

# ACBF IN ACTION

25 Years of Capacity Development impact across Africa



**The African Capacity Building Foundation**  
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## Introduction: About ACBF

Since 1991, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) has supported and invested in efforts to build human and institutional capacity across Africa to meet development needs at the country, regional and continental levels.

The mandate of ACBF is to enhance skills, strengthen institutions and promote regional integration. To achieve this, ACBF supports capacity development through investments, technical support, knowledge generation and sharing across Africa. ACBF not only invests through extending grants, it also provides grant management and technical assistance throughout the implementation of the capacity development interventions, catalyzing scalable change in Africa. To date the Foundation has empowered governments, parliaments, civic society, private sector and higher education institutions in more than 45 countries and 6 regional economic communities.

ACBF has invested in over 321 capacity development projects, produced 73 knowledge products advocating emerging development issues and has committed more than USD700 million to capacity development in Sub-Saharan Africa to date.



# Enhancing Skills

25 years of Experience in Enhancing Skills

Since 1992 ACBF has, through its partnerships, committed over US\$ 91,000,000 as financial support to 73 higher education institutions and another US\$ 44,275,661 to non-degree training programs - a total of well over US\$ 135,000,000.

The projects and programs supported, have been largely focused on increasing the pool of skilled professionals in the fields of economics, public policy, public sector management, and financial management and accountability.



One of ACBF's most successful skills enhancement programs is the Economic Policy Management (EPM) program.

Currently the programme is offered by seven universities, in the following countries; Cameroon; Côte d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of Congo; Ghana; Mozambique; Uganda; and Zambia

More than 40% of the auditors who participated in the EPM have been promoted immediately after their training.



The **University of Abidjan-Cocody** has offered a Diploma in EPM Studies for 11 years. More than 624 public and private sector executives, from 12 African countries, have benefited from the human capacity development activities of the programme, 50% of which are from Ivorian administrations.

More than 90 percent of graduates work in the public sector; and almost all ministries in the **WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union)** employ EPM graduates, as do international institutions, business intelligence practices, and the Presidency and Prime Ministry.



A tracer study for **Economic Policy Management - Makerere University (EPM Makerere)** alumni for the period 1998/99 to 2008/09, shows from 300 alumni responses received, out of a potential pool of 429 respondents, EPM graduates had found employment in the following sectors:

- Management - 14%
- Service Provision - 20%
- Policy making -20%
- Information/knowledge dissemination – 18%
- Project implementation - 16%.

In addition to this, 72% of EPM alumni indicated that at least 50% of their professional activities were related to the development of their countries.



ACBF has ensured the continued delivery of quality learning programs at universities that aim to address gender disparities at higher level.

ACBF support to **Women's University in Africa (WUA)** has succeeded in:

- Maintaining an average annual enrolment of 1500 students, 75% of whom are women.
- Achieving a 95% graduation rate.
- Providing flexibility and demand-driven courses through evening, weekend, holiday block releases and Open Distance Learning (ODL) modules.
- Purchasing essential resources including a generator, library systems, and a student bus for the university and upgrading of ICT equipment and internet connectivity facilities.

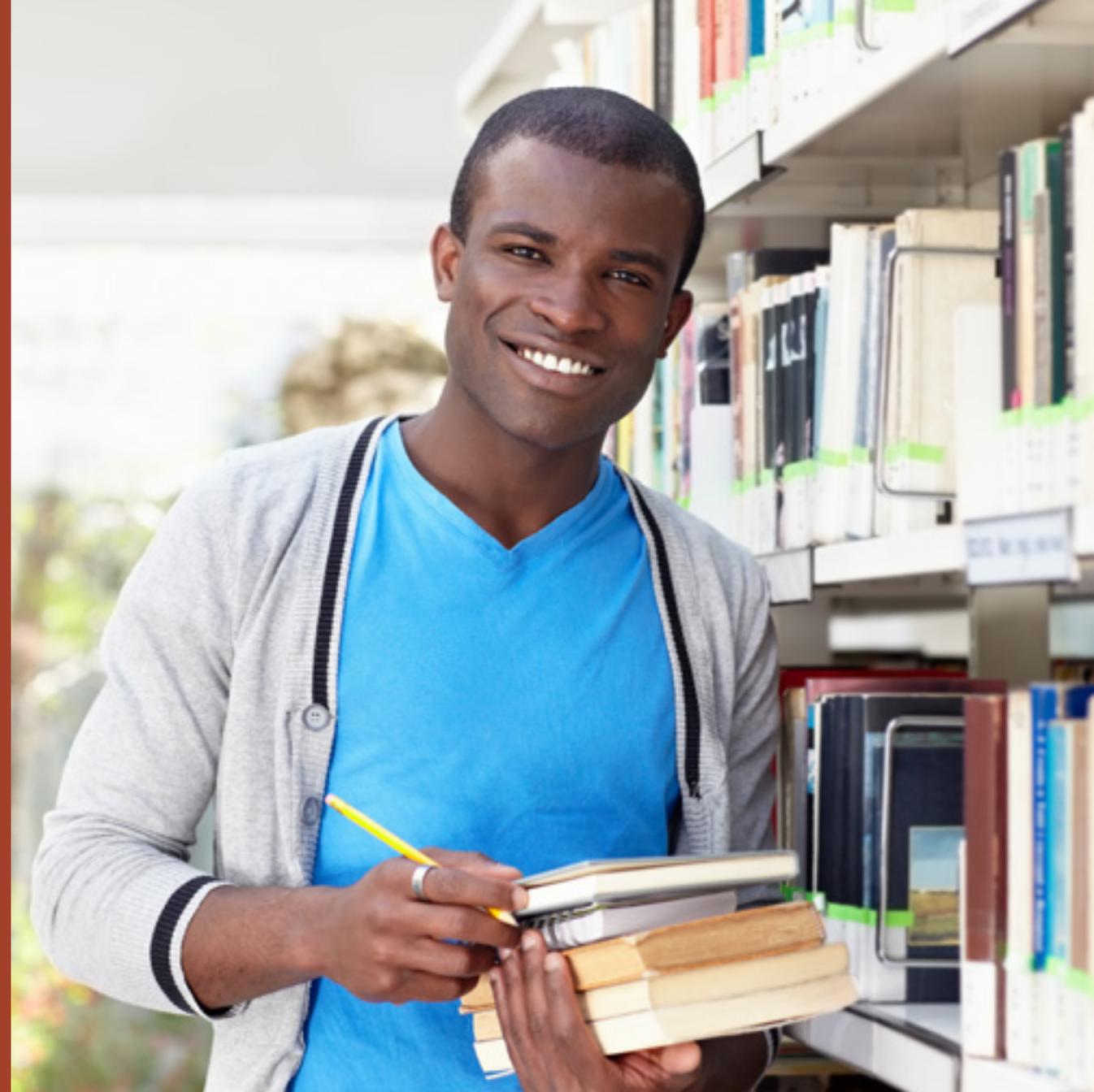


**Collaborative MA Program– CMAP:**

The 20-year history of CMAP is one of unparalleled success. Not only has it increased the individual capacity of nearly 2000 graduates, it has also provided them with skills that are not available anywhere else in the region.

CMAP provides standardised, high-quality, core training, combined with the unique Joint Facility for Electives (JFE) approach.

One of the main characteristics of the CMAP population is the extent to which it is the near exclusive feeder for a doctoral Collaborative PhD Programme (CPP).



# Strengthening Institutions

25 years of Experience in Institution development

About 9% of ACBF's funding portfolio has been used to strengthen the capacity of national parliaments. ACBF-supported institutions have conducted intensive training programs for national parliaments in support of their legislative activities as well as their oversight of the executive.



ACBF is recognized Africa-wide for having created or strengthened 35 think tanks and policy institutes in Africa and established them as sustainable institutions. ACBF-supported Think Tanks have become key drivers of policy discourse and debates as well as reliable conduits or sources of technical and advisory support to stakeholders along the policy value chain. The patient capital model adopted by ACBF has enabled the establishment and grooming of policy institutes in extreme capacity deficient contexts and regions with limited policy research analysis and management capabilities.

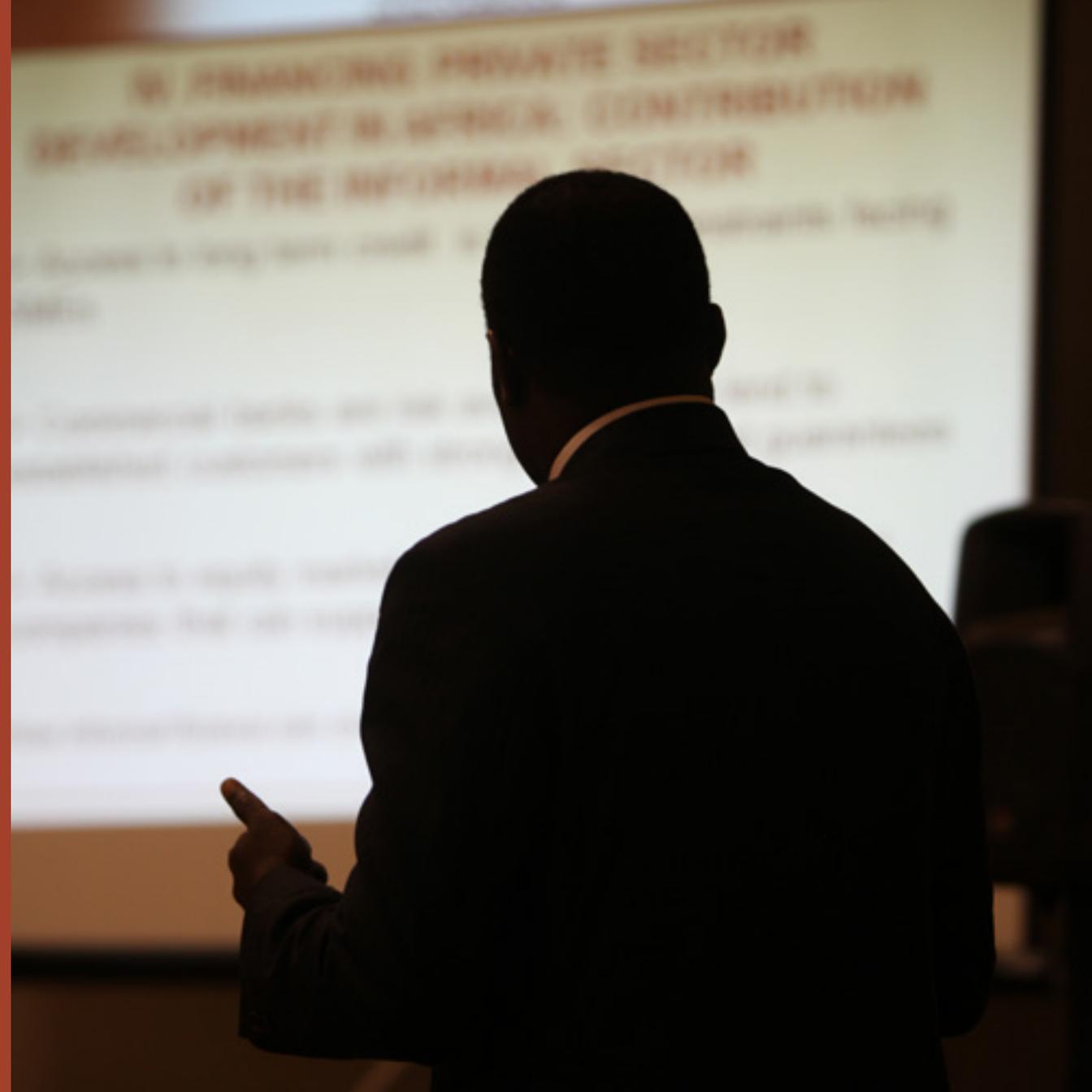
ACBF organized Africa Think Tank Summits and established an African Network of Think Tanks to provide a platform for sharing information, exchanging ideas, and enhancing partnerships among think tanks in order to individually and collectively develop informed solutions to the pressing development challenges facing Africa.



**Centre for Corporate Governance (CCG)** is able to raise 65% of its own resources, relying on only 35% from ACBF its only funder. The Centre has established itself, firmly, as a reputable organization actively supporting the Government of Kenya in good corporate governance processes. CCG not only initiated the establishment of the Pan African Consultative Forum on corporate governance, various organizations including the Central Bank rely on the due diligence of CCG in appointing, training and recommending new directors of state corporations, insurance companies and companies listed on the Nairobi Stock Exchange as it has become mandatory for directors to go through the training and courses on corporate governance.



With ACBF's support, the **National Institute for Legislative Studies (NILS)** has emerged as one of the most successful Parliamentary Initiatives in the history of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. NILS is the first fully established legislative institute in West Africa and provides capacity building support to Nigerian federal and state assemblies and the Nigerian National Assembly, as well as to legislators and staff from other African countries.



ACBF and the Parliament of South Africa partnered in a capacity building project to enhance the institutional effectiveness of parliament. An Executive Leadership Development program was initiated to strengthen the leadership skills of newly elected parliamentarians. At least six (6) members of parliament who participated in this program have since been appointed to ministerial positions.

Parliament's research capacity has been enhanced. A Parliamentary Content Management System was established and Systems and processes have been streamlined to allow for greater coordination of house procedures, better monitoring and tracking of reports and bills, and overall more efficient work committees, and functioning of The House.



Progressive development in the **Malawi National Statistical System Project (MSSP)** was the establishment of a national databank - the Malawi socio-economic database (MASEDA) - accessible online at - [www.maseda.mw](http://www.maseda.mw) - to track statistical information. This website was set up with grants from the ACBF, the Government of Norway and the UNDP.



The institutionalization of a network of gender budgeting groups and individuals under the Zimbabwe Budgeting Network (ZGBN) is now in place to support national monitoring of the gender budgeting process. The Gender Budgeting Project is managed under the facilitation of the Zimbabwe Women's Research Centre and Network (ZWRCN). ACBF's support to ZWRCN's contributions has ensured that since 2008 gender budgeting has been incorporated into Budget Call Circulars and adapted by all government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in Zimbabwe.



## Promoting a Culture of Media Excellence

The West African Journalists Association (WAJA) was supported by ACBF to strengthen the voices of media in order to promote democracy and ensure participatory governance, accountability and transparency in ECOWAS member countries.

Nationally WAJA has trained 532 journalists and media workers. Regionally 242 journalists have been trained as trainers. 125 WAJA trained journalists are now qualified to be part of the pool of trainers whom the PRC-UJAO hires for national programmes.

Through WAJA, ECOWAS Ministers of Communications and Information adopted a Regional Freedom of Expression Act, jointly submitted by WAJA in partnership with Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) and Media Rights Agenda (MRA).



## Advancing Tertiary Education

ACBF's intervention in higher education institutions has contributed immensely to strengthening teaching and research capacities with many graduates of ACBF programs now working as policy analysts, economists, and planners in government policy units and making important contributions, in areas of policy formulation and implementation.

ACBF has also provided institutional support aimed at reviving infrastructure (for example, restocking libraries, supplying furniture, providing teaching materials, upgrading computer networks and internet connectivity and even renovating buildings) and strengthening human resource capacity at the participating higher education institutions.



# SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

25 years of Experience in Supporting Policy Formulation  
and Implementation

The economic and social development of any country is dependent on the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of solid policies and strategies aimed at economic growth and poverty alleviation.

Over 40% of ACBF's funding has been committed to the area of Economic Policy Analysis and Management. Since the early 1990s, twenty-eight (28) ACBF-supported policy units and think tanks have been established.

Nine think tanks supported by the ACBF have been ranked among the top 20 in sub-Saharan Africa in the 2015 Global Go To Think Tanks Index Report.



The ACBF coordinates over twenty (20) interventions in the area of support for civil society and the private sector, involving lobbying and advocacy in the creation and implementation of policies.



ACBF's work is fully recognized at the pan-African level. ACBF was commissioned by the African Union Commission (AUC) to conduct a capacity needs assessment for the implementation of Agenda 2063, and further, an assessment of internal and external risks associated with the implementation of the Agenda 2063.

In assessing the capacity needs required for the implementation of the first 10-year plan of Agenda 2063, ACBF has conducted three critical studies: (i) Capacity Requirements for Agenda 2063; (ii) Capacity Development Plan Framework; and (iii) African critical technical skills: A key Capacity dimension needed for implementing programmes in the first ten years of Agenda 2063.

The assessment of internal and external risks associated with the implementation of Agenda 2063 has contributed to the identification, the quantification and classification of risks factors (at country, regional, continental and global levels). Mitigation strategies were proposed, and roles assigned to relevant stakeholders.



ACBF intervention impacted fair trade exchange in Ethiopia, through promoting the creation of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX) - An **Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI)** project, a public private partnership. The first initiative of its kind in Africa, ECX opened in April 2008 with the vision of revolutionizing Ethiopia's traditional agricultural sector into a more vibrant sector.



With the support of ACBF, the **Centre of Policy Analysis (CEPA)** contributed immensely to macroeconomic policy formulation and analysis efforts in Ghana. Government's responsiveness to CEPA's recommendations on the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) reduced the rate by 3.50 basis points from 18.5% to 15% per annum and inflation forecasts prompted the decision by the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of Ghana to hold the MPR steady at 13.5% p/a in its September 2010 meeting. These reductions have brought stability and an improved business environment to the country.



Through its research and analysis work, the **Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA)** plays a pivotal role in contributing to the achievement of national development goals outlined in Kenya's Vision 2030. KIPPRA's contributions to developing the Kenya Treasury Macro Model (KTMM) in 2000, Preparing the annual Kenya Economic Report (KER), Contributing to policy research for high key programs, Organizing consultative meetings, policy working groups and task forces that led to the creation of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and Providing skills to people who now hold key posts in the public sector.

KIPPRA's Young Professionals Program - was 100% funded by ACBF from 2003 to 2009. Over 50% of these graduates now work in government.



## Using statistics to combat poverty

Through ACBF support, the Projet de Renforcement des Capacités en Statistiques, Etudes Prospectives et Planification pour la Lutte Contre la Pauvreté en République du Congo (RESPEC) successfully developed the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) which was approved by donors in October 2008. This project enabled the Republic of Congo to reach the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) completion point in January 2010.



Thank to the increase in the number of professional statisticians trained (467 in total), the ACBF-supported **Zanzibar Statistical System Capacity Building Project (ZANSTAT)** has been able to increase the collection and the production of statistical data. The improvement in data production enabled it to provide timely and relevant data (quantitative and qualitative) for evidence-based policy making in development planning and management.



ACBF partnered with civil society organizations in the Central African region to establish a network of civil society organizations in eight countries, namely Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Rwanda. This initiative has enabled the partner organizations to keep track of information on potential conflicts through an Early Warning System to issue alerts and put in place preventative measures to avert future conflicts.

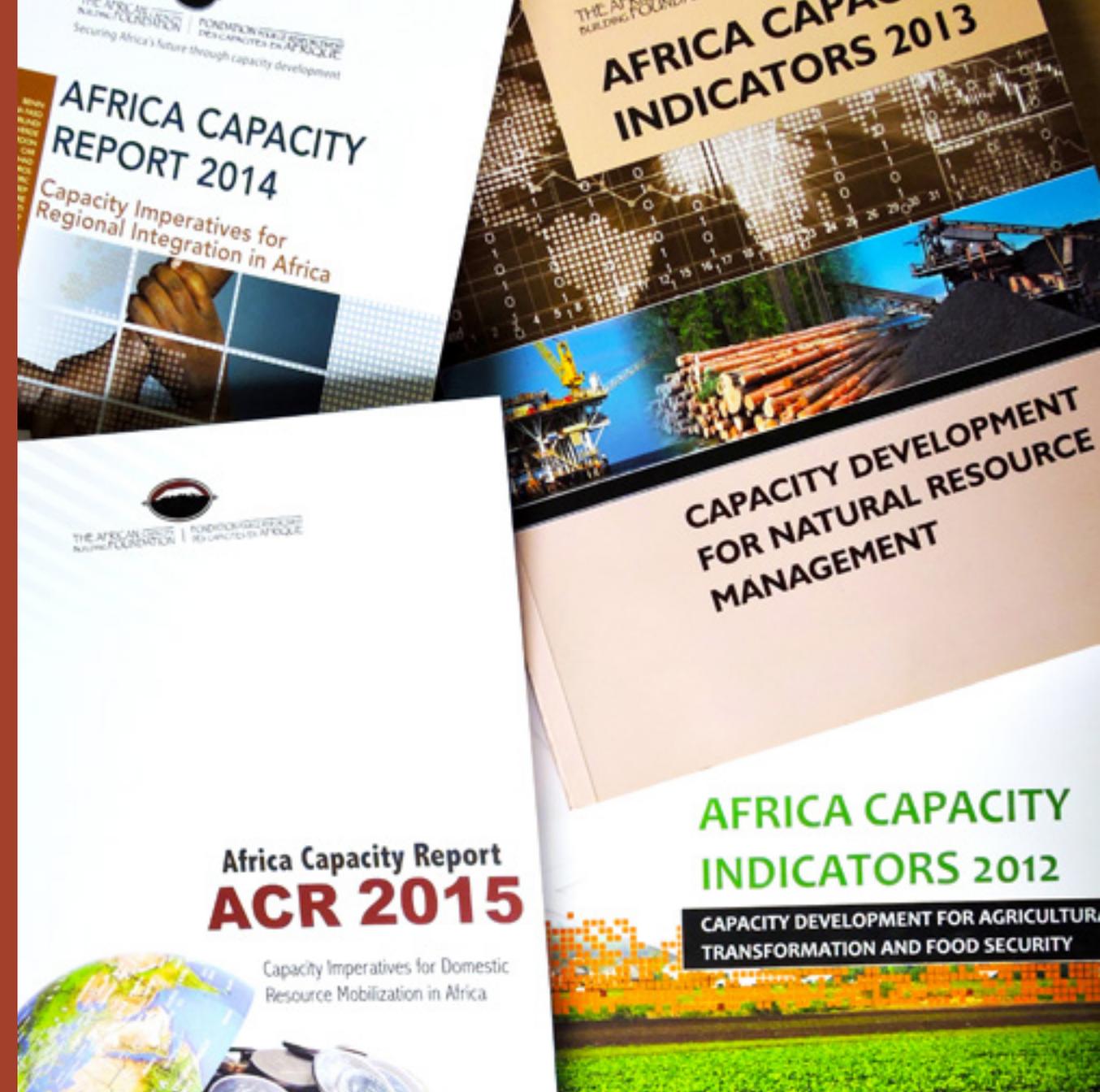


# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

25 years of experience in generating and  
sharing knowledge

## Taking stock of progress in capacity development

Launched in 2011, ACBF's Flagship Publication – Africa Capacity Report (ACR) is a timely addition to ACBF's growing list of knowledge products, and a testimony of the Foundation's leadership in the field of Capacity Development. ACR provides an authoritative characterization of the state and evolution of Africa's capacity across space and time. ACR also provides an invaluable tool for country benchmarking, and monitoring-and-evaluation of capacity development interventions.



## Availing a Pool of Experts in Support of Africa's Development: Technical Advisory Panels and Networks (TAP-NETs), Strategic Studies Groups (SSGs)

The Knowledge Networks (SSGs today and TAP-NETs yesterday), have the fundamental objective of providing a pool of technical and professional expertise that will supplement existing skills in the Foundation in order to raise the quality of its operations. Thus, knowledge networks are established and maintained to support the activities of the Secretariat in each core area of intervention and, where possible, provide the Executive Board and Board of Governors an idea management tool through which they can broaden consultation and review specific issues and questions relating to capacity development. A knowledge network is expected to achieve other objectives. It has to serve as:

- an institutional support for reviewing aspects of the Foundation's activities and adding value to its operations;
- an idea management tool for the Secretariat to seek professional opinion on issues and discuss ideas in greater depth; and
- a professional arm of the relevant thematic network or community of practice that will be set up by the Foundation in the relevant core competence area.



## How ACBF is funded

ACBF is funded by African and non-African governments, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

The contribution of African member countries is primarily allocated to the financing of the Foundations operating costs covering project identification, development, implementation supervision, monitoring and evaluation and administrative costs. This is to ensure that contributions made by Partners are entirely devoted to supporting capacity development initiatives across the African continent.

ACBF's interventions are guided by five-year strategic plans developed under the stewardship of a Board of Governors (representatives of African Member countries, the shareholders of the Foundation.) The current Strategic Medium Term Plan 2012 – 2016 (SMTP III), focuses on enhancing critical capacities; (a) to promote economic and social stability for transformational change, (b) to engage and regulate the productive sector and (c) to track policy impact.

# GET INVOLVED

The programs mentioned are but a selection of the work ACBF has been doing in the area of capacity development in Africa over the past 25 years. For these and other ACBF supported programs to continue to change lives and be at the forefront of ushering Africa economic transformation projects will need to be implemented and current programs enhanced into the future.

## How You can get Involved

- Become a member
- Become a corporate partner
- Support a program
- Contribute to a publication

Support ACBF - Support Africa's Future