



African Institute for Supply Chain Research

Connecting Research, Education & Practice

WEBINAR SUMMARY REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT OF A PAN AFRICAN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT FEDERATION

November 18, 2024



**Marcus Ambe, President of AISCR &
Professor at Jackson State University**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The webinar brought together supply chain professionals, policymakers, academics, and industry leaders to discuss the establishment of a Pan-African Supply Chain Management Federation. This initiative stems from a resolution adopted at the 1st AISCR Pan-African Supply Chain Management Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, aimed at professionalizing supply chain practices across Africa. The webinar emphasized the potential of supply chain management to drive socio-economic development and align with Africa Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key presentations outlined strategies for professionalizing the sector, addressing regulatory disparities, creating a standardized certification framework, supporting SMEs, and developing a sustainable funding model. The session concluded with actionable next steps to establish the Federation and foster a unified approach to supply chain management on the continent.



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INTRODUCTION

The webinar held on November 14, 2024, focused on deliberating the formation of a Pan-African Supply Chain Federation. Building on discussions from the 1st AISCR Pan-African Supply Chain Management Conference 2024, organized by AISCR in collaboration with the University of Nairobi (UoN) and the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management (KISM), the event addressed critical sector challenges, including regulatory disparities, workforce development gaps, and funding limitations. It also presented actionable solutions to advance the field. Distinguished speakers provided strategic insights to promote the professionalization of supply chain practices, enhance economic resilience, and align with Africa Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Federation's establishment is envisioned as a transformative initiative to harmonize standards, resolve logistical bottlenecks, and elevate professional practices, ultimately driving Africa's economic growth. The Federation aims to create a robust platform that integrates diverse stakeholders, such as government agencies, SMEs, and educational institutions, fostering collaboration and innovation. Among 900 registered participants, the webinar achieved a 30% turnout, with over 300 attendees actively contributing to the discussions. Moderated by Prof. Marcus Ambe, President of AISCR and a leading advocate for supply chain development, the webinar underscored the importance of collective action in addressing systemic inefficiencies. Prof. Ambe highlighted the Federation's pivotal role in uniting efforts across the continent and acknowledged the significant contributions of institutions such as the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management (KISM) and the Ghana Institute of Procurement and Supply. These contributions form a strong foundation for the Federation to effectively lead Africa's supply chain evolution.

PARTICIPANTS AND SPEAKERS

The webinar featured distinguished speakers who provided valuable insights into advancing Africa's supply chain sector.

- Prof. Marcus Ambe, President of AISCR and a professor at Jackson State University, moderated the event and set the tone by emphasizing the importance of collaboration to tackle the continent's supply chain challenges.
- John Karani, Chairman of the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management, presented Kenya's regulatory model as a potential framework for other African nations, showcasing its applicability and success.
- Hon. Dagmawit Moges, former Transport and Logistics Minister of Ethiopia, discussed innovative financing mechanisms to support the establishment and sustainability of the Pan-African Supply Chain Federation.
- Ronald MLalalazi, Managing Director of Commerce Edge, stressed the critical role of workforce development in ensuring the sector's long-term growth and effectiveness.
- Simon Anan, President of the Ghana Institute of Procurement and Supply, provided a detailed roadmap for implementing the Federation, outlining practical steps to translate vision into reality.

The speakers underscored the shared commitment to building a resilient, ethical, and inclusive supply chain ecosystem across Africa.

PRESENTATIONS

Speaker 1: John Karani, Chairman, Kenyan Institute of Supplies Management

John Karani, in his presentation focused on the foundational strategy and vision of the federation. He delivered a compelling overview of Kenya's supply chain governance framework, highlighting its progression from being a function regulated under the Treasury to becoming an independent discipline governed by the Supplies Practitioners Management Act of 2007. This legislative milestone underscored the importance of establishing supply chain management as a structured profession, akin to traditional fields like law and engineering.

Karani emphasized the critical need for professionalization within the supply chain sector across Africa. He proposed the creation of a Pan-African certification body inspired by the KISM certification model to standardize qualifications and elevate the profession's credibility continent-wide. Despite these ambitions, challenges persist, including regulatory inconsistencies across countries, limited acknowledgement of the supply chain profession, and insufficient training programs.

Karani advocated leveraging Africa's vast continental advantages to address these issues to accelerate professionalization efforts. He called for initiatives that encourage personal professional development while reinforcing institutional frameworks, ensuring that Africa's supply chain management systems achieve global competitiveness and contribute significantly to the continent's development.

Speaker 2: Dagmawit Moges, Former Transport and Logistics Minister of Ethiopia

Dagmawit Moges highlighted possible financing and investment models. She critical strategies for fostering the sustainability and growth of the Federation's operations and developmental initiatives. She emphasized the importance of **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** as a mechanism to pool resources effectively, enabling the Federation to address its operational and strategic needs collaboratively. This approach underscores the potential of partnerships in bridging funding gaps and advancing developmental objectives.

In terms of **development financing**, Moges stressed the necessity of engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including multilateral institutions, the African Union, member states, and other influential bodies, to secure adequate funding. Aligning the Federation's goals with **global development frameworks**, such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was identified as a strategic move to attract international support and funding. To diversify revenue streams, Moges proposed introducing measures such as **membership fees**, sponsorship arrangements, and specialized **training programs**, which could provide sustainable funding avenues. These initiatives aim to ensure the Federation's financial independence while fostering professional growth and capacity building within the sector.

Speaker 3: Ronald Mlalalazi, Managing Director, Commerce Edge

Ronald Mlalalazi focused on workforce development and capacity building. He emphasized the transformative role of **skills development** in advancing supply chain management as a driver of economic growth across Africa. He advocated for building a skilled workforce by collaborating with educational institutions to develop standardized supply chain curricula tailored for African universities. This alignment would ensure that graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of the evolving sector.

Recognizing the importance of **youth inclusion**, Mlalalazi called for efforts to inspire young professionals to explore careers in supply chain management. He suggested mentorship programs and awareness campaigns as effective tools to attract and guide the next generation of talent into the field. A central recommendation was the creation of a **standardized competency framework** to ensure uniformity in training and skill levels across the continent. Such a framework would foster consistency in professional development and align skill requirements with the industry's needs.

Mlalalazi also acknowledged the challenges hindering progress, including limited access to training resources, a lack of harmonization in skill standards, and inadequate workforce mobility. Addressing these barriers is critical to unlocking the full potential of supply chain management as a key contributor to Africa's economic growth and development.

Speaker 4: Simon Anan, President, Ghana Institute of Procurement and Supply

Simon Anan presented on the roadmap for implementation. He emphasized the importance of **stakeholder engagement** in advancing the Federation's goals, advocating for partnerships with governments, professional institutions, and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Such collaborations would ensure inclusivity and garner widespread support for initiatives aimed at strengthening the procurement profession across Africa.

He highlighted the need to align the Federation's **strategic objectives** with Africa's broader development agenda, including economic integration and trade facilitation under the **African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)**. This alignment would position the Federation as a critical enabler of continental growth and cooperation.

To guide the Federation's establishment, Anan outlined a **seven-step road map** featuring milestones, timelines, and responsibilities for stakeholders. The proposed steps include building partnerships, establishing standards and certification processes, promoting mentorship and stakeholder engagement, creating an operational plan and securing funding, developing marketing and communication strategies, implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and planning for future development.

Additionally, Anan emphasized the importance of **education and training**, advocating for collaborations with universities and technical institutions to develop standardized certifications. These initiatives would not only enhance professional competency but also facilitate **cross-border talent mobility**, ensuring that the workforce meets the demands of an integrated African market.

DISCUSSIONS AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

The discussions emphasized several critical next steps to strengthen the supply chain ecosystem in Africa. Key actions include forming a working group to engage stakeholders, aligning local regulations with ASCA standards, and establishing ethical guidelines. Speakers underscored the need to integrate educational curricula that include small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and develop a Pan-African certification framework. Financing strategies, such as public-private partnerships and leveraging trade agreements, were also explored. Deliverables identified during the discussions include drafting a comprehensive roadmap, securing sustainable funding, and fostering professional networking alongside continuous development.

Challenges and solutions were addressed in detail. Regarding regulatory disparities, the lack of uniformity in supply chain regulations across African nations was identified as a key issue. Advocating for policy reforms to align national regulations was proposed as a solution. For ethical practices and corruption, corruption was recognized as a threat to the credibility of the supply chain profession. Establishing a robust code of ethics and promoting transparency were suggested as countermeasures. In terms of SME inclusion, resource constraints often limit SMEs' participation in formal supply chain networks. To address this, capacity-building programs, preferential policies, and funding support were recommended. The challenge of funding sustainability highlighted the Federation's over-reliance on voluntary contributions, which restricts growth. A sustainable funding model encompassing membership fees, sponsorships, and grants was proposed as a solution. Lastly, workforce mobility faced barriers due to varying skills and certifications across nations. Standardizing training programs and certifications was suggested to facilitate seamless workforce movement across borders.

These discussions provide a structured pathway to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities for a robust, ethical, and inclusive supply chain ecosystem in Africa.

THE WAY FORWARD

The formation of a working group will mark a pivotal step in advancing the Federation's goals. This committee will engage stakeholders, coordinate initiatives, and develop a strategic plan to address key priorities such as funding, policy advocacy, and stakeholder engagement. A strong emphasis will be placed on standardization and certification through the operationalization of a Pan-African certification body. This entity will ensure consistent skill levels and professional standards across the continent. Collaborations with educational institutions will further support this goal by integrating supply chain management into university curricula.

To foster inclusivity, an inclusive membership strategy will target diverse sectors, including SMEs, NGOs, and the informal sector, creating a comprehensive and representative Federation. A compelling membership value proposition will be developed to enhance engagement and retention across these groups. Additionally, the promotion of ethical standards will serve as a cornerstone of the Federation's efforts. Training programs and enforceable codes of conduct will reinforce professional integrity, while empowering supply chain professionals to advocate for ethical practices and highlight the sector's critical role in economic development. These initiatives collectively aim to strengthen the supply chain profession and its contribution to the continent's growth.

CONCLUSION

The webinar underscored the urgent need for a Pan-African Supply Chain Federation as a cornerstone for professionalizing the sector and bolstering economic resilience across the continent. By addressing key challenges such as regulatory disparities, workforce development gaps, and funding constraints, the Federation holds the promise of transforming Africa's supply chain landscape. Anchored in collaboration, innovation, and ethical practices, the Federation can drive sustainable growth, empower supply chain professionals, and align its objectives with Africa Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants were encouraged to stay actively engaged with the initiative, contributing through feedback, professional advocacy, and active participation.

The discussions highlighted the importance of ethical conduct, SME inclusion, and standardized educational curricula as vital components for advancing supply chain management in Africa. To translate these priorities into actionable steps, immediate actions were outlined. A working group will be formed to draft strategic documents and explore potential funding avenues. Broader stakeholder consultations will be conducted, engaging government agencies, SMEs, and educational institutions to refine and support the Federation's objectives. Finally, an actionable progress report will be presented at the next Pan-African Supply Chain Conference, providing a comprehensive update on the initiative's development and ensuring continued momentum.



ABOUT AISCR

AISCR is a premier non-profit and independent research institute with 501(c)(3) status, registered in the State of Texas, USA. Our mission is to advance supply chain management professionalisation and disseminate knowledge that fosters inclusive growth and sustainable economic development. Through rigorous research, publications, comprehensive education, and impactful outreach initiatives, we empower individuals, organizations, and communities to navigate and optimize supply chains effectively for Africa and beyond.