



Press Release

Paris, Thursday March 8, 2021

**Graduation Ceremony for the First Pan-African Program 100% Dedicated to  
Developing *Responsible* Leaders in Africa:  
*Lead Campus - Sustainable Leadership in Africa***

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**On February 11, the 19 participants of the first phase of the Lead Campus - Sustainable leadership in Africa program, validated their certificate after one year of training and the presentation of a responsible action project.**

Lead Campus Sustainable Leadership in Africa is the result of a co-construction between the French Development Agency (AFD), and HEC Paris, with the Faculty of Economics - Mohammed VI Polytechnic University and the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business, to promote the teaching of responsible leadership and strengthen the links between Africa and Europe.

**Taking into account the regional particularities of the African continent, this bilingual and certifying training, anchored in a sustainable and responsible growth entrepreneurship, intends to contribute to the transformation of the economy and the job market in Africa.**

This year, the program has adapted to the upheavals caused by the crisis related to Covid-19 by offering participants a hybrid format, including face-to-face and distance learning courses.

The training is divided into five modules co-delivered with partners in Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa, Kenya and France.

Participants from all over Africa participated in courses given by professors and experts from partner universities and the AFD, around themes such as corporate strategy and new socially responsible business models, finance, leadership, entrepreneurship and the digital revolution. Thematic conferences on the continent's major challenges (water management or carbon footprint), major geopolitical or macroeconomic issues, and numerous field trips to companies, provided a focus that was 100% adapted to the continent's needs and specificities. The field experience - a key element of the training - benefited from the expertise of local players, HEC Paris alumni and Young Leaders from the French Tech Foundation.

The culmination of the training, the individual project, allowed each participant, accompanied by their mentor, to put into practice what was learned during the training, while developing and growing his or her project, as a common thread throughout the program.

Each one supported the results of their work before the members of the jury, made up of representatives from each institution.

The closing ceremony of this pioneering program took place in the presence of Thomas Mélonio, Executive Director of Innovation, Research and Knowledge - the French Development Agency (AFD), Anne-Valérie Corboz, Associate Dean - HEC Executive Education, Karim El Aynaoui, Dean of the Faculty of Economics - Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Kumeshnee West, Executive Education Director, Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town and Jeremy Hajdenberg, Deputy Managing Director, Investment & Partners (I&P) investment fund.

*"I will remain marked for life by this rich experience which on all levels has fulfilled my desire to evolve. Faced with the difficulties encountered by my company, I thought I had reached my limits. Today, the Lead Campus program has awakened in me all the sensitivity and open-mindedness that are essential to the full realization of my potential,"* said Madinatou Bouraima Assouan, who has worked in Fashion Retail for 22 years.

For Bénédicte Faivre Tavignot and Christelle Bitouzet, scientific directors of Lead Campus: *"The future leaders trained by Lead Campus are all committed to creating the Africa of tomorrow, driven by more sustainable and inclusive growth. We are certain that the spirit of adventure - the ability to innovate and transform - and the societal commitment will endure through their projects and will take concrete and real root in their respective ecosystems, sources of growth and productive change in Africa and for Africa."*

A first version of the Lead Campus training program was launched in 2015 by AFD with African and French partners. It enabled the training of more than 80 African leaders and future leaders, to bring them together in a community, to support them in the development of their skills and their projects in the service of sustainable and inclusive growth for Africa. HEC Paris and the AFD Group have since joined forces to offer this new edition of the Lead Campus program, entitled "Sustainable Leadership in Africa," which has just been successfully completed.

### **About HEC Paris**

Specialized in management research and teaching, HEC Paris offers a unique and comprehensive range of training programs for tomorrow's decision-makers: the Grande Ecole program, the Specialized Masters, the MSc, the Summer School, the MBA, the Executive MBA, TRIUM Global Executive MBA, the PhD, as well as a wide range of programs for executives and managers. Founded in 1881 by the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry, HEC Paris brings together 140 permanent professors, more than 4,500 students and 8,000 executives and managers in training each year.

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