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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our activities in 2015 would not have been possible without the support of our funders and we would like to thank Irish Aid, Trócaire, Dublin City Council, City of Dublin Youth Service Board, IMPACT and all those who have provided us with financial support during the year.

We also sincerely thank our dedicated volunteers for this past year, without whom, the centre would not have survived as we didn't have paid staff for most of the year.

Finally, we want to thank our Board members for their invaluable contributions to the work of the organisation during the past year.

2. CHAIRPERSON INTRODUCTION

I have the greatest pleasure introducing to you the Africa Centre annual report for the year 2015 and hope that you find it useful and informative. The year was no doubt very challenging as the centre focussed its attention on implementing the rest of the strategic plan (2014 -2015) by consolidating its outreach and networking activities with members of the African community and the wider Irish society.

Throughout the year, we organised various events aimed at highlighting the contributions of the African Community to Irish life through the first development education residential activity in Waterford, a continued distribution of the 'Africa Also Smiles' posters, various workshops called "Giving Voice to the African Diaspora" in Dublin, Galway, and Waterford. We had a collaborative work with AkiDwA and ENAR Ireland to launch the anti-racism manifesto, the African Community Forum, the annual lecture which was superbly delivered by Selena McCarty of the Black Poppy from United Kingdom.

Our Director Mbemba Jabbi left us during the year due to funding lost which the Centre entered into public engagement volunteer recruitment. While we have wished every success in his future endeavours and look forward to welcoming his successor; I have to acknowledge that the Board and the organisation quickly got into difficulties after Mr Jabbi's departure as we met the greatest moment of untold dreamers leading us into a deeper crisis. Today the Africa Centre thanks to Mr Jabbi for his love and passion to the African cause, he came back with my request to help us rescuing the organisation without any condition to assist us finalising reports to funders, putting together this report as a consultant in gaining the successes we are enjoying today.

These accomplishments, as always, were made possible by men and women who support the Centre in various capacities: consultants, facilitators, mentors and donors without forgetting to mention the hard work and huge input of the devoted and committed board members.

On behalf of the board I want to thank all the staff and volunteers during the year (Mbemba, Hafsa, Victoria, Kosi, Elizabeth, Brittany, Armaan, Daud and Kwame (web designer) for their tireless and hard work during the year. I thank Africa Centre Board members for giving me their unparalleled support from the momentary solidarity that was needed to challenge a difficult time through the vote of no confidence between the outgoing Chairperson and I, which I earned their trust and support. I took up the mantle of leadership at the Centre with a strong believe we will overcome the challenge as brothers and sisters working in unity toward a common goal.

I have no doubt that standing shoulder to shoulder we will accomplish Africa Centre's mission.

Finally, I would like to thank members of the Africa Centre, Funders, contributors and supporters for ensuring that the organisation grows from year to year.



Lassane Ouedraogo
Chairperson

3. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (FACILITATE A NETWORK TO ENCOURAGE A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION AMONG AFRICANS AT HOME AND AT EUROPEAN LEVEL)

3.1 Community Participation

The 2015 population figures of people of African descent living in Ireland is estimated at over 70,000, African Diaspora communities have increasingly realised they need to organise themselves in a more structured way. In the last two years, the Africa Centre organised the Africa Forum which produced the Africa Council.

However, the work of the council was not very productive due to lack of resources, but also individual representation rather group or regional affiliated membership has been a challenge to get the group working and it failed to secure resources to organise the Africa Forum in 2015.

Thus, it was agreed that the work of the Africa Council will be suspended as it has been funded from the Africa Centre and the organisation do not have a budget line for the expenses and future funding can be sought to continue hosting Africa Forum, which give space to African Diaspora in Ireland to discuss issues affecting them in Ireland and how to overcome them

Africa Centre and the Wheel held three people's conversation discussion in February, March and April in Dublin city centre looking at the role of citizens in shaping Ireland. The meeting was specifically targeting the African Diaspora as an initiative to rethink Citizenship for today's Ireland. The meeting was attended by over seven people at each time.

3.2 Regional Networks



Africa Centre held its first development education residential activity in Waterford organised in collaboration with the Waterford African communities facilitated by Teleja Tshimbalanga one of our Board members. The even broth together over 10youths and 5adults to discuss themes related to African diaspora and development, images and messages, representation, role of youths in African societies and how to make the Intercultural Youth Society Stronger.

Development Education training in Waterford

3.3 Referrals and Networking

In 2015, the Africa Centre continued providing information and referrals to members of the African diaspora communities on immigration, health, education and other areas of interest and we received numerous phone calls and visits from interested persons looking for information on services that African community offers in Ireland and information on African countries or country specific issues.

We continued our membership of European Network against Racism (ENAR), Africa Europe

Platform (AEP) at the European level. At home, we are members of Dochas (the umbrella body of Irish Development NGOs) and Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) of development educators. We continue to network with African led organisations in Europe; through Africa Europe Platform (AEP) a project of African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) in the UK, which supported Africa Centre organized our Africa Forum in 2013 and assisted us financially during the year.

On the 20th and 21st February Africa Centre attended the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty Forum which was co-hosted by Dublin City Council and UNDP in partnership with UN Women and UNITAR and in association with the Irish EU Presidency. For the Africa Centre the event was a networking avenue, but also to learn what African representatives from cities across the continent are doing to combat poverty as more and more people are now resettling in cities from the rural communities.

During the year, we attended meetings organised by AkiDwA, Dublin City Council, Irish Aid, Trocaire, ARN (Anti-Racism Network Ireland), Immigrant Council of Ireland, ENAR (European Network Against Racism) Brussels, Oxfam, Debt and Development Coalition and South African Embassy.

4. CREATE A PLATFORM FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF AFRICAN YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRELAND

During the year the Intercultural Youth Society (IYS) hosted a few interns from the United States and in Ireland, who were doing the youth mobilization and organising mountain walk in Wicklow as well as the development education day out in Waterford. The IYS received funding from IMPACT and City of Dublin Youth Service Board for summer activities.

5. DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION DISCOURSE, POLICY AND PRACTICE IN IRELAND AND AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

Our 2015 development education activities were mainly Irish Aid and WorldWide Global Schools funded activities, which included annual lecture, printing of Africa Also Smiles resources (teacher resources, poster and stickers) and carrying out education activities with schools.

The main development education activity was the annual lecture. Africa Centre annual lecture was done in collaboration with Trinity College and Dublin City Council on the 21st January at Trinity College, with the theme China in Africa – What is there to learn? Our guest speaker for the event was Ms Sombo Chunda of Zambia and key note speaker was Professor Pdraig Carmody of Trinity College.

Hafsa Belayachi went to a school with Africa Also Smiles resource pack for DevEd activities with pupils at Saint Aidan's Community School, Tallaght on the 6th march

6. MEETINGS

Director attended Dóchas and Irish Aid meeting on beyond 2015 held on the 15th January at the Department of Foreign Affairs. The meeting was also attended by Ms. Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on the post MDG (Millennium Development Goals), a Nigerian. Ireland was the co-chair with Kenya for the sustainable development goals negotiations post MDGs and Ms. Mohammed's was in Ireland to meet with government officials and NGOs, explaining to them the preparations for post 2015 MDGs, what is happening with the negotiations. Africa Centre had one to one discussion

with Ms. Mohammed on what the Africa Centre has been doing on the beyond 2015 MDGs campaign, our role in Dóchas and what we intend to do in 2015.

Africa Centre Director on the 16th January attended the launch of the European Year of development co-organised by the Irish Members of European Parliament (MEPs), Dóchas and Concern Worldwide, held at the European parliament office in Dublin. The Africa Centre Director informed the MEPs that, they should include the African Diaspora in their plans for the year as there are over 70,000 Africans in Ireland most of them Irish who can influence Ireland's development policy in a positive way.

On the 18th February – Africa Centre director attended Ireland Fund Workshop on funding and we submitted expression of interest to their 2014 Flagship Investments Grant Round for funding for two years, from mid-2015 to mid-2017. We applied but wasn't successful based on the reason that the Africa Centre do not have history with the funder and the amount requested are normally given to organisations that have long standing relationship with the funder.

The Director, chairperson and Community Participation Officer met with Dublin City Council to secure venue for the 23rd May Africa Day outdoor event. The meeting was successful, but the event didn't go ahead due to lack of funding to organise the event.

Lassane Ouedraogo and Hafsa Belayachi attended Wezesha strategic launch on 10th March 2015 in Dublin and director met with Ireland humanitarian summit coordinator on 13th March to discuss the preparatory seminars and director attended a two-day Irish humanitarian summit preparatory seminars on the 23rd and 26th March.

The event "Make My Africa Day" on 19th May, Africa Centre, AkiDWA and ENAR Ireland came together to launch a report on tackling racism against people with African descent in Europe and Ireland.

Africa Centre attended lecture delivered by UN secretary general at Dublin Castle, 25th May as part of the negotiations for the Sustainable Development Goals (STGs) that Ireland and Kenya are the co-ordinating partners.

Director attended Dochas signatories meeting as one of the requirements for organisation who are signatories of the code. The Dóchas Code of Conduct event is an annual event which seeks to bring members of the overseas development NGO sector together with organisations that signed up to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (which was developed in 2007), to discuss the way in which global issues and global development is being communicated. The director was also a panellist at the event discussing Media & Development – Does the Code of Conduct Get in the Way?

The chairperson and the director met with the Trocaire team on 18th June to update them on the Africa Centre from the time we received unrestricted funding from them in 2013. We also discussed the future plans of the centre including the Trocaire Mobilization for Justice (MfJ) funding application due 26th June 2015.

The director and programme development intern attended the two-day conference in Maynooth on 23rd and 24th June. The public conference themed "Meeting the Challenge of Climate Justice: From Evidence to Action" was aimed bringing together some of the world's

leading voices on climate science, climate justice and climate activism to discuss global challenges faced by climate change.

Hafsa Belayachi Community Participation Officer (CPO) attended a working group meeting with the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner to discuss the work of the commission and updates on refugee applications and the asylum system.

Director met with Irish Development Education Association Director Frank Geary to discuss Deved and our meeting with Irish Aid on our strategic plan which end up having a meeting on our 2015 funding application.

Lassane Ouedraogo, a Board member attended the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) 2015 AGM in June, where he represented the Africa Centre. He met with a few African Diaspora leaders from Slovenia, Sweden, Germany and Norway at the AGM who requested the collaboration of the Africa Centre to be part of the “Decade of People of African Descent” initiatives.

The directors of the five organisations (AkiDwA, Wezehsa, Forum Polonia and NCP) met on 11th August to brainstorm on activities to mobilised Diaspora in Ireland to participate in Irish politics, especially to mobilise registration, standing for election and voting.

7. COMMUNICATION (WEBSITE, FACEBOOK AND TWITTER ACCOUNTS

Funding was secured as part of our Irish Aid development education grant to redevelop our website and contract was agreed with Kwame Afriya to update the site with new features. The website can be viewed at www.africacentre.ie . As at 31st December 2015 the website has over 25,000 visitors and this can be seen on the website.

Our Facebook and Twitter accounts have generated interest in the work of the centre and we use the networks to highlight our work and invite people to our events. Our Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/africacentredublin>) has over 4300 friends. Our twitter account can be view at https://twitter.com/Africa_Centre .

8. CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

This year, the Africa Centre faced more challenges financially to offer community services to the African diaspora communities. We weren't able to organise the African Diaspora Community Forum and most of the needed services to African diaspora youths couldn't take place either.

Challenges:

- The lack of funding has seen the Director been made redundant at the end of the year and the centre was managed by two volunteers.
- There was lack of support to the regional networks as planned.

Way forward:

- A funding mechanism must be drawn, reference can be made from the draft fundraising plan done by Lamin Bojang (former Treasurer) to come up with activities in the year to generate unrestricted funds for the Centre. And as part of the plan, the Board needs to commits to work in submitting funding application to funders.

- It is essentially important for Africa Centre to map out funding sources and target them for African diaspora community activities that will make the centre visible and recruit staff to implement these activities in line with the needs of the African communities.
- The programme of action for the new Board:
 1. Put in place a timeframe for a few strategic activities and ways to fund them that will see permanent staff been employed to carry out the plans.
 2. Set up strategic working groups and select chairs of each of the working groups based on the interest and skills of the Board members.
 3. Redefining the Africa Centre itself targeting the African diaspora communities at the centre of its activities which will strengthen the organisation
 4. Look for collaboration with other Africa diaspora led organisation in Europe to partner on project that will benefit the African communities in Ireland

9. FUNDING AND FINANCE

Irish Aid approved funding of	€20,000
Other small-scale funding of	€13,000

10. STAFF, INTERN/VOLUNTEERS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2013

Staff Members

Mr. Mbemba Jabbi	Director Redundant 31 st September 2015
Brendan Coyle	Admin and Finance Officer

Volunteers/Interns

Ms. Hafsa Belayachi	Community Participation Officer
Ms. Kosi Anyanwu	Youth Development Officer
Mr. Daud Adilahi Gilingel	Youth development Officer
Ms. Elizabeth Salako	Community Participation Officer
Ms. Brittany Sherman	Youth Development Officer
Ms. Armaan Sanghera	Youth Development Officer
Ms. Victoria Mkandawire	Communication Intern

Board Members

Farai Jeyacheya
 Joseph Nyirenda
 Niall O’Keeffe
 Gugu Ndlovu,
 Benoni Samuels
 Janet Horner
 Michael Isichei
 Ebenezer Segatu
 Melody Chadamoyo
 Lassane Ouedraogo
 Teleja Tshimbalanga