



Africa Capacity BULLETIN

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From the Executive Secretary

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the sixth edition of Africa Capacity.

The year 2014 was a significant year for the African Capacity Building Foundation in its drive toward sustained capacity development in Africa. ACBF has successfully supported the continent in building capacity for the formulation and management of economic policies and in achieving strengthened public administration, transparent and accountable financial management. We have supported statistical development, effective oversight of the executive arms of governments by parliaments, as well as improved participation of civil society and private sector in the policy-making process.

ACBF was able to make such an effective

contribution thanks to the tremendous support of its African and non-African member countries and its multilateral partners, including the African Development Bank the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

Among some of the major highlights of the year for us was the decentralization of ACBF's operations department in West and Central Africa. An office was set up in Accra, Ghana that is fully operational, ensuring we are close to our partners for more effectiveness. The ACBF also undertook major institutional and programmatic reforms and adopted a new business model, which has resulted in a more focused, more efficient and better governed organization that pays serious attention to results and sustainability. These reforms will enable the Foundation to increase its effectiveness and maximize its impact in Africa.

The Foundation also organized a workshop and coordinated the drafting of papers towards a common position paper in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the 1st US-Africa summit in Washington D.C. The summit was the first of its kind between a sitting US President and African leaders. It was

aimed at strengthening ties between the US and Africa that is a fast-growing region. Drawn from the main regional economic communities, the papers provided a unified, consolidated African position on issues pertaining to US-Africa relations.

A new strategic partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was started. The Foundation also supports strategic grant-making and capacity building functions of civil society organizations to advance evidence-based tobacco control policies in Africa, including tobacco taxation, advertising bans, graphic warning labels, and smoke-free environments.

Another notable milestone is that the Board of Governors (BoG) Committee on Resource Mobilization is now operational and held its first meeting in Lome, 4-5 November, 2014. At the meeting, the committee developed an annual work plan for its activities.

The ACBF website was also revamped in September, making it a more user friendly platform for our diverse audiences. As a result, there are more people visiting the website, which is in English and French, and are getting to know more about our activities. Our knowledge products are also more accessible through an improved virtual library. It is indeed cheering to know that visits to the website have more than doubled with wider reach to more African countries, especially Francophone African countries.

Despite the success achieved, the continent still faces challenges. The outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in 2014 fully demonstrated that although significant progress has been made over the past two decades in the field of capacity, Africa still faces serious human, institutional and societal capacity constraints. In this regard, Africa should have a sustained investment in capacity development that will enable it to prevent, anticipate, or manage such crises.

Among its key activities for 2015, ACBF will hold the third Pan-African Capacity Development Forum during the first week of September in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the goal of reflecting on the capacity development imperatives of Africa's economic transformation. Among the expected delegates are heads of state, policy-makers, academics, civil society activists, and private sector operators.

Meanwhile, the Foundation will continue to support the African Union Commission and African countries in their efforts to address their capacity challenges, in particular, in articulating the capacity dimensions of AU's Agenda 2063, and in its integration into national development plans. Addressing capacity challenges in countries affected by conflict will equally constitute a major focus of the Foundation's work this year.

I cannot end this note without wishing Africa and the friends of Africa's development a happy, peaceful and prosperous 2015.

RESULTS

ACBF boosts COMESA's research capabilities with \$3 million grant

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) launched in August 2014 a US\$3m project to help the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa's (COMESA's) Secretariat address the challenge of inadequate capacity for the conduct and coordination of policy research and analyses – a state of affairs, which had hindered the secretariat's ability to develop and utilize quality, relevant and timely research to inform the bloc's economic and trade policy.

The goal of the three-year project was to improve the conduct and utilization of research through the establishment and resourcing of a research unit that would spearhead the conduct, coordination, and dissemination of economic and trade policy researches. In addition, the project incorporates a mechanism for continuous hands-on advisory, technical support, and training to the departments and organs of COMESA.

Significant achievements

The functional research unit -the first of its kind - is in full operation and is actively contributing

to the production and coordination of research information to feed into the deliberations of the committees, councils and other organs of the trading bloc.

Boosting intra-regional trade

Its establishment has also facilitated the conduct of a number of strategic studies such as the study on 'Trade Volumes within COMESA', which was motivated by the desire of the secretariat to improve intra-regional trade among member countries as a way of mitigating the aggregate production deficit of food and agricultural goods in the region in the short to medium term.

The research highlighted a number of critical strategies for bridging the intra-regional trade gap as well as delineated opportunities and mechanisms by which COMESA can boost trade, especially in food and agricultural products, among member countries. The study, among other things, revealed that COMESA can promote intra-regional trade within the short to medium term while allowing the joint volumes to increase, particularly for agricultural products. It noted that the region must balance aggregate production deficit by promoting trade transfers from member countries with excess production to member countries with a deficit. Furthermore, the study showed that unlike food and agricultural products, trade in minerals should target markets outside the bloc given the pattern of demand. Nonetheless, member states needed to develop their industrial base in order to process these commodities locally before they were exported. The proposed strategy was to help the countries to leverage the benefit of value addition, and to create the much needed jobs for the burgeoning youth population of the region as well as grow the economies of member states.

Since its establishment in 1994, the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has focused on promoting regional integration through trade development, investment promotion and sustainable utilization of natural resources for the mutual benefit of citizens of the region. Developing and utilizing quality, relevant,

and timely research to inform economic and trade policy has been one of the key priorities of COMESA.

ZEPARU's study contributes to shape mining policy in Zimbabwe

A 2013 strategic study conducted by the Zimbabwe Policy Analysis and Research Unit (ZEPARU), a semi-autonomous policy think tank established and supported by the African capacity Building Foundation, the government of Zimbabwe and other development partners has led the Zimbabwean government to initiate a review of the country's Mines and Minerals Act.

ZEPARU's study assesses the current mining policy and its implication for the sector. It specifically focuses on reviewing the state of the mining sector in Zimbabwe and on providing a comprehensive analysis as well as recommendations on how the country's mining policy can be enhanced to ensure effective contribution of the sector to the development of the country.

The study also aims to provide the basis to transform the industry into an engine of economic growth and job and wealth creation. It looks at ways to strengthen the value chain of the mining sector in order to maximize the benefits of exploiting mineral resources. Moreover, the study aims to increase public awareness on how the nation's resources are being exploited by mining companies for the benefit of Zimbabweans.

Amending the Act

As a result of ZEPARU's study, the government has developed a draft minerals policy in 2013 and the principles for amendments of the Mines and Minerals Act have been approved. The bill is expected to go through parliamentary processes in 2015.

The government has also renewed its efforts to revitalize the Zimbabwe Mining Revenue Transparency Initiative, which was launched in 2011 to improve transparency and accountability in the mining sector. Furthermore, the government has committed US\$ 500,000 in support of the

initial operation of the Sovereign Wealth Fund which was first mentioned in the 2014 national budget statement.

And in line with the recommendation for financing small scale miners proposed in the study, the government has entered into a US\$100m loan agreement with a Chinese company to provide small scale mining equipment to entrepreneurs on credit. Today, most small scale miners now have the requisite equipment for use in extracting mineral resources. This in turn is said to have boosted their revenue and created employment opportunities.

In addition, the study also generated a lot of interest among development partners, prompting the African Development Bank to provide funding for in-depth work on some of the areas and issues covered in the study.

The current Mines and Minerals Act came into force long before the independence in 1980. Since then the act had not seen any significant changes to align it with current needs and realities.

PARTNERSHIPS

ACBF, partners get Gates Foundation grant for tobacco control

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has made a US\$32m grant available to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's Foundation (CDC Foundation) and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK). The grant will be used to advance the coordination of the Tobacco Control Project across the continent, which aims to curb the menace of tobacco in Africa.

The Gates Foundation's Deputy Director, Cynthia Lewis, said in a statement that the support "represents the largest funding commitment from the Foundation to the African continent for tobacco control to-date". "African countries have [also] faced challenging tobacco industry road blocks, and a shifting landscape."

Coming soon after the end of a previous intervention by the Gates Foundation on the continent, "this new phase of grants capitalizes on the excellent work already underway, while also responding to evolving and critical needs of many country partners," the statement said.

Part of the funding will be used to develop the Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. The rest will be given as grants to civil society organizations to help develop evidence-based tobacco control policies in Africa. These policies will cover a number of areas, including tobacco taxation, advertising bans, graphic warning labels and the promotion of smoke-free environments across the continent. Participating Civil Society Organizations will come from Uganda, Kenya, Mauritania, Botswana, Ethiopia, Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Benin, Gabon, and the Gambia.

The Gates Foundation described ACBF as a highly-respected leader in institutional and human capacity building that has managed \$500m in grants in 45 African countries, adding that the latter also fills a key role as an Africa-based "strategic partner providing both grants and capacity building support for civil society and others."

At a partners meeting last year, the ACBF, WHO, CDC Foundation and CTFK agreed that coordination and effective implementation of tobacco control would take a prominent place in the new project. They also agreed on an effective mechanism for work at country level, a joint reporting tool. They also consented to develop a monthly calendar of key activities as well as hold regular forums to discuss their plans and progress at country and regional levels.

The Gates Foundation is also supporting social marketing and behavior change work against tobacco use in Africa as a complement to this important ongoing policy work.



The University staff development program had grounded to a halt. In addition, most people who were able to obtain externally funded scholarships to study abroad were not returning to the university or to Zambia. The ACBF support to the Ministry of Finance under the DMPA project enabled more people to be trained within universities in Africa and later join the Ministry and the University of Zambia.

In 2005, I was awarded a second scholarship by the Africa Economic Research Consortium (AERC), another ACBF-supported institution, to study at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa under the Collaborative PhD Programme (CPP). After obtaining a PhD in Economics in 2010, I returned to the University of Zambia. However, armed with new energy, I was looking for something a bit more challenging. When an opportunity opened at the newly established think tank, the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis (ZIPAR), I took a leave of absence from the university and joined ZIPAR as a research fellow. After working for ZIPAR for only a few months, the Executive Director left and I was appointed acting Director while the steering committee, the board of ZIPAR, was trying to fill the position. I acted in the position for over one year and the committee recommended that I was actually the person it was looking for. I was appointed as Executive Director of ZIPAR.

ZIPAR is a semi-autonomous policy think tank established by the government of Zambia with the support of the ACBF. It was established as an offshoot of the DMPA Projects at the Ministry of Finance, the same project where funding for my Masters programme came from. Therefore, I have come full circle and I see myself as born and bred of the capacity building efforts of ACBF.

FEATURE

Coming in full circle: born and bred of the capacity development efforts of ACBF

This is the story of Dr. Pamela Kabaso, the current Executive Director of the Zambia Institute of Policy Analysis (ZIPAR), a semi-autonomous policy think tank supported by ACBF. ZIPAR's mandate is to conduct research and analysis for policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. Pamela is a beneficiary of two ACBF post graduate scholarships.

Dr Kabaso narrates her story on how ACBF scholarship helped change her life and enabled her to contribute to evidence-based policy making in Zambia.

I graduated in 1996 from the University of Zambia as an economics major. Upon graduation I was awarded a scholarship to study for a Master's degree in economics at the University of Nairobi. The scholarship was funded by the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) through a project at the Directorate of Macroeconomics and Policy Analysis (DMPA) in the Zambian Ministry of Finance. The ACBF support to the ministry had just begun and was intended to build capacity in the area of Macroeconomics Policy analysis. When I completed my Masters, I joined the Department of Economics at the University of Zambia as a lecturer. At that time the Department was grossly understaffed because of the economic challenges the country was going through.



Looking back 18 years ago, the ACBF was hardly known even to me as I set out for University of Nairobi. But today, many institutions in Zambia have either been directly or indirectly impacted positively by the capacity building efforts of the ACBF. ZIPAR is currently playing a leading role in carrying out researches and policy analysis in order to provide evidence-based policy recommendations and advice to various ministries and government institutions in Zambia. This includes working with the members of parliament by providing their parliamentary committees with well researched and analysed memoranda on topics on their agenda during their sessions.

ZIPAR has also made initial inroads by engaging with the private sector on policy matters through making presentations at private sector business seminars, including our research topics that contribute to shaping policies affecting the sector. We are also actively engaged with the media to reach out to the wider public so as to enrich policy dialogue and debate by providing informative commentary on current and future policy developments.

KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING

Implications of the Ebola crisis on Africa's capacity development

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) was among top African organizations and businesses at a roundtable to establish an emergency fund to help countries hit by the Ebola outbreak. The meeting at the African Union Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on November 8, 2014 brought together the African Union, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, foundations, non-governmental organizations and leading businesses in Africa committed to creating and supporting a funding mechanism to deal with the Ebola outbreak and its consequences.

Participants at the conference were able to raise a total of US\$ 28.5 million through pledges to be used to deploy at least 1,000 health workers to

Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia – the three West African countries mostly affected by the epidemic. The resources will be deployed under the framework of the AU Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA), in close coordination with the national taskforces in the Ebola-affected countries and the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). The resources mobilized will be part of a longer term program to build Africa's capacity to deal with such outbreaks in the future.

The mandate given to the ACBF by African countries and their bilateral and multilateral partners is to build sustainable human and institutional capacity for good governance and development management in Africa. The Foundation considers the Ebola epidemic - like malaria, HIV AIDS, tobacco epidemic – first as a threat to the capacity already built by African countries with the support of ACBF over the past 23 years of its existence. Secondly, ACBF sees the Ebola epidemic as one of the manifestations of the remaining capacity challenges which the continent still faces despite the effort already made.

Projects negatively impacted

The outbreak of Ebola has impacted negatively on the implementation of some ACBF supported initiatives in West Africa. These are especially regional projects and those located in the countries affected by the disease.

Since its establishment in 1991 and with the support of its African member countries and their bilateral and multilateral development partners, ACBF, has been instrumental in supporting policy formulation and implementation, skills development and promotion of policy dialogue between governments and non-state actors in the overwhelming majority of African countries. There is a large consensus in the development community that Africa's premier capacity development institution has made a significant contribution to the improvement of the macroeconomic environment in Africa that paved the way for the steady economic growth which has been observed in many African countries over the past decade.

The Foundation achieved this impressive performance by supporting think tanks and policy institutes that provide governments and other development actors with quality policy analyses and research for policy formulation and implementation. It was also involved in skills development of thousands of middle to high level officials in economic sectors across Africa. It is easy to understand therefore that any epidemic that comes with the risk of depleting the capacity already built in Africa, due to its heavy death toll, represents a major concern for ACBF.

According to public health specialists, the Ebola virus disease (EVD) is said to kill between 50% and 90% of those contracting it. Estimates by the World Health Organization indicate that the epidemic in West Africa is likely to affect at least 20,000 people in the most affected countries before it can be controlled, hopefully within the next 6 months. The risk is therefore a potential death toll of about 10,000 to 18,000 in just 8 months if more vigorous mitigating measures are not taken. It is most likely that the affected people would majorly be the most active and capacitated segments of the population.

Regional integration threatened

The other major implication of the Ebola epidemic on capacity development relates to the resurgence of attitudes that can be seen as rolling back the progress made in regional integration. Over the years, ACBF has been at the forefront of the promotion of regional integration in order to improve intra-African trade and increase Africa's share in world trade. One of the main areas in which progress has been observed in Africa's regional integration agenda to date, namely free movement of people and goods, is being seriously threatened by the wave of border closures and travel bans. Yet, priority should have been given to the pooling of resources to contain the epidemic and help fight it in affected countries to avoid its spread. This is in addition to the other economic inconveniences such as its negative impact on foreign direct investment. Ebola is indeed nourishing a psychosis among investors who are putting their plans for the affected regions on hold, with business partners canceling travels to African countries.

Public health challenges

The other capacity dimension of the Ebola epidemic is the observation that a lot remains to be done in capacity development in Africa despite all the efforts already made by African countries with the support of ACBF and its partners. Public health experts agree that without better public health systems, Ebola will be difficult to contain.

The current outbreak in West Africa has shed more light on the public health capacity challenges that some African countries are facing at both human (trained personnel) and institutional (a good public health infrastructure) levels. Most hospitals in Africa have no quarantine units or holding centers, despite Ebola being a real health risk. Meanwhile, the doctor-patient ratio is said to be below the WHO norm of one physician for 600 people in the majority of African countries. The epidemics that too frequently rock the continent are signals that Africa should continue investing heavily in capacity development. Indeed, it becomes very difficult to mobilize help from abroad with an epidemic that has such a high contamination risk and without the minimum institutional capacity for the assistance to be effective.

With a mission to build sustainable capacity for good governance and development management in Africa, ACBF cannot remain indifferent to the outbreak of epidemics which may undermine its goals by depleting capacity already built. Therefore, the Foundation is ready to support policy formulation and implementation for an effective mitigation of these major risks to the continent's progress and economic transformation. In this regard, a number of activities have already been set in motion. For instance, a special session on Ebola was held during the recent ACBF Policy Institutes Committee meeting in Swaziland from 24 - 25 October 2014. It was agreed during the meeting that ACBF should launch studies on the capacity dimension of the spread of Ebola virus disease. ACBF intends to collaborate with its partners such as the UN Development Programme, the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI), and the Mano River Union (MRU) to engage the Ebola Management Response Team (EMRT) of the affected countries to discuss areas of intervention in relation to capacity development.

OUR RESOURCES

Play leading role in financing capacity building, ACBF urges African states

In light of the significant capacity challenges facing the continent, which requires more resources, there is an urgent need for Africans to step up their own financial support and take the lead in advocating for the financing of the activities of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). This appeal was made by the Foundation's Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie, at the inaugural meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Board of Governors of the Foundation on Resource Mobilization held on 3-4 November 2014 in Lome, Togo.

"There is an urgent need for Africans to take the driver's seat in the financing of ACBF," Prof. Nnadozie said at the meeting. He also called on member countries to give political support to the Foundation's resource mobilization efforts.

The meeting appealed to the ACBF to continue to build on the level of cooperation it already has with multilateral and non-African partners.

Also at the meeting, Prof. Kako Nubukpo, Chair of the Committee and Togo's Minister in the Office of the President in charge of Long-Term Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies, said support for the capacity building work of the Foundation was important for African countries as they go through various stages of economic transformation. The Committee adopted a plan of action for resource mobilization in 2015.

As part of the outcomes of the meeting, the committee agreed to engage African heads of state in addressing the financing challenges facing capacity building on the continent. It also decided to solicit one of them to champion this cause among his peers and the international community. The meeting decided to start the engagement by soliciting the support of Faure Gnassingbé, President of host nation Togo.

ACBF's Executive Board approves business plan for 2015

The Executive Board of the African Capacity Building Foundation at its meeting on 8 - 10 December 2014 in Harare approved the Foundation's 2015 business plan, budget, and six new operations. The management updated the Board on ACBF's new business model which emphasizes enhanced collaboration with mature implementing partners. The new model also highlights decentralization of operations, effective use of Information and Communication Technology, and multidisciplinary teams for supervision mission and clarity of business processes. The new operations are:

- The Malawi Public Policy Research and Analysis Project
- The African Union Capacity Building Program
- The East African Community Capacity Building Project
- The Capacity Building Project for the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)
- The Capacity Building Project for the West African Economic and Monetary Union
- The Ghana Policy Analysis, Research and Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

The three-day meeting, held at the ACBF secretariat in Harare, also had an induction program for the new board members on the Foundation's mandate, organizational architecture, legal and operational frameworks. The board equally approved the Foundation's revised operations manual. The ACBF operations manual presents the policies and procedures to be used by ACBF staff in project development, implementation, supervision, and monitoring and evaluation. The ACBF operations are divided into two departments - East and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. The next Board meeting is scheduled for the end of the first quarter of 2015.

ACBF Publications

Africa Capacity Report 2014: Capacity Imperatives for Regional Integration in Africa

The Africa Capacity Report (ACR) and its supporting indicators offer inputs for decisions on what to support in capacity development. The 2014 report focuses on capacity imperatives for regional integration, a priority focus area for ACBF. It looks at capacities needed to help move the African regional integration agenda forward. [Download Full Report](#) | [Executive Summary](#)

SAVE THE DATE: 3rd Pan-African Capacity Development Forum

The World Needs a Strong Africa and a Strong Africa Needs Sustainable Capacity
2-4 September 2015, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The 3rd Pan African Capacity Development Forum organized by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) will be held on the 2-4 September 2015, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The theme of the Forum is **"Developing Capacity for Africa's Economic and Social Transformation"**. The Forum will provide an excellent opportunity for the ACBF to partner with all the institutions working for Africa's sustainable capacity development and offer to all an exclusive opportunity to showcase their work and to exhibit their programs for developing sustainable capacity in **Africa's public sector, private sector and civil society** for an effective transformation.

The 3rd Pan African Capacity Development Forum will also provide a unique opportunity to policy makers and development practitioners, to reflect on the priority capacity development avenues that will lead to the effective economic and social transformation in Africa.

The Forum represents a powerful platform not only for knowledge sharing in capacity development but also for the development and the improvement of partnerships among stakeholders. In spite of the notable political, economic and social progress recorded across the continent, many African countries continue to face serious human and institutional capacity deficits, which have prevented them from achieving their development potential. These capacity deficits that exist at the local, country and regional levels have made it difficult for the continent to address such key challenges as lack of structural transformation, youth unemployment and poverty.

As the MDGs come to an end, it is important to take stock of progress and lessons learned but it is even more important to engage in a serious reflection and dialogue on the capacity imperatives of Africa's Post-2015 Development Agenda and AU Agenda 2063.

The first Pan African Capacity Development Forum organized by the ACBF was hosted by the Government of Mali in Bamako on 22-24 October 2001 while the Government of Mozambique hosted the second one in Maputo on 1-3 August 2007. On both occasions, the Forum represented a major high level gathering, involving close to 1,000 delegates, including Heads of State and Government; high level African and international country delegations; international organizations; as well as representatives of the public sector, private sector and civil society organizations. The Forums offered an opportunity to assess the progress already made in capacity development in Africa, made recommendations to boost the effectiveness of existing programs while paving the way for success in the future.



EVENTS

15-16 January

Partnership meeting between the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and ACBF. Harare, Zimbabwe

23-31 January

24th African Union Summit, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

02-03 February

Expert Group discussions on The Future of Capacity Development in Africa and ACBF's Role, Harare Zimbabwe

02-04 February

10th Meeting of the COMESA Technical Committee on Gender, Lusaka, Zambia

16-18 February

African Evaluation Association partnership meeting, Harare, Zimbabwe

18-19 February

African Think Tank Policy Research Initiative, Johannesburg, South Africa

19-20 February

ACBF – NEPAD partnership meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa

19-23 February

ACBF – AfDB collaboration meeting Abidjan, Ivory Coast