



## Unilever commits to the ICF

**Unilever has announced a \$1million commitment over two years to the Investment Climate Facility (ICF).**

### Promoting sustainable growth

The company brings over 100 years' history of doing responsible business in Africa, and we strongly believe that this joint venture between public and private sector is an important commitment to promoting sustainable growth and improving livelihoods more widely.

The ICF is a public-private fund aimed at creating a more attractive business environment in Africa. It currently has funding of some \$100mn with the major backing coming from the UK's DFID and the World Bank. Unilever has pledged \$1mn over two years as a sign of our commitment to Africa and to helping African countries realise their economic potential. We are now looking to develop practical projects that will build their capacity as a trading partner both with the outside world and within their own regions.

Harish Manwani, president of Unilever's Asia and Africa business, said: "I am confident that Unilever's business experience throughout the developing world will contribute to making the ICF an effective results-driven organisation. Across our operations in Africa - manufacturing in 18 countries, employing 40,000 people directly and 150,000 indirectly - we have a wide range of technical expertise and management capability which we can bring to the partnership."

He added: "We believe that employability is as important as employment. Business creates jobs, direct and indirect, and builds human capabilities. We want to work with the ICF to lift the constraints that currently exist for business in terms of bureaucracy, capacity, finance and good business planning. Our experience of working collaboratively with government, UN agencies, NGOs and local communities should also add value."

### Helping to drive integration

Unilever believes that the business case and the development case fit. For example, it sees particular benefit both to Unilever and to Africa in supporting the drive towards more integrated regional markets and more efficient movement of goods through customs and across borders. More reliable infrastructure is key to this. So is accountability and good governance.

Manwani concluded: "The ICF has to be a collective effort. African political leaders and donor governments have committed their support. Business can bring a sharper focus to this process, including rigorous output measurement, a specific actionable agenda and effective implementation."

