

Press release: Foreign Secretary welcomes more than £64 million of British funding for Kenyan industry

- £52 million of UK funding has been raised for solar power plant, creating up to 250 jobs in Kenya
- £11 million investment by British business De La Rue to produce high-tech identity cards, tax stamps, and currency
- £1.4 million package of support for creative industries in Kenya and Nigeria

The Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt has today welcomed over £64 million of funding for Kenyan businesses on the final day of his week-long visit to Africa.

This included a new agreement which will see British business De La Rue invest £11 million to boost its production in Kenya of identity cards, tax stamps and currency, creating new high-skilled jobs locally.

He also welcomed the announcement that £52 million of UK investment has been raised for a solar power plant, with construction expected to start soon and power to come online in 2020. This innovative project, run by British-headquartered power company, Globeleq, and funded by CDC, the UK's development finance institution, will bring clean power to the Malindi region in South East Kenya, which currently struggles with regular power shortages and relies largely on expensive thermal plants. This is set to transform the local economy, with up to 250 direct jobs being created and a further 5,600 jobs in the wider economy supported thanks to the availability of power.

Finally, the Foreign Secretary announced an additional £1.4 million package of support targeted at the creative industries in Kenya and Nigeria. The Creative Enterprise programme will help 540 entrepreneurs from across the two countries access training and support in the UK.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

I have seen for myself the incredible opportunities opening up between the UK and Kenya and the close partnership which already exists between our countries. It is great to see British investment creating jobs, prosperity and growth in Kenya and across the continent.

These announcements came as Jeremy Hunt took part in a 'Dragon's Den' style event today in Nairobi, to help find Kenya's next budding entrepreneur.

As part of a UK aid funded programme 10 shortlisted candidates pitched to the Foreign Secretary and a panel of entrepreneurs and innovators for the chance

to access up to £100,000 each in grant funding and technical assistance to help them scale up.

The winners of the pitching event were Ten Senses Africa, TakaTaka Solutions, Lynk Jobs Limited, Savanna Circuit and Build Her.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

As a former entrepreneur myself, I have been inspired by the dynamic and talented businessmen and women I have met in Kenya, and look forward to seeing their fantastic companies become the household names of the future.

The pitching event was the first of its kind under the new Kenya Catalytic Jobs Fund, a £5 million UK aid funded programme, announced during the Prime Minister's visit last year. The Jobs Fund, which is being implemented by MercyCorp, supports tried and tested business ideas, helping them scale up to stimulate large-scale job creation in Kenya.

De La Rue's Regional Director for Africa, Matt West said:

This innovative Joint Venture with the Government of Kenya, which builds on De La Rue's already long and productive business relationships here, expands the opportunities for highly skilled jobs for Kenyans and opens up the prospect of new business in the region, which will add yet more value to this highly productive partnership.

Moses Anibaba, the British Council's Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, said:

This is an exciting and highly anticipated launch by the Foreign Secretary of a proven creative enterprise support model, that we piloted in Lagos, Nigeria and are now expanding in Nigeria and Kenya.

The programme presents a unique opportunity for young entrepreneurs in the UK and Africa to connect, create jobs and build enterprises in what is a fast-growing industry and one that is a sector of competitive advantage, in both countries.

I am convinced that through the programme, the partnership between the Creative economies of the UK and Africa will be strengthened, enhancing creative expression and prosperity.

Successful candidates of this first pitching event will receive a £100,000 grant and technical assistance to scale their businesses and create jobs. The Kenya Catalytic Jobs Fund is being implemented by MercyCorp.

Creative Enterprise is a £1.4 million UK commitment to extending support for employability and enterprise in the creative industries sector in Kenya and Nigeria with the British Council.

- the 2018 to 2019 pilot in Lagos is being replicated in Nairobi this year and expanded in Nigeria to Abuja, Kano and Owerri
- in the Lagos pilot, UK-delivery partners Henley Business School and Fashion Foundry worked with 108 entrepreneurs on an 11-week intensive course, 40 creative hub managers were trained and 1.8 million people were reached online through the project website and social media.
- the expansion will allow 540 young entrepreneurs across 5 cities to attend the intensive courses and 60 hub managers to visit the UK.

Further information