustainable social projects that help create jobs for disadvantaged people in the community.

Selma previously worked for the City Hall of Sal island. She is also a member of several associations, including RA-AMAO, focusing on empowering African women, and ADAD, working on the environmental protection of Cabo Verde. Selma has a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in food science from the State University of Ceara.

Upon completing the Washington Fellowship program, Selma plans to continue working and expanding her cooperative projects.

Photo credit: Selma Margarida Fortes Neves
