

# Business pivotal to dealing with social inequalities in Africa

Business leadership is needed to ensure that the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality are addressed on the continent, said Seema Sardha, director of export promotions at the South Africa Department of Trade and Industry (the dti), during a West African investment seminar.



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Sardha was speaking during an investment seminar which was part of the week-long trade and investment mission to the West African countries, Ghana and Nigeria, taking place currently from 20-25 March 2017.

According to Sardha, increasing trade on the continent and fostering partnerships with African partners is important and can lead to poverty alleviation, increased trade flows, industrial development and subsequent creation of more jobs which is key to the economic development of Africa.

She added that both sides needed to focus on the creation of regional value-chains, manufacturing hubs and centres of excellence that Africa currently lacks and which impede the continent's competitiveness as we seek to integrate into global trade flows.

Sardha noted that South Africa remains resolute in its commitment towards the implementation of Africa Agenda 2063 and the Southern African Development Community's Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap.

She added that SA was committed to support for the Tripartite Free Trade Area and Continental Free Trade Area which will provide optimal yields in terms of advancing growth on the continent.

“Currently intra-Africa trade stands at a mere 12% compared with about 40% in North America and about 60% in Western Europe.

“However, we believe that the continental free trade area will expand intra-African trade which will enable the promotion of collaboration between the regional economic communities and the facilitation of joint resource mobilisation and project implementation which is key towards unlocking the structural deficiencies on the continent,” said Sardha.

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