



Africa Capacity BULLETIN

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In this issue: ACBF proves to be a valuable partner to Australia's AACES program | Building Capacity for the successful implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 | ACBF to enter into partnership with PEP | Think tanks relevant to Africa's future | African countries pledge their continued support to ACBF | Events



From the Executive Secretary

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the eighth edition of Africa Capacity. The Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) continues to drum the relevance of Africans making the continent "The Africa We Want". In line with the African Union Agenda 2063 - "a strategy to optimize use of Africa's resources for the benefits of all Africans", the ACBF remains committed to raise awareness on the importance of capacity for Africa's development and demonstrate its role in supporting the implementation of Agenda 2063. ACBF has been leading two important studies at the behest of the Africa Union Commission, one on the capacity imperatives for Agenda 2063 and the second focusing on risks to the implementation of the continent's development blueprint.

Also significant over March and April was the acknowledgement of the key role played by the Foundation in supporting the successful roll-out of the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES). The scheme is having a positive impact on vulnerable communities across 11 African countries and has been instrumental in giving them access to crucial

community services, such as food security, water and sanitation, and maternal and child health. ACBF is proud to be associated with AACES.

During the 24 years of its work, ACBF has mainly been recognized for its contribution to policy formulation and implementation through its support to think tanks across Africa. As demonstrated in the recent African Think Tanks Summit held on 6-8 April 2015 in Addis Ababa, think tanks confirmed their increasing relevance to Africa and identified the Foundation's support to be critical in helping them to create alternative thinking on Africa's development and in generating policies that really improve the lives of Africans.

The Foundation continues to benefit from the financial support of its multilateral partners as well as from member and non-member African and non-African countries. These contributions have not only contributed to the sustainability of ACBF but also been critical to its successes in carrying out its mandate. Many African member states have positively responded to the Foundation's continued call to meet their financial obligations, showing eagerness to strengthen their ownership and to contribute to capacity development on the continent.

This issue of the bulletin aims at updating you on ACBF's activities over the last two months (March-April 2015). I hope you find it useful and thank you for your continued support.

Enjoy the read!

RESULTS

ACBF proves to be a valuable partner to Australia's AACES program

The African Capacity Building Foundation's (ACBF) support as the Resource Facility Manager to the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) has been pointed as critical to the success of the AACES program. A recent performance assessment by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of ACBF's support to AACES underlined the excellent capacity of the Foundation in steering the program towards achieving its objectives.

The ACBF's role as the 'Resource Facility Manager' has been to provide timely, efficient, and effective logistical, administrative and technical support to AACES. In this respect, ACBF has supported the communication, coordination and management of AACES.

Since 2012 the AACES program has benefited 1,287,888 people. Among those, more than 248,650 people accessed maternal and child health services, above 337,900 have experienced improved agricultural productivity while 638,210 now have access to water, sanitation and hygiene services. The program focuses on marginalized communities, with particular attention to women, children, people with disability and people vulnerable to disaster. It is being implemented in the following countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The ACBF has helped develop mutual trust with AACES partners, enabling effective communication and collaboration among the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) under this program. The culture of collaboration, now entrenched in AACES, is a key element of an effective program delivering real results. ACBF conducted two Partnership Surveys that recognized partnership as being an essential component of AACES. The surveys identified areas where partners wanted to see improvements. For example, the 2013 Partnership Survey results indicated that African NGOs wanted greater support for leadership and strategy

development. Following this, staff from NGOs were encouraged and supported to take on leadership roles in the AACES Program Steering Committee and other forums. The Foundation has managed and supported the diverse relationships within the AACES partnership, resulting in improvements in communication between AACES NGOs and in the overall strengthening of the AACES partnership model. As an illustration, the development and management of Yammer - a shared online communication platform - has facilitated open and regular communication amongst partners.

The ACBF also improved visibility of the AACES work in the past years by producing three high quality AACES Annual Reports, which have been successful in informing and communicating with stakeholders the achievements of the program. The ACBF has also supported the launch and dissemination of the annual report through promotion of targeted media releases, linkage of the report on DFAT, ACBF and NGOs websites. Targeted support has also been provided to AACES NGOs to launch the report in their respective countries. Field visits were organized and the communication capacity of AACES partners through training in photography, writing techniques, and documentation.

In other areas, the ACBF has provided technical input in thematic workshops on AACES priority themes such as disability, sustainability, gender, value for money and monitoring and evaluation. These workshops have provided AACES NGOs with opportunities to learn and share approaches to improve their work. Learning and sharing has also been improved through the common communication platform – Yammer – that supports online communication, sharing of experiences and resource dissemination among AACES partners, and is particularly valued by African partners.

To increase knowledge sharing, the ACBF also opened up its Virtual Library to AACES partners to enable them to access online knowledge resources on capacity development and other development topics.

The ACBF was contracted in January 2012 by the Australian Government to establish and manage a Resource Facility for the AACES program. AACES

is a partnership of the Australian Government, ten Australian NGOs and their Africa-based partners. The 90 million Australian dollar program is funded by the Australian Government through DFAT.

FEATURE

Building Capacity for the successful implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063

Without capacity development, chances are relatively minimal that the African Union Agenda 2063 - a vision focusing on a sustainable transformation of Africa in the next 50 years - will succeed in achieving its goals. The need to reflect on the capacity imperatives of the Agenda 2063 cannot, therefore, be overstated as concluded by African experts at a high level panel discussion organized by ACBF on 26 March 2015 during the 8th AUC/ECA Annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the theme "Capacity Imperatives for the African Union Agenda 2063".

The experts agreed that there was need for a strategic approach that prioritizes areas of capacity challenges that can unlock potential for the implementation of the African Union Agenda. They also agreed on the need for Africa to 'revolutionize' its approach to addressing the capacity gaps in the continent and come up with practical interventions, which are adapted to capacity imperatives and Africa's plans for structural transformation. It was also deemed important that lessons from the past be learned and that a new mindset toward development be cultivated as a result, they said.

"For a long time, African countries have invested time and resources to establish the pre-conditions of development and by doing so, sometimes focused on what was not working rather than what could have been working," said Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie, ACBF's Executive Secretary. "Now we need to find out what is working, start from what is working and build from what is working and see how we can develop despite the daunting challenges Africa faces." The experts also agree that Agenda 2063 will be a success if it is owned and domesticated by Africans and if they work

towards achieving its goals. "There has been a lack of confidence among Africans in their capacity to develop the continent. However, development of Africa through partnerships and a concerted effort can be achieved," said Prof. Nnadozie.

For the continental agenda to be successfully designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated, cross-cutting capacities are needed at the individual, organizational and institutional levels; but also at the local, community, national, regional and continental levels. Other key elements that were agreed to be important to the realization of Agenda 2063 included domestic resource mobilization, the importance of gender equality and youth, knowledge and skills and maintaining a good coordination of efforts by various capacity building institutions across Africa.

PARTNERSHIPS

ACBF to enter into partnership with PEP

ACBF and of Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) in March held a workshop in Harare, Zimbabwe to explore areas for future partnership. PEP is an international organization that links researchers globally to enhance capacity for development policy analysis in developing countries. Its focus includes contributing contextualized policy solutions to socioeconomic development challenges. PEP's research contributes to informing national and international debates related to economic policy, poverty, gender and sustainable development – an area that is also strategic for ACBF.

In his welcoming remarks, ACBF Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie said that PEP's visit to ACBF was timely as Africa's renewed push for development – through the African Union Agenda 2063 – and the upcoming international negotiations around the post-2015 agenda made it imperative for continent-based policy institutions to increase collaboration on areas of mutual interest. "Only true partnerships will contribute to resolve African countries' difficulties. Supporting research is important and so is supporting men and women as well as institutions whose work it is to contribute to policy making," said Prof. Nnadozie.

PEP Executive Director, Dr. Bekele Shiferaw said that his institution had always held ACBF in high esteem and considered the Foundation as a potential partner in the fields of research, capacity building and the facilitation of north-south and south-south collaboration in policy making. "We value partnerships as they help enhance your performance and ability to achieve institutional goals," he said.

Discussions by the two organizations revolved around research, capacity building, knowledge management and communication. Both PEP and ACBF expressed their satisfaction at the outcomes of the meeting and agreed to continue the consultation towards developing and signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING

Think tanks relevant to Africa's future

Africa has over the last years witnessed a rise in the number and quality of think tanks, under ACBF's leadership. These think tanks have played an important role in shaping policies for sustainable development of the continent. However, they should continue to look over the horizon and ground their work on local priorities and realities if they are to remain relevant to the African continent, especially in the context of renewed efforts to speed up the development of continent.

Representatives of 65 think tanks meeting at the Think Tanks Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 6-8 April agreed that their institutions should contribute to creating alternative thinking on Africa's development, policy that improves lives in Africa. Think tanks were encouraged to strengthen their network and work in partnership on the key areas as the implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Post-2015 development agenda. Think tanks were also encouraged to improve and simplify their communication to the media, policy makers and public in general to allow them to better understand where Africa stands and which direction it is, or should be, headed.

The African Capacity Building supports over 30 African think tanks, the majority of which now ranks among Africa's best.

OUR RESOURCES

African countries pledge their continued support to ACBF

ACBF member countries pledged their continued support to the Foundation at a working lunch held for the third Special Meeting of the ACBF Governors, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30 March. Contributions from member countries stood this year at US\$15m, a record in the history of the Foundation, prompting Hon. Christian Magnagna, Gabon's minister of Budget and Chair of the Board of Governors to commend countries for their financial support.

However, he reminded them that extra effort was needed to fully meet commitments made and called on defaulting parties to meet their financial commitments to the Foundation's Strategic Medium Term Plan III (2012 – 2016 "Let's not forget our collective commitment to contribute US\$28.15 million to ACBF's SMTP III. Currently, our contributions represent only 45% of the commitments made," said Hon. Magnagna.

He commended five countries for meeting their commitments in full - Cameroon, Guinea, Senegal, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, as well as the four other countries which are up-to-date with their payment, namely Gabon, Mali, Nigeria and Swaziland. He also said 15 other countries had met their commitments partially. He expressed concerns over the ten other countries which have not made any disbursement yet. These are: Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

In his opening address to the, the Foundation's Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie said that currently the ACBF was in a better situation than it was last year and that it had revitalized its partnership with the World Bank and key pan African organizations – the African Union, the African Development Bank, the

Economic Commission for Africa and the Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). "I have no doubt that our collective commitment to an effective teamwork among the five organizations will lead to a decisive support to Africa's transformation process," Prof. Nnadozie said. "Economic and social transformation of our continent through the successful implementation of our national emergence plans harmonized with the African Union's Agenda 2063, will indeed require a strong teamwork of all pan African institutions, with the aim of keeping capacity at the center of the continent's development process." Prof. Nnadozie added that the Foundation was already working with its partner organizations to identify the capacity imperatives of Agenda 2063 and would support the process of harmonizing national development plans with the African development blueprint. The Foundation was also contributing to clarify the respective responsibilities of the AUC and the Regional Economic Communities in the implementation of Agenda 2063.

Speaking on behalf of the Permanent Committee of the Board of Governors on Resource Mobilization, Ms. Nandipha Mkunqwana, Director, Africa Multilateral Institutions, Ministry of Finance, South Africa called on more countries to join the membership of the Committee "I urge all African countries to join the Committee's effort to give our Foundation an Endowment that will guarantee its sustainability and its continued support to Africa's development process, because indeed capacity is development," she said.



EVENTS

04-05 March

Partnership meeting with African Evaluation Association: Harare, Zimbabwe

10-13 March

Monitoring and Evaluation Information Management System (IMS) Training Workshop for Projects

22-31 March

18th COMESA Summit and Policy Organ Meetings: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

25-31 March

2015 Conference of Ministers: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, including 2 ACBF side events:

- Special Meeting of ACBF Governors to discuss the Foundation's sustainability issues
- Panel Discussion on the Capacity Imperatives of Agenda 2063

06-08 April

2015 Think Tank Summit: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

08 April

54th Regular Meeting of the Executive Board: ACBF Secretariat in Harare, Zimbabwe

08 April

Consultative workshop on Structural Transformation in African Agriculture and Rural Spaces (STAARS): Nairobi, Kenya

09 April

Fourth Consultative Forum of the Policy Institutes Committee: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

13-17 April

First Implementation Support Mission of the World Bank for the year 2015: ACBF, Harare, Zimbabwe

