DRAFT REPORT OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA TASK FORCE MEETING

HELD AT NOVOTEL, TUNIS ON 29th and 30th JULY 2013

Participants

Professor Mohamed F. Chouikha
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
School of Engineering, CEACS

Prof. Irene U. Osisioma
California State University, Dominguez Hills

Professor Hamadou Saliah-Hassane
TELUQ- Université du Québec 5800,

Professor I.K.Dabipi
Department of Engineering and Aviation Sciences

Professor Damtew Teferra
Center for International Higher Education, Lynch School of Education,
Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

Professor Temilade Abimbola
Division Manager, EADI

Dr. Michel Guedegbe
Chief Education Specialist, OSHD, AfDB

Dr. Oussama Ben Abdelkarim
Senior Education Economist, OSHD, AfDB

Mr. Ahlin Byll-Cataria, Executive Secretary, ADEA

Dr. Bola Elegbe, Coordinator of African Diaspora Task Force, ADEA

Mrs. Rosepamela Ouma, Assistant to the Executive Secretary, ADEA

Introduction and Background Information

ADEA established the African Diaspora Task Force following the request of the African Diaspora that the Association should "implement African Diaspora inclusion in sustainable development processes, particularly that pertaining to education, research, skills and knowledge transfers in Africa by creating a working group on the Diaspora and committing to follow up on the 2012 Diaspora Day

recommendations". The purpose of the meeting of the Task Force was to examine the initiatives proposed by its members, identify new ones, agree on concrete implementation steps and also identify partners and sources of funding for the initiatives. The Executive Secretary of ADEA, Ahlin Byll-Cataria, presided over the meeting.

As most of the participants at the meeting knew little about ADEA, the first part of the meeting was devoted to discussing ADEA's activities, strategic plan and on-going collaboration with African countries. Essentially, there was a common understanding that for the African Diaspora to collaborate effectively with ADEA, it has to identify countries that it has been collaborating with or those that have requested for help; provide data that could be drawn from to develop a concept note or to support any proposal which would be used to mobilize resources. ADEA disclosed that it was already collaborating with the following countries in one way or the other on the basis of the new paradigm, and therefore they could be countries which the African Diaspora could engage for support.

Country	Areas of Need
Burkina Faso	Common Core Skills, TVSD, Technical skills School leadership development
Cote d'Ivoire	Technical and Vocational skills
Niger	Teacher training, incubator initiative at the University
Angola	Science and Technology and Higher Education
Democratic Republic of Congo	Secondary education and TVSD
Kano State	Teacher and school leadership development Gender issues Skills development Integrating ICT into General Education and TVSD Books and Instructional Materials

Participants expressed the view that in engaging the countries in the implementation of the new paradigm shift in education, a multiple approach should be considered in a few regions and specific areas where the Diaspora with specific skills could help. They believed that highly committed and willing partners would be important for any pilot project and such individuals could be from the Ministry of Education, universities, etc. There was a general understanding that ADEA and the African Diaspora could identify and support existing initiatives particularly in countries where ADEA already has a strong relationship with Education Ministers. They would need to determine where success could be achieved within a short time, taking into account existing skills and how to build on them. It would be useful to work with the local universities.

What the African Diaspora can do in Higher Education

The African Diaspora members indicated several ways in which it could deploy its intellectual capital and immense experience in education and technology to work with ADEA in support of African countries.

The first step would be to identify critical gaps in countries where assistance would be provided; generate ideas and gather relevant statistics to define the nature of the gaps; interface with interested countries to determine what they need. For instance, Kano State (Nigeria) and Angola have identified their needs.

The Diaspora could use summer months to teach or supervise PhD students; do an evaluation of higher institutions' infrastructure to determine the nature of deficit and assistance required; and to establish industry-university partnership. There is need to identify industries with which universities could collaborate. It is preferable and more cost-effective to bring in the experts to teach doctorate students than to send them abroad. The Task Force also explored the possibility of introducing mobile laboratories and noted that if the higher institutions could accept the concept of "@ university" (for example @Howard University) they would have the advantage of having direct link and access in their own country to the facilities of university to which they are affiliated. That would be of great benefit to students. The objective is to establish linkages between the universities and the Diaspora in their areas of need to enhance successful collaboration. In implementing these proposals the African Diaspora suggested that ADEA should take into account areas of partnership and expertise, identify the easiest countries to work with; hold a conference with high level people of the country; and determine what the African Diaspora could achieve in two years

The challenges

The Task Force identified a number of challenges which inhere in the educational institutions in Africa. They include, among others, lack of modern and adequate educational infrastructure and the use of outdated pedagogy and teaching materials. There is also the challenge that the youth are trained in higher institutions but there are no jobs because of the disconnect between the skills and knowledge they acquire and what the society, particularly the economic sector, actually needs. It would be necessary to identify the skills needed to enhance youth employability and productivity.

Proposed Areas of Contribution of the Diaspora

In the light of the various challenges in the education and training systems, the Task Force identified various areas in which the Diaspora networks could contribute to improving the situation. They include, among others, the following:

- Enquiry based learning /Constructivist instruction
- Technology enhanced learning, (e.g. the use of raspberry computers and Mobile Studios)
- ICT Infrastructure with low maintenance cost
- Teacher evaluation (for accountability), assessment and certification
- Entrepreneurship: manufacturing skills – design, development and marketing
- Nanotechnology and textile
- Diaspora voluntary guest support
- Converge the real world to the cyber world (commodity exchange, quality assurance)
- Technical and scientific expertise in agriculture

Sources of Finance

The Task Force acknowledged the fact that ADEA needed financial resources in order to effectively implement programs or projects with the countries. In this regard it was disclosed that the inaugural USAID fund, managed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was very generous and that the Makerere University was benefiting from the fund. ADEA could also tap from it with the assistance and guidance of the Diaspora members. Members of the Task Force also volunteered to approach agencies and foundations owned by some individual African Diaspora members in the USA for financial support to ADEA. The Task Force noted that the AfDB, the World Bank, USAID, foreign universities and some bilateral agencies were possible sources of finance. A member indicated that he could help to approach an organization that had expressed the desire to invest money in education development. ADEA could follow up with a proposal.

Follow-up Actions

In capsule members agreed that the following actions would need to be taken as the way forward to achieving the objectives of the Task Force. Diaspora members would prepare a proposal on the topic "*enabling technology for education and training*" which may include mobile laboratory, online engineering, etc. Its implementation would be in the countries already collaborating with ADEA or are receptive to the proposed assistance. The ADEA Secretariat would provide concrete information and documents and terms of reference for the collaboration with the countries identified for support. A workshop would be organized in January 2014 in Kano State, Nigeria. The Task Force should work out modalities for engaging the Pan-African Universities.

On behalf of ADEA and its Executive Secretary, the Coordinator of the Task Force thanked all the Task Force members for honoring the invitation to attend meeting and, more importantly, for their immense contributions. He noted with delight that the meeting was a concrete step towards collaboration between the African Diaspora and ADEA to achieve a common manifest destiny.