



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION | FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE  
Securing Africa's future through capacity development



# Africa Capacity

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**TIME TO  
ADEQUATELY  
FUND AFRICA'S  
CAPACITY  
DEVELOPMENT**



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## Four reasons why African States must raise their game in funding capacity for development\*

That Africa is a well-endowed region of the world, a continent said to have a 'golden hand,' is a fact. But that our continent is not fully taking advantage of its weight and worth in gold, to transform itself and be the development wonder of the world, is a major issue to ponder.

This issue of why Africa is not yet fully taking advantage of its potential to completely achieve its own development, is a serious challenge to overcome. How quickly African leaders make the right choice on this issue, especially in supporting the comprehensive work done by capacity development organizations and think tanks, and particularly the work of ACBF (which in January 2017 was officially

designated as the AU's Specialized Agency for Capacity Development), will highly determine the pace of implementation and success of Agenda 2063 and the other development plans.

I speak with conviction that it is time African countries developed a radical mindset change that leads to the prioritizing of funding for capacity development. For, unless we can slay the ghost of the

Prof Emmanuel Nnadozie, ACBF Executive Secretary

capacity deficits, it will be difficult to implement Agenda 2063 and SDGs.

I therefore want to reiterate the following four reasons why African states must raise their game in funding capacity for development:

**Reason 1:** The institutional capacity deficits on the continent affect every level of African life. They affect the AU Commission and its organs and prevent them from effectively coordinating the continental development agenda. They affect regional economic communities (RECs) and inhibit them from effectively playing their role as building blocks of the continental development architecture and accelerating regional integration. The deficits also affect national institutions and take away their ability to align national development plans to continental and global agendas. Moreover, they affect Africa's ability to retain, harmonize and fully utilize the capacity that it may have already sweated to acquire.

**Reason 2:** The continent has an acute shortage of the critical technical skills necessary for accelerating its industrialization and socio-economic transformation. An ACBF study on capacity needed to achieve the First Ten-Year Plan of Agenda 2063 has shown that the continent lacks over 4.3 million engineers and around 9,000 mining specialists/engineers. It is therefore imperative that Africa invests more in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, but we cannot do so without raising our game for funding capacity development.

\* This write-up also appeared in New African of November 2017

We must also pay attention not just to capacity building but also to capacity retention, capacity harmonization and capacity utilization. In fact, if African countries can build, retain and fully utilize Africa-specific critical skills they would go a long way in providing a potent solution to the mass perilous migration of millions of their youth who constitute an important asset for the transformation of the continent.

**Reason 3:** Achieving “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa” as stated in the aspirations of Agenda 2063, must be driven by Africa’s own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena. The continent cannot do this if governments don’t lead the way by equipping their citizens with the right capacities and if educational institutions do not educate Africa’s youths to solve Africa’s problems.

**Reason 4:** So far, the continental and country development plans have and remain sound, but countries lack capacity to implement them. Even the art of assessing crucial funding for development requires specialist skills, and if these skills are absent, it makes it doubly difficult to assess, appropriate and fully utilize the needed funds.

In view of the foregoing, African governments, institutions and development partners must continue to support organizations, such as ACBF, that coordinate capacity development on the continent. ACBF has the biggest comparative advantage in coordinating complex and composite capacity development programs across Africa and has been giving high-impact support to over 45 countries across the continent,

coordinating over USD700 million in grants with high standards of accountability and transparency. It has the requisite experience, complex fund management savvy, and a huge network to help countries move forward. Therefore, both non-African and African donor partners as well as the Bretton Woods institutions should take advantage of ACBF’s unique experience and fund its interventions now more than ever before given that the continent is begging for crucial leadership, managerial, scientific and technological skills to drive its transformation. As true development partners, all should work to give worthiness to Africa’s golden hands. The pages of this edition of Africa Capacity that follow will give us a sense of the direction we should be taking in this regard. Have a good read. ●

## Transforming the lives of underprivileged women in Nairobi

Ms. Violet Moraa Mogaka, an entrepreneur, is a beneficiary of the AERC’s Collaborative Masters in Agricultural and Applied Economics (CMAAE) with membership from 17 universities in Africa program partly supported by ACBF.

She now motivates girls and young women in Kibera (Africa’s largest city slum) to study hard at school and mentors housewives there to boost their household incomes through the production of peanut butter. “Anybody can consult me on matters bio-energy and Agric economics,” she says.



**PARTICIPANTS OF ACBF'S 26<sup>TH</sup> BOG URGE PARTNERS TO INCREASE THEIR SUPPORT TO ACBF SO IT CAN HELP AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY**



## Time to adequately fund Africa's capacity development

ACBF's Central role in creating an "Africa capable of achieving its own development as envisioned by the African people" was amply acknowledged by top level leaders in government and development partners who attended the 26th Annual Meeting of the ACBF Board of Governors (BoG) in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, from 4 to 5 September 2017.

Held under the theme, "Accessing Funds for Development: Required Capacities for Resource Mobilization, Utilization and Absorption", the BoG was attended by finance and economic planning ministers, other top gov-

ernment officials, leaders from the African Union Commission, the World Bank, the United Nations and others from other sectors and organizations, who, on account of the centrality of ACBF to the continent's 2063 development agenda, urged both African and non-African States, global development partners and the private sector to renew and increase their support to ACBF "in its efforts to help create an Africa capable of achieving its own development."

This was the main message contained in the final communiqué of the two days of discussions at the BoG. According to the partici-

pating African leaders and development partners, "to efficiently mobilize the available resources, countries need to tackle capacity constraints" which "include human and institutional capacity to effectively manage tax exemptions, tax evasion, capital flight, illicit financial flows, as well as constraints to accessing private resources particularly blended finance offered by public private partnership (PPP) avenues and capital markets."

The high-level delegates enumerated areas needing robust ACBF intervention for Africa's sustainable development as "human resource capacity in the public sector, science

and technology, institutional-level capacity around oversight, governance, legal systems, absorptive capacity of the private sector, and project implementation capacity."

While the participants acknowledged the pivotal role that ACBF has played in coordinating capacity development efforts on the continent, they encouraged the Foundation to do more "to produce skilled people and strong institutions capable of bringing about transformative change at national, regional and continental levels in Africa."

Another recommendation was made for the Foundation to "develop capacity of African countries to mobilize resources either domestically or on the inter-

national financial market, including through the private sector, pension funds, etc." to help with implementing their development plans."

The delegates also expressed gratitude to the World Bank for 26 years of "unwavering support" to ACBF and solemnly requested the Bank "to ensure that the results that ACBF has achieved over the past quarter of a century remain sustainable by continuing support to the Foundation and, welcomes in this regard the renewed commitment made by the Bank to continue supporting capacity development programs in Africa."

They echoed a similar note of gratitude to African member countries, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and Afreximbank, and encouraged them to keep their promise of supporting the Foundation's current Strategy covering the period from 2017 to 2021.

The new Strategy will be implemented through four mutually supportive pillars: enabling effective delivery of continental development priorities, supporting countries to achieve tangible development results, enhancing private sector and civil society contributions to sustainable development, and leveraging knowledge and learning to increase development effectiveness on the continent.

The next BoG will be hosted by the Republic of Cameroon at a date to be agreed between the Host Government and ACBF. ●

## WHAT INDIVIDUAL LEADERS SAID



**Hon. Yaw Osafo Maafa, Senior Minister, Ghana**

"We in Ghana certainly welcome any additional support for ACBF, but we should be able to mobilize among ourselves sufficient resources to keep ACBF going, before we stretch our hands to development partners for help. Their help should be the icing on the cake, not the main thing."



**Hon. Goodall Gondwe, Chair of the ACBF Board of Governors and Minister of Finance, Malawi**

"The Foundation has invested in strategic engagement along the entire policy value chain and in building human and institutional capacity across Africa, encompassing over 321 capacity development projects and a commitment of more than \$700 million to date.

"Through its 26 years of operation, our Foundation has helped us achieve significant results in terms of increasing macroeconomic stability, fiscal management

and debt sustainability; enhancing our capacity for economic policy analysis and management, thanks to the training of over 50,000 economists and public sector managers as well as the creation of more than 40 think tanks and policy institutes.”



**Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta, Minister of Finance, Ghana, and Host ACBF Board Governor**

“The government and people of Ghana are especially honored to be hosting this meeting in Accra,” he said, adding that contributions during the forum would generate a new energy in “our collective discussions on African development grounded in capacity building.”



**H.E. Kwesi Quartey, Deputy Chair, AU Commission**

“ACBF has been granted the status of Specialized Agency of the African Union not just because we like ACBF or that we simply needed to add to the list of specialized agencies to expand the AU Empire. Rather, it is solely in recognition of the criticality of capacity development on the continent and the uncontested role and vast experi-

ence of ACBF in this area.

“I am urging all African countries, development partners, and non-African members and friends to support ACBF and channel all capacity development-related support through our Specialized Technical Agency, for better coordination, efficiency, impact, and tangible results.”



**H.E. Erastus Mwencha, Chair of the ACBF Executive Board**

“Africa needs ACBF to continue playing its capacity building coordination role to effectively address development bottlenecks such as the limited absorptive capacity.

“The Foundation is well placed for this role on the continent not only because it has accumulated immense experience and knowledge on capacity development, but also because the growing impact of its operations and interventions provides the proof that capacity should be central to development.”



**Ms. Aminata Sidibé Diarra – Member, ACBF's Executive Board**

We have a big problem with capacity building, because African

countries do not make it a priority! However, Africa needs this capacity building to rise to the level of other countries. It is indispensable and we must do it! Our role as members of the ACBF Board of Directors is to lobby African countries and other donors for resource mobilization for capacity building across our continent.



**Mr. Henri Kerali, World Bank's Country Director for Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone**

“We have been with ACBF in the past 26 years and we look forward to 26 more years to develop capacity on the continent.”



**Mr. Lamin Momodou Manneh, Director, UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa**

“We have paid all our financial contributions to [ACBF's] outgoing strategic plan and we pledge to play our part in the new strategic plan. You will find in the UNDP a continued strong partner. Agenda 2063 and the SDGs would pose serious challenges to the continent without adequate financial support to ACBF.” ●

## ACBF-Michigan State University:

Hand in glove for Africa's development

In pursuit of its desire to mobilize technical and financial resources to help push the implementation of Africa's socio-economic transformation agenda, ACBF, the African Union's specialized agency for capacity development, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 18 July 2017 with the African Alliance for Partnership of the Michigan State University in the USA.

The Alliance, also known as AAP, seeks to promote sustainable, effective, and equitable long-term partnerships among African organizations with the aim of addressing mutually defined challenges across a range of thematic issues. The goal is to build networks among African partners from all sectors – including universities, NGOs, governments and the private sector

– and Michigan State University in order to address their capacity challenges.

The AAP also supports multidisciplinary partnerships for research, education and outreach activities that connect theory to practice.

Under the MoU signed at a ceremony in the Tanzanian capital, Dar es Salaam, ACBF will bring to the table nearly three decades of experience in tackling Africa's capacity development challenges while the Alliance will present its comparative advantage in strengthening African agricultural research institutes and supporting African universities in conducting relevant research studies.

ACBF's Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie, said the MOU “provides for cooperation

and collaboration in home-grown research and capacity building activities of mutual interest as defined in the new ACBF Strategic Plan 2017-2021.”

He said the priority areas of the collaboration include: (a) Building institutional research and policy engagement capacity in African partner organizations; (b) preparation of external funding proposals for African organizations; (c) provision of technical assistance in capacity development; (d) joint research and other various dimensions of capacity necessary to enhance research in Africa.

The signing was followed by a high level policy and development discussion whose theme was “Putting vision into action together.” Michigan State University faculty representatives and African development leaders and policy makers brainstormed on innovative approaches to partnership that will bring transformative change to Africa from the local to the global level. ●



**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY JOINS ACBF TO MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS ACROSS AFRICA**



## Tobacco Control: Benin's example to follow

Following the lead set by ACBF in its tobacco control program, which is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Republic of Benin took a giant step in tobacco control on 14 July 2017 when its National Assembly adopted a bill relating to the production, packaging, labelling, sale and use of tobacco, its derivatives and related products in the country.

The new Tobacco Control Bill, which was first drafted in 2011 at the initiative of the Ministry of Public Health, is meant to fill a legal void and institute control measures compliant with the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), which guides the ACBF's tobacco control program.

Among other changes, the new law comes with pictorial health warnings (to cover 75% of the main display side of cigarette packaging), a comprehensive ban on direct and indirect advertising of tobacco products, derivatives and related products, a comprehensive ban on the direct or indirect promotion and sponsorship of activities by the tobacco industries, a comprehensive ban on smoking in public places, the creation of a unit that

includes civil society responsible for the implementation of the law, and a more rigorous enforcement of Article 5.3 of the FCTC, which demands the protection of public health policies from vested interests of the tobacco industry.

Benin's new law represents a turning point for tobacco control in the country. It was not surprising therefore that ACBF expressed joy at its passing and joined the international community in congratulating Benin for the significant step forward. In particular, ACBF hailed the spirit of cooperation between civil society, the Ministry of Public Health, and all the actors in tobacco control in the country, which made this positive outcome possible.

However, as ACBF sees it, even though one good step forward has been taken by Benin to adopt the law, another equally important step remains in implementing it.

Consequently, ACBF has urged Benin's civil society to remain active and continue its advocacy work in order to prevent any delay in the implementation of the new law, which will most certainly help to protect the population from the adverse effects of smoking.

According to ACBF, Benin's example should be followed in Africa in order to ensure better health for the people of the continent, especially the youth – the future of the continent – who need a healthier environment in which to contribute to Africa's development.

Benin's new law is the culmination of six years of advocacy and mobilization by civil society, most notably the Initiative pour l'Educa-

tion et le Contrôle du Tabagisme (IECT), one of the organizations that has benefited from ACBF's tobacco control program.

Benin ratified the WHO FCTC in 2005, and on 7 August 2006 adopted Law Number 2006-12 to regulate the production, marketing, and consumption of cigarettes and other tobacco products.

It was one of the first tobacco control laws to be adopted in West Africa after the entry into force of the FCTC. However, Law Number 2006-12 soon became redundant with changes in the tobacco control environment and the adoption of new enforcement guidelines by the Conference of Parties to the FCTC. Benin therefore needed to urgently review its legal framework, taking into account the new changes and good practices adopted worldwide to improve tobacco control.

But the new tobacco bill faced stiff opposition from the tobacco industry. As such, it was only at the end of 2016 that the bill was officially presented to Parliament. During this period, the IECT proved to be a crucial actor in the process by mobilizing civil society and lobbying decision makers and stakeholders to be interested in promoting the bill.

The IECT's work, in partnership with ACBF, was intended, among other things, to enhance knowledge among parliamentarians about tobacco control with a view to adopting the new law to regulate the production, marketing, and consumption of tobacco products in Benin. The adoption of the bill by Parliament, therefore, is a victory for both the IECT and ACBF.



The West African country shows the way in tobacco control



## The Gambia: strides in development planning

With support from ACBF, The Gambia's new government, headed by H.E. President Adama Barrow, launched a capacity needs assessment exercise on 21 August 2017 to support the implementation of the country's National Development Plan (2018-2021) which is in its final stages of formulation.

The launch followed a scoping mission to The Gambia by the ACBF in March 2017, which was followed in May by a country-visit by the Foundation's Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie.

During the visit, President Adama Barrow told the ACBF delegation that solutions to the difficulties faced by African nations lay within the continent itself and that

institutions such as ACBF could help make all the difference. He said The Gambia needed civil service reforms and capacity building to steer it in the right direction.

It is in this context that an ACBF team of experts engaged various ministries, departments, and agencies in The Gambia to conduct thorough institutional and human capacity reviews of those institutions. The selection of participating bodies was in line with priorities identified by The Gambian government in the National Development Plan (NDP).

As a demonstration of the seriousness with which the country takes the exercise, the government set up a High-level Coordination Committee, comprising the

With ACBF's support, Government kick-starts capacity audit for implementing its development program

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance (chair), the Permanent Secretaries from the Office of the President, Office of the Vice President, PMO, Ministry of Higher Education, and the Solicitor General to oversee the development of both the NDP and the capacity needs assessment exercise.

In addition to providing funding for the capacity needs assessment exercise, ACBF is also supporting The Gambia in various capacity development initiatives, mainly involving the training of civil servants and other public officials to provide them with skills to deliver on the government's agenda. ●

## ACBF/ NEPAD putting AU reforms first

The two continental institutions collaborate for a good cause

ACBF and the AU's NEPAD Agency have pledged to collaborate in a big way to help build synergies between Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and specialized technical committees serving the African Union to achieve continental plans.

"We must work hand in glove to develop strategies for resource mobilization to streamline institutional and human capacity for sustainable development in Africa, and there is no better time than now to hitch our horses to achieve this goal," said ACBF's Executive Secretary, Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie, during a strategic and technical working session between ACBF and NEPAD teams following the 29th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa in early July 2017.

The collaboration is aimed at boosting the development of major sectors such as infrastructure, natural resource management, food security, and agriculture. At the first working session in early July, it was



agreed that these sectors, on which the NEPAD Agency currently lays emphasis, should constitute the key areas of the collaboration, while the ACBF contributes the indispensable component of capacity development.

The working session was held in the context of ongoing efforts to streamline the structures and functioning of the African Union and its institutions – a task that African leaders entrusted to H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and a pan-African advisory team.

"Giving the ongoing developments to reform the African Union and the functioning of its main bodies, it has become incumbent on our two institutions to join forces to accompany Africa in achieving this crucial Agenda," said Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of the NEPAD Agency.

Replying, Prof. Nnadozie said: "The centrality of developing capacity for African institutions and the people manning these institutions is now both evident

to everyone and crucial for the continent to achieve its plans for transformation."

The principals of ACBF and NEPAD agreed that it was necessary to join forces to develop capacity, which Africa urgently needs, to deliver on its transformation agenda.

Collaboration by the two institutions has gone on at a low-key level for more than a decade. Now they want to raise the game.

During the last decade, ACBF has helped to: (a) Improve the delivery of NEPAD by strengthening its human capacity in core strategic management functions. (b) Enhance its organizational effectiveness through reviews of its structure, functions, systems and procedures. (c) Attract qualified personnel for NEPAD in key administrative and management functions by contributing to the establishment of conditions conducive for retention of qualified professionals to ensure that NEPAD delivers results. ●

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## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN AFRICA: Capacity Building and Innovative Strategies

Occasional Paper No. 30, 2017



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION





## **SUPPORTING ECOWAS' MOVE TOWARDS A SINGLE CURRENCY**

“At ECOWAS today, we are moving towards a single currency, but we need to harmonize the public finance framework and it is the recommendations from CAPEC’s research [supported by ACBF] that are being implemented at ECOWAS level”

*says Prof Alban Ahoure, Director of Côte d'Ivoire's Economic Policy Analysis Unit of CIRES (CAPEC).*