



FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

Africa Kaizen Annual Conference (AKAC 2026)

Sustainable Kaizen for a Competitive and Prosperous Africa

26 – 27 October 2026 • The Ravenala Attitude Hotel • Republic of Mauritius

The Republic of Mauritius will host the Africa Kaizen Annual Conference (AKAC) in October 2026 under the framework of the Africa Kaizen Initiative (AKI), a joint platform of the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

With **Sustainable Kaizen** as the conference theme, AKAC 2026 projects itself as a strategic driver of productivity, resilience and green transformation in Africa. The Conference is an important step toward a continent-wide approach that connects ongoing productivity improvements with sustainable environmental practices, social inclusion and long-term economic resilience.

BACKGROUND

Since its launch in 2017, the AKI has built the capacity of productivity organisations, supported enterprise-level Kaizen implementation, and promoted peer learning across Africa through AKAC and the Africa Kaizen Award (AKA). In this way, promoting and embracing Kaizen/Quality and Productivity Improvement (QPI) at all levels of local industries and institutions including public entities, contributes to advances in Africa's industrial and service delivery goals and the continent's economic growth and development ambitions as articulated in Agenda 2063.

The member institutions of the Pan African Productivity Association (PAPA) have participated in AKAC since 2019. Taking collaboration to a higher level, PAPA is co-organising AKAC 2026 with AUDA-NEPAD, JICA, and the Mauritian government. Today, the initiative engages 17 countries and 24 Kaizen promoting institutions/units/NPOs, with continued expansion underway.

Africa stands at a pivotal moment. Industrialisation and economic transformation must now address

climate change, global sustainability standards, supply chain vulnerabilities and the need for inclusive growth. Productivity growth can no longer focus solely on efficiency; it must also safeguard natural resources, promote decent work and strengthen resilience to shocks.

In this context, **Sustainable Kaizen**, which builds on the core Kaizen principles of continuous improvement and respect for people, is both opportune and visionary. When fully applied, Kaizen naturally supports:

- Waste reduction and resource efficiency (environmental sustainability);
- Respect for people, participation and safe workplaces (social sustainability);
- Continuous learning and adaptability (economic resilience).

Sustainable Kaizen therefore deepens Kaizen's original philosophy by explicitly linking productivity improvement to green growth, human-centered development and future-ready enterprises.

Mauritius, as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) and an early adopter of Kaizen (back in 2001), provides a suitable setting for AKAC 2026. The country's experience demonstrates how productivity improvement, institutional reforms and sustainability can be mutually reinforcing.

THEME OF AKAC 2026

Sustainable Kaizen for a Competitive and Prosperous Africa

Sub-theme: Advancing productivity and quality for resilient, inclusive and green growth

AKAC 2026 will also be an opportunity to mark the tenth anniversary of the AKI. The Conference will be built around a large-scale awareness and outreach initiative aimed at highlighting AKI's journey and achievements, while paving the way for a new and ambitious phase of its development.

THE CONFERENCE

AKAC 2026 will expand Kaizen beyond an enterprise tool to a shared mindset that supports:

- Competitive and climate-resilient Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises (MSMEs);
- Strong productivity and quality institutions;
- Improved public sector performance;
- Policy leadership embedding continuous improvement into national and regional systems.

The Conference will highlight practical experiences, evidence-based insights and innovative approaches including Kaizen 4.0, integrating continuous improvement with digital and Industry 4.0 technologies.

OBJECTIVES

AKAC 2026 aims to:

- Reposition Kaizen as a driver of sustainable development in Africa;
- Showcase best practices in Sustainable Kaizen;

- Promote human-centered productivity, including skills, decent work, safety and wellbeing;
- Strengthen regional cooperation under the Africa Kaizen Initiative;
- Contribute to Africa’s resilient, inclusive and green growth trajectory.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

- National productivity and quality institutions;
- Kaizen and Business Development Service (BDS) practitioners;
- Ministries and public institutions;
- AKA Winners;
- Private sector leaders, academia and development partners.

CONFERENCE DETAILS

Dates: 26 – 27 October 2026

Venue: The Ravenala Attitude Hotel, Mauritius

Format: Hybrid

Additional Notes

- Capacity Enhancement Programme for AKI members will be held on 28 – 29 October 2026 (onsite).

The second announcement will be circulated by **June 2026**.

IMPLEMENTING STRUCTURE

Host Country	Republic of Mauritius
Co-Organisers	AUDA-NEPAD, PAPA, JICA
Supporting Organisations	Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives, and NPCC (National Productivity and Competitiveness Council Mauritius)
Lead Sponsor	Mauritius Telecom

FOR INQUIRIES

Please direct all inquiries to: akac@jpc-net.jp

— End of First Announcement —