

REPORT OF OPERATIONS  
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## TESTIMONIAL FOR A WORTHY PARTNER

*I*n recent months, a broad consensus has developed among African leaders on the following key points:

- The economic and political marginalisation of Africa must be reversed;
- Leadership and control of African development must rest with Africans themselves;
- Economic progress depends on complementary progress in governance and democratisation;
- Aid effectiveness must be increased.

To translate these goals into actions, three very important strategic initiatives have been launched by African leaders: the African Union (AU), the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

To help develop a broad consensus among Africans for these initiatives, the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) is organising a series of regional and sub regional conferences for parliamentarians and civil society representatives. With such a consensus, and with support from the international community, it is hoped that real progress can be made and that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will indeed see Africa's renaissance.

The first of these conferences, for African Parliamentarians on Recent Strategic Development Initiatives in Africa, was held in Accra, Ghana from 18-20 April, 2002. With financial support from the Governments of Canada, the Netherlands and Norway, ALF brought together parliamentarians from 25 African countries; the conference concluded that the three initiatives are important attempts to reverse the downward trend in the development profile of Africa and stressed the fact that Africa's development agenda be designed, managed and led by Africans. The parliamentarians pledged their assistance and support in ensuring the overall success of the initiatives and declared their willingness to cooperate with other stakeholders, especially the civil society, including women's organisations, the indigenous private sector and the African Parliamentary Union in the quest to advance peace, stability and development in Africa.

The World Bank Institute (WBI) is pleased to support this initiative. Not only did our staff attend the conference and contribute to deliberations at the conference- and we are intending to provide further support as these initiatives move forward- we are also assisting with the publishing and distribution of this important Proceedings document which will be translated into French, Portuguese and Arabic and distributed to parliamentarians across Africa.

For several years now, WBI has provided support to African Parliaments, as part of its broader Governance Programme. Focusing primarily on issues relating to parliamentary oversight (including over the budget) and the role of parliaments in poverty reduction (especially with regards to Poverty Reduction Strategies-the PRSPs) WBI has worked with parliamentary leaders in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. Of utmost importance to us is our relationship with, and thus, the strengthening of indigenous African institutions that are also working to strengthen African parliaments. ALF is one such organisation with this initiative being the third joint collaborative effort between WBI and ALF.

I would like to acknowledge the very important contributions of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands to WBI's support for this endeavour.

**Frannie Leautier**  
Vice President, World Bank Institute

## INTRODUCTION

*A*frica's civil society is at a crossroads. For the operators of the system the period following the liberalisation of the political space with the decimation of civil strife, rulership of the military and death of apartheid, the challenge of relevance became germane. 2002 was however a watershed for key civil society organisations to establish that there can be no lull to ideas that have universal application. For the Africa Leadership Forum that year established that the successes it had garnered over its 14 years of existence were no fluke! The challenges of the continent in its post-military, post-apartheid and post civil war era were the primary concern. There is no gainsaying that the ALF acquainted and applied itself scrupulously, creditably and meticulously to the terms that informed its formation in 1988 when there were no private institutions to prepare for the challenges of economic marginalisation, political inadequacies and development in Africa. The implication of this is in form of new sets of challenges for the continent and its leadership, in terms of devising concerted and workable strategies for combating the myriads of problems the continent has faced.

*The year 2002 provided the leeway for the operationalisation of some African designed, African initiated, and African managed response mechanisms to her problems. Chief among these are the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), which, ALF scored a bull's eye as its initiator*

In practical terms, it is imperative that a strategic framework informs Africa's engagement with the rest of the world. Such an agenda, must in turn, evolve within the framework of an African collective solidarity on issues of socio-economic development, integration, security and stability, democratisation and human rights. To these challenge we have responded. Our response was our genuine quest for real freedom, undisguised liberty and total liberation of the African continent and its people.

Within these broad challenges, the Africa Leadership Forum, as the premier civil society organisation has been able to locate a central role for itself. The way forward, our informed search has revealed is for Africa to engage the rest of the world by evolving a series of initiatives to deal with her developmental agenda.

The year 2002 provided the leeway for the operationalisation of some African designed, African initiated, African managed response mechanisms to her problems. Chief among these are the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) which ALF scored a bull's eye as its initiator, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an initiative of African heads of States and Governments which also gained international acclaim as key to Africa's renaissance and the transition of the Organisation of Africa Unity to African Union with Octopus powers in July of the year under review.

Way back in Kampala, Uganda in May, 1991, the ALF had initiated in cooperation with the secretariats of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), organised a series of consultative meetings culminating in the adoption of the Kampala Document containing the proposals for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa, (CSSDCA).

Variously described as Africa's *Magna Carta*, the CSSDCA has won the support of numerous Africa states and especially non-governmental organisations, influential individuals and opinion leaders. It is without doubt the foremost precursor of the current NEPAD and APRM. In spite of this, it suffered long, windy, tortuous and rough travails on the road to its adoption in the year 2000 by Heads of States and Governments of Africa. The inability to secure the adoption of the CSSDCA proposals by the continental body itself was however, largely a result of the fear the proposals initially elicited among a number of vulnerable regimes in 1991. Within the OAU itself, there was no recorded or concerted opposition to the process itself. And, the two countries that opposed it have done so purely on matters of "national policy".

Taking a cue from the CSSDCA document, the NEPAD is an equally ambitious project aimed principally at regional integration, with in-built mechanisms for curtailing the excesses of political leadership and ushering in a reign of prosperity in and around the continent of Africa.

The implications of these two continental agenda are legion for the emerging social order within the re-invigorated African Union, which has far larger organs than the OAU which it replaced. For the ALF as partner, which provides logistic and technical backstopping for these initiatives, it has been a year of constructive engagement.

This report will provide a bird's eye view of the activities of the Africa Leadership Forum in the 2002 project year. The report will cover the following programme activities:

- i. Regionally, we had the Africa Women's Forum focussing on Africa Women and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and
- ii. The Regional Conference for Parliamentarians on Recent Strategic Development Initiatives in Africa, which formed the crux of the ALF international programme for the year under review.

On the local Nigeria scene, the Capacity Building Projects **we successfully to collaborate with the private sector** through the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC) and the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) on the following issue areas:

- i. On the issue of Women and Peace in Nigeria: Strategy for Sustainable Development.
- ii. The Role of Professionals in Nation Building: the Issue of Ethics and the Consequences of Failure. Other local programmes undertaken were:
- iii. The Improving Service Delivery Workshops

With the public sector, leveraging our clout and access we were able to collaborate with the federal government to give citizenship education some a focussed attention as we facilitated a Project on ethical regeneration under the aegis of the **Hope Project**.

The report will also provide an overview of the publications that have emanated from our stable this year. Indeed all the programmes have published works. And of course, the *Africa Forum*, the ALF journal of democracy, leadership and development, which acts as the institutional medium for disseminating ideas, views and principles on our activities and programmes, will be reviewed.

## The Programmes:

### **The Africa Women Forum (AWF)**

ALF in seeking a reversal of the obvious unequal gender representation in the scheme of things had created at its ninth Annual International Conference convened in Accra, Ghana in January 1997, the Africa Women's Forum, based on the theme of that year's meeting "**Empowering Women for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Challenges of politics, business, development and leadership**". The AWF has since become an annual event.

The initial meeting was chaired by H.E. Mrs. Graca Machel and was opened by H.E. Mrs. Nana Rawlings, the first lady of the Republic of Ghana. The AWF strives to promote the collective interest and leadership of women in Africa through research, training and advocacy and the strengthening of the abilities, competences and capabilities of Africa Women's networks. The AWF also seeks greater collaboration and partnership between Africa women's networks and with governments, intergovernmental agencies and other international civil society organisations for the improvement of the status of women in Africa.

Pursuant to the Accra meeting, the inaugural meeting of the Africa Women's Forum was convened in Cape Town, South Africa from 28-30 May, 1998 under

Cognisant of the fact that the issue of governance in Africa had been predominantly patriarchal and that in high-level decision-making, policy formulations and governance issues, gender sensitive approaches have rarely been in evidence, and the role of women in these areas are seriously underrepresented, the ALF in pursuit of genuine equality has always sought to strengthen women's unique contributions to governance issues.

the main theme of "Leadership and Communication for Empowerment".

The focus of the 1999

Africa Women's Forum was the launching of the **Index of the Status of Women in Africa**. This international conference was convened in *Abidjan, Cote d' Ivoire*, August 23-24 1999.

ALF convened the Third Africa Women's Forum in collaboration with the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development (AWCPD), Femme Afrique Solidarite (FAS), and the Tunisian Ministry of Women and Family Affairs from January 22-24, 2001.

The theme of the three-day conference held at the Hilton Hotel in Tunis, Tunisia was *Women and Conflict Management in Africa*.

The theme of the three-day meeting was **Women and Conflict Management in Africa**. H.E. Dr. Specioza Wandira Kazibwe, Vice-President, Republic of Uganda chaired the proceeding. Mrs. Angela King, the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues, delivered the keynote address. Madam Naziha Zarrouk, Tunisia's Minister for Women and Family Affairs, formally declared the meeting open.

In attendance at the meeting were over 100 participants drawn from twenty countries and from across the world. They represented a cross-section of the various networks within the women's movement in Africa and Europe, including political leaders, parliamentarians, ministers and development professionals and representatives regional and global inter-governmental organisations.

The overwhelming success of the **4<sup>th</sup> Africa Women's Forum took root from its precursor**. Held at the Secretariat of the Africa Leadership Forum, Ota, Nigeria between 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2002, the conference was a joint initiative of the Africa Leadership Forum and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) drew an array of distinguished women, among whom were ministers, women in strategic positions in the civil society organisations, the international organisations, across Africa, Europe and North America.

The conference was declared opened by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria who was represented by the minister of Aviation, H.E. Dr. Kema Chikwe, Honourable Minister for Aviation in Nigeria. The chairmanship of the President of the Constitutional Court of the Benin Republic, Prof. Conceptua Oquinosu was chairperson.

To put the New Partnership initiative on the right footing, the ALF saw an obvious need to involve African women by convening, deliberating and synergizing on the issue of *NEPAD*. Some of the important issues that were at the conference addressed included the following:

- *What is the overall strategic interest of African women in the NEPAD?*
- *How can we ensure that African women effectively participate in NEPAD activities and make significant contributions towards programmes development, project selection and implementation?*
- *How can we ensure effective and strategic representation of African women on various Regional Committees and Special Task Teams working on NEPAD such that issues affecting women are considerably reflected in the various outputs of these committees*
- *What strategic framework should African women adopt in responding to opportunities and challenges embedded in the NEPAD initiative?*
- *What plans of action should we put in place to create a broad based awareness among African women on the importance, relevance and opportunities within the NEPAD?*
- *How can a network of African women that is capable of facilitating strategic planning and implementation be established and what will be the framework for effective interface between and among African women?*
- *How can the various government and sub-regional Economic Communities be ensured that women play a significant role in development and*

*implementation of NEPAD programmes (e.g. Health, Youth, Governance, Economics, Conflict Prevention)*

- *Which priority projects can be identified and what development framework is required to facilitate their implementation?*
- *What mechanism can African governments use to monitor and evaluate the situation and progress in the continent regarding security, stability, development and cooperation and which role can women play in this process?*
- *How can African women play a pro-active instead of re-active role in policy development and implementation on a continental level?*

### **Conclusions of the Conference:**

*A*t the end of the three-day conference, the participants made the following recommendation to the NEPAD document which they consider pertinent to the realization of the ideals that inspired the advent of the initiative.

1. The conference reviewed the main NEPAD Document as adopted by the NEPAD Steering Committee Meeting in October 2001 and commended and saluted the efforts, the foresight and the vision of African leaders behind the NEPAD initiative.
2. Participants saw in the NEPAD initiative a further affirmation of an emerging responsive leadership that is aware and cognizant of its responsibility to its people and the continent. This was hailed as positive development and a major departure from the previous trend of sub serving and pursuing developmental agenda designed, managed and led by non-Africans. The conference observed that this positive trend development must be supported, encouraged and made to become the defining hallmark of African development in the years ahead.
3. The conference therefore called on African women in particular and the African civil society in general, to provide the required popular support, which will be critical in ensuring the success of the NEPAD initiative. African political leaders were also enjoined to seek ways and means of ensuring that NEPAD becomes a people based, people focused and people driven initiative.
4. Conceptually, there is a major gender gap in NEPAD, as it does not give enough attention to gender-related issues. Noting that the contribution of African women to sustainability and stability is crucial, participants therefore urged the NEPAD Implementation and The Steering Committees to initiate processes to address positively this major omission.

5. That NEPAD Implementation and the Steering Committees should also endeavour to undertake as urgently as possible a needs assessment of all vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children, the poor and the disabled and incorporate same in project identification, selection and execution. Participants also saw the need for the document to contain more comprehensive and thorough going strategies with clear indicators for measuring progress towards the mitigation of corruption and all forms of administrative and financial malfeasance which has continued to undermine development efforts in Africa.
6. Participants urged the Chairman of the NEPAD Implementation Committee to consult urgently with his colleagues with a view to creating an interface mechanism for effective participation and representation of civil society organization especially those of women, in the task teams and other strategic committees of NEPAD;
7. That the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) should develop a follow-up mechanism that will create an effective framework for continuous interaction with the Chairman of the NEPAD Implementation Committee. Such a mechanism should include facilitation of high level experts consultative meetings, formulation of country level strategy document and participation of women and CSOs in development partners meetings and other national and regional meetings of NEPAD.
8. That Africa Leadership Forum should ensure that the recommendations and suggestions adopted at the Regional Conference is effectively disseminated through advocacy and contacts with political leaders. This, the conference noted, is one of the ways by which NEPAD can truly become a true African programme, accepted and owned by African people. Furthermore it was suggested that NEPAD should be discussed and endorsed by parliaments in each of the African Countries. ALF was therefore mandated to explore the possibility and modalities of making this a reality through the engagement and consultation with African Parliamentarians;
9. That a mechanism for all stakeholders' meeting and analysis should be created such that all the missing links and gaps especially those effecting women identified at this conference can be brought into proper focus in the implementation of NEPAD programs. ALF was mandated to facilitate this process by mobilising required resource.
10. The participants recognized the need for the formation of women network both at the regional and international levels that will promote and facilitate the incorporation of interest of women in NEPAD.

11. Participants enjoined Secretariat to forge a relationship with the Secretariat. ALF was provide requisite backstopping as may implementing the

**Participants enjoined the ALF Secretariat to forge a closer working relationship with the NEPAD Secretariat.**

the ALF closer working NEPAD also requested to technical be required in recommendations

of the conference.

12. The conference recommended that conscious efforts should be made to incorporate all documents that have contributed positively in the various aspects of the African's existence into NEPAD. In other words, the NEPAD document should be made a compilation of all the major, beneficial policies of government.
13. The Conference further recommended that a mechanism of evaluation that would be structured towards eliciting a response of accountable, effective leadership from our political leaders be established. The conference contended that for the NEPAD project to be truly fulfilled, it must make adequate provision for the establishment of capacity building projects for the women, without which its smooth realisation would run into hitches.
14. The conference decided that now is the time for the women to exhibit more consciousness in the politics of their respective countries. They enjoined the women to be more critical politically; ask follow-up questions when manifestos are tossed at the society without the accompanying sincerity for their implementation.
15. The participants advised that an all-women movement be initiated to challenge the politicians to imbue in them the imperative of strict adherence to the ethos of governance.
16. The conference emphasized the need for women to be involved in decision-making at all stages. This, they argued, will enable government to focus on the economic empowerment of the illiterate women who are oppressed in every aspect of life.

### **Agenda For Action**

In furtherance of recommendations above,

1. ALF was mandated to liaise with relevant development agencies, in particular the United Nations Development Fund for Women to undertake immediately a Gender Analysis of the NEPAD document.
2. ALF was requested to facilitate the creation of a Core-group of Eminent African Women to formally present the conclusions and recommendations of the conference to the Chairman of NEPAD Steering Committee and to discuss with him possibilities for further advancing the recommendations.
3. The conference also recommended that an Expanded Committee should be constituted from participation in the conference to broaden the follow-up process on the recommendations of the meeting. It was suggested that such a committee should be drawn from existing regional and sub-regional networks.

4. ALF was also requested to ensure immediate continent wide dissemination of the report of the conference all relevant stakeholders.
5. NEPAD Steering Committee was urged to simplify, disseminate and publicise the NEAPD Document in each country before the next meeting with the G8 in Ottawa in July.
6. Participants agreed to identify civil society focal points in their respective countries and to seek an effective interface with the Government Focal Point.
7. The meeting will issue out Solidarity statement and commitment necessary for the encouragement of other groups of African women.

ALF should initiate discussions with UNESCO and other development agencies with a view to convening follow-up meetings to the conference within the next twelve months.

### **African Parliamentarians Meeting**

*T*he Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) organised a three day Regional Conference for African Parliamentarians on Recent Strategic Development Initiatives in Africa. The conference was held at M Plaza Hotel, Accra, Ghana from 18 – 20 April, 2002. It had in attendance a cross section of parliamentarians from 25 African countries. They were joined by other distinguished and accomplished men and women from business, the organised civil society, and the professions, international organisations, from countries across the African continent as well as Europe and North America.

The conference was convened to discuss the three most recent strategic development initiatives in Africa: the **African Union (AU)**, the **Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA)** and the **New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)** with a view to creating broad based awareness among African parliamentarians as well as mobilizing them for effective participation in the implementation of the initiatives.

The main objectives of the three – day conference were

- To establish an African network of parliamentarians that would help in advancing the CSSDCA, NEPAD and the AU as a collective;
- To create broad based awareness among key
- African parliamentarians on the importance and relevance of the three initiatives;
- To facilitate and strengthen the capacity of the African parliamentarians with a view to developing strategies and modalities for influencing policies and decisions of various African governments to

reflect the *CSSDCA*, *NEPAD* and the *AU* in national legislations of individual African countries.

- To serve as a platform for discussing and finding lasting solutions to various African problems especially in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution as well as governance and economic development and cooperation

The conference was declared open by His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, through an address read on his behalf by Honourable Minister for Local Government and Rural Development, Honourable Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu. Dr. Abdoulie Janneh, the UN Assistant Secretary General & Director, Africa Bureau, UNDP, delivered the Keynote Address. H.E. Dr. John Malacela, former Prime Minister of Tanzania and member of the Council of Conveners of ALF chaired the opening session. The conference also benefited from instructive presentations by the OAU Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ambassador Said Djinnit, and Prof. Wiseman Nkulu chair of the NEPAD Secretariat.

Participants commended the Africa Leadership Forum for taking the initiative of convening this conference and for seeking to familiarise African parliamentarians with important developmental initiatives and frameworks. Participants also requested the Forum to convey its gratitude and appreciation to the funding organisations.

The conference reviewed three initiatives, which were presented in various papers delivered during the conference as well pertinent official documents, by the Organisation of African Unity. The three initiatives are: the Solemn Declaration on a Conference on Security, Stability, Cooperation and Development in Africa (CSSDCA), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union (AU). The conference saluted the courage, efforts, the foresight and the vision of African leaders for launching these initiatives.

Participants were of the opinion that **the three initiatives are bold attempts by African leaders to reverse the downward trend in the development profile of Africa.** They commended the fact that these initiatives are different from previous efforts in that they are enjoying enormous commitment and political support from leaders of African countries. The conference considers it critical that Africa's development agenda is designed, managed and led by Africans. The participants pledged their assistance and support in ensuring the overall success of the initiatives and are willing to cooperate with other stakeholders especially, the civil society including women's organisations, the indigenous private sector operators and the African Parliamentarian Union in the quest to advance peace, stability and development in Africa.

The conference noted with regret the low level of awareness of these initiatives among parliamentarians as well as the general public in virtually all countries. The participants underlined that broad based ownership and embrace of these initiatives is indispensable for its success and implementation. Participants called

on the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF)) to make necessary strategic alliances to help reverse this trend through a process of awareness-raising, capacity building, training and Parliamentary Exchange programmes

Towards this end, the conference called on African parliaments to initiate processes at regional and national levels through various activities and consultative meetings that will promote effective implementation of these initiatives and seek ways of popularising them within their constituencies. Parliamentarians, as democratically elected representatives of the people, and guarantors of good governance are well placed to take the lead in galvanising the creative energies of civil society. **Through their legislative powers they can translate these initiatives into concrete action.** Doing this will enable the African leaders to make these initiatives truly people driven and people focused initiatives. The participants therefore called on members of the NEPAD Steering Committee in particular to allow presence and participation of African parliamentarians in their proceedings.

### Recommendations

*P*arliamentarians are elected representatives of the people. They guarantee democracy and democratic practices and translate popular aspirations, hopes and demands into reality and practical policies. They ensure good governance, accountability and transparent practices at all levels of legislative activities and provide the mechanisms for oversight and accountability of the governments including that of the peer review. Accordingly, a greater collaboration between the legislative and the executive branches of government is essential.

In order to create an effective participatory framework for the involvement of African parliamentarians in the recent or future strategic development initiatives in Africa, the participants made the following recommendations:

To broaden awareness and knowledge about the evolution, aims, objectives and mechanisms of the three initiatives at hand, the OAU/AU, the Africa Leadership Forum and the NEPAD Secretariat should urgently device and undertake information programmes to popularise the recent strategic development initiatives among African parliamentarians and political parties. This will enable the parliamentarians seek to include objectives and commitments from such strategic initiatives in their respective party, programmes, manifesto or platforms.

To develop a network of African parliamentarians focusing on the new initiatives as a vehicle of exchanging information and holding regular debates in order to sustain their continuous involvement and contribution to the evolution and implementation of these new initiatives.

To expand participation and representation of the civil society organisations in the steering committee of NEPAD and the ongoing discussions of the CSSDCA process. In this regard, modalities for **participation of parliamentarians in all meetings preceding the final adoption of CSSDCA as well as the G8 meeting in Ottawa, Canada must be worked out.**

To promote effective collaboration between parliamentarians and the African **Indigenous Private Sector Operators (IPSOs)** which is crucial for the overall implementation of NEPAD, CSSDCA and AU. To realise synergies, an interface mechanism for interaction between these two groups should be developed. In this regard, ALF was therefore mandated to explore the possibility and modalities of making this a reality through the engagement and **consultation with IPSOs**. A regional conference by ALF for IPSOs would be a useful beginning to examine the new initiatives and to articulate their stake in the implementation process, including an active collaboration with the parliamentarians.

Each Parliament should create a Select Committee to deal with new and existing political/development initiatives. National Focal Points in each African country should be established to disseminate information on NEPAD, CSSDCA and AU to the general public and provide forums for discussions and input.

Parliamentarians should establish effective linkages and partnership with local and international media and create information clearing-houses on select issues. A set of new virtual network including the use of present networks such as video-conferencing should be used to facilitate the periodic meetings of the Parliament and joint meetings with Pan African Parliament.

To serve long-term national interests, a strong African Parliament should be put in place. All parliamentarians must have a meaningful participation in the creation of this new Parliament.

All agreements, regulations, standards and legislations at the regional level must be made part of the national law and ratified by various African parliaments. This will ensure consistency and ownership of these initiatives at the national level and facilitate further adherence.

Explicit parliamentary endorsement through pertinent laws associated with budgetary provisions, ensures implementation of actions called for under these new initiatives. To this end, parliament should provide enabling budget for the policy initiatives.

African parliamentarians should solicit support for the implementation of these developments in initiatives from their partners in the industrialized world through various outreach means such as personal visits or through resolutions by the IPU.

The conference recognised the need for **policy harmonisation and rationalisation between the CSSDCA process and the NEPAD process in the overall framework of all**. It was recognised by the participants, that the CSSDCA represents a formal solemn treaty undertaken by African leaders, while NEPAD is a more comprehensive programme with strong emphasis on economic and social development; open also to subscription and participation by non-Africans. The conference recommended that the OAU/AU Secretariat, ALF and NEPAD Secretariats, on the approval of African leaders, should urgently endeavour to clarify the roles and interrelationships of the three initiatives.

It was resolved that the recommendations of the conference should be presented to the **OAU Secretariat and the OAU/AU Summit in July** as part of the input of African parliamentarians to the ongoing efforts of NEPAD, CSSDCA and AU.

The conference requested that the **Steering Committee of NEPAD be expanded to include representatives of African parliamentarians and civil society organisations so that full ownership, effective synergies and broad based dissemination can be assured.** This should also be applied in constituting National focal points for NEPAD.

A group of eminent parliamentarians should be constituted to formally **present the conclusions and recommendations** of the Conference to the **Chairman of NEPAD Steering Committee and the Secretary General of OAU/AU** and to discuss with them a possible framework for implementing the recommendations that emanated from this conference. ALF was requested to ensure immediate continent-wide dissemination of the report of the Conference and all relevant documents relating to all the three initiatives to all the Parliaments in Africa.

The ALF, APU and select Parliamentarians should review the CSSDCA and NEPAD documents and develop suggestions that can advance the cause of the two initiatives as well as ensure broad-based implementation.

ALF should initiate discussions with APU and other development agencies on how to organise a follow-up meetings to the conference within the next twelve months, so as to review the progress in implementing recommendations adopted by this Accra Conference.

Before July 2002, a much more representative conference of parliamentarians are to take a serious look at the protocol on the AU and make a presentation of their views to the AU summit in July.

## National Women Peace Group (NAWOPEG)

The Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) under the aegis of the Africa Women's Forum (AWF) had for long concerned itself with the need to strengthen the capacity of women in conflict management and peace building. This culminated in the successful organisation of a high level meeting of African women in Tunis, Tunisia in January, 2001.

The Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria) Limited within the framework of its Community Development Programmes has also established a track record of constructive engagement with Nigerian women in the areas of conflict resolution and peace building. It was thus logical that the two organisations sought to synergise with a view to facilitating the creation of a network of Nigerian women in the area of peace building and conflict resolution.

After initial consultations, it was agreed that two Experts Consultative Meetings be convened essentially to review the roles and contributions of Nigerian women in Conflict Management with the additional responsibility of mapping out action plans, with the overall target of mobilisation and greater involvement of women in peace building in Nigeria, from 21-22 November, 2001, and 9-10 January, 2002, respectively

Subsequently, the Africa Leadership Forum and the Shell Petroleum Development Company organised the National Women Peace Congress at the Sheraton Hotels and Towers, Abuja-Nigeria. A major **outcome** of the congress was the inauguration of a National Women Peace Group (NAWOPEG), and the organisation of a 4 – day intensive training programme on 'Conflict Transformation Skills' for a corps of women mediators, peace builders, and conflict managers drawn from the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory.

In attendance at the congress were over two hundred select participants, (mostly females) from a cross-section of the various networks of the political class, the organised private sector, professional bodies, civil society organisations and religious institutions across the country.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Following the extensive debate on the issues of conflict management, conflict transformation, women's role and the need for more pragmatic approaches to these issues participants came up with the underlisted positions:

socially and economically, and recommended that prompt attention should be given to the increased participation of women in public affairs, particularly, at the top level of decision-making. They therefore called on all stakeholders to be effectively involved in the education of women and the initiation of capacity building programmes that could breed a sense of self-esteem in women.

2. The participants agreed that the government should implement all inter-governmental instruments, convention and charters to which they are signatories and apply affirmative action through the effective execution of quota conditionality for the appointment and nomination of women into public positions. In consonance with this, the conference recommended further that women should display demonstrable competence and expertise whenever they are accorded the opportunity to occupy challenging positions.
3. The group pointed out that there is an unacceptable degree of imbalance in gender representation in all facets of our national life. It, therefore, recommended that a legal framework be put in place to address the observed imbalance. Participants proceeded to call for the encouragement of gender mainstreaming in education and all training programmes in order to put the girl-child on the same platform with her male counterpart. Some of the plausible ways suggested for realising this, according to them are the enactment of legislation against early marriages (considered inimical to the development of the girl child) and the introduction of free education for the girl-child throughout Nigeria and indeed the whole of Africa.
4. The conference made a critical analysis of religion, particularly the detrimental religious content of development and agreed that religious conflicts emanate due to the misinterpretation of religious codes, doctrines and teachings on one hand, and religious bigotry, fanaticism and intolerance on the other hand, which quite often ignite mob action, and cause avoidable loss of human and material resources. It was thus recommended that, to checkmate the menace of religious violence, there should be restraint in thoughts and actions of religious leaders. To the participants, mutual respect for each other's faith and beliefs coupled with the crucial need for moderation, on the part of the preachers should form the hallmark of redressing this ugly trend. Furthermore, they called on leaders to eschew inciting and inflammatory statements when commenting on issues of common concern – communally and nationally. Participants also recommended the establishment of an active interactive forum for leaders of the various religions as a way of fostering greater co<sub>2</sub>existence and understanding.
5. The conference noted with concern the devastating impact of corruption, waste and mismanagement and their incontestable contribution to the aggravation of the poverty situation and the escalation of conflicts in the country. To effectively put these in check, the participants recommended the enactment of laws to sanction corrupt public officers even after their exit from such offices, They also called for the removal of immunity from prosecution of public officers accused of corrupt practices, irrespective of the office they may be occupying.
6. While recommending the re-appraisal of our value system, the conference demanded a review of the school curriculum to include moral instructions, the commencement of a vigorous anti-corruption campaign and the discouragement of money -politics.

7. The conference considered the pertinence of positive change and how it can be managed. While acknowledging that the most cost-efficient method is conflict prevention, they stressed that it is always better to prevent the outbreak and escalation of hostilities. To actualise this, they called for the establishment of a constructive and healthy way of addressing potentially volatile issues before their degeneration into conflict situations.
8. They further recommended that crisis-prone communities be assisted to develop more mature and sensitive ways of handling age-long feuds and primordial mindset.
9. The conference also called on the various stakeholders: the government, community leaders, youth leaders, companies and their host communities, religious bodies, etc., to accord priority attention to the issues of creating and developing a conducive environment for the restoration of mutual trust and peace in the society.
10. Still on conflict resolution, the participants demanded that programmes and structures be put in place for the resolution of conflicts, which should, of necessity, be constantly monitored, evaluated and reviewed.
11. The participants, among others, recommended that women should engage in actual participation in the creation of awareness and the sensitisation of their communities concerning the challenges ahead.
12. It was further recommended that it is critical for women to adopt a domestic approach that places priority on subtlety and persuasion, in their resolution of conflicts. Women were also enjoined to demonstrate effective parental skills with the overall target of developing the values of tolerance, hard work and discipline.
13. The participants examined the usefulness of the media to the promotion of the ruling objectives of peace building in Nigeria, and recommended that NAWOPEG should accordingly enlist the support of journalists in the peace campaign through the vantage platform of the National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ).
14. In addition to recommending the inauguration of an award for the best correspondent/reporter on peace, the conference called for the provision of training opportunities for media practitioners on the critical centrality of accurate, unbiased and balanced presentation of facts.
15. The Conference also recommended that the theatre, music and other genres of the arts be effectively exploited to enhance the promotion of the culture of peace.
16. The conference addressed the importance of considering the manner of relationship that should exist between government and women groups. In line with this, the participants recommended the identification of women groups as partners with government rather than as a threat or opposition

to government. The participants therefore averred that it is critical to depoliticise the various women organisations in order to maintain objectivity and impartiality. While calling on the government to create a development fund, easily accessible to NGOs in the areas of peace, they advised that the women should be involved in effective lobbying aimed at influencing government policies and programmes. They also urged them to play advisory roles to the government.

17. Women were enjoined to create a mandate at the end of this congress to enable the various ministries of Women Affairs to link up with multinational agencies and philanthropic organizations; solicit the support of leaders in charge of revenue mobilization and budget; and ensuring that a body of select stakeholders manage the resources so mobilised.
18. The organisers of this congress were advised to approach the Presidency for direct budgetary allocation in order to put the peace movement in a vantage pedestal for the dreams, which culminated in the organisation of the conference to be actualised.
19. The conference called for the facilitation of a review of the school syllabus to ensure the incorporation of conflict and peace in the school curriculum; the periodic organisation of seminars, workshops, enlightenment campaign at all levels and building of the capacity of civil society and professional bodies to tackle the problems of conflict and its management process.

### **Agenda for Action**

*T*he conference agreed on the critical need to ensure the prosecution of certain follow up activities and the need to apportion responsibilities to the concerned groups for adequate co-ordination.

1. Participants agreed that there should be a replication of this kind of initiative at all levels.
2. It was recommended that all the recommendations be treated with every seriousness as they are jointly owned, endorsed and consequently are expected to be operated by the government, NGOs, and NAWOPEG as a collective enterprise.
3. The conference agreed that appropriate machinery be put on ground to ensure that all the states and local governments are mandated to embrace and adopt the programme initiatives.
4. It was further recommended that peace rallies, targeted at enhancing sensitisation, awareness and advocacy campaigns be held at the states and local government levels.
5. It was strongly recommended that press conferences be organised at regular intervals with a focus on the NAWOPEG activities, while the National

Orientation Agency was seen as a possible collaborator to take it on board her women campaign mechanism.

6. It was further decided that NAWOPEG should get involved with productive networking activities with the National Council of Nigerian Women Societies.
7. The meeting mandated the Gender unit of the Africa Leadership Forum, ALF, to carry out effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of NAWOPEG recommendations.
8. Other set targets of the Peace Group include the vigorous pursuit and evolution of a National Peace Plan, the encouragement of women to prioritise the maintenance of peace at the home front and also convocation of an annual peace summit.

### **Platform for Action on Women and Armed Conflict**

*T*here is great strength and support for women peace building movements inherent in the Beijing Platform for Action from which Nigerian women can draw strength for National peace building and development. Specifically reference is here being made to the Platform for Action E on **Women and Armed Conflict**. It has a number of objectives and recommendations with far reaching implications for engendering peace, security and stability.

#### **Strategic objective E.1**

*C*alls on all governments, international and regional intergovernmental institutions to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation. Some of the actions recommended include:

- Promote equal participation of and opportunities for women to participate in all peace activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level including in the United Nations Secretariat in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Integrate a gender perspective in the resolution of armed or other conflicts and aim for gender balance when nominating or promoting candidates for judicial and other positions in all relevant international bodies.

#### **Strategic objective E.2**

*A*dvocates reduction in excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments. Some of the actions to be taken by governments include:

- Increase and hasten, as appropriate, subject to national security considerations, the conversion of military resources and related industries to development and peaceful purposes.

- Explore new ways of generating public and private financial resources through reduction of excessive military expenditures. Including global military expenditures, trade in arms and investment for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to permit the possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development, in particular for the advancement of women.
- Take action to investigate and punish members of the police, security and armed forces and others who perpetrate acts of violence against women, violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict.

### **Strategic objective E.3**

Calls for the promotion of non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations. Actions to be taken by Governments and others include:

- Ratify international instruments containing provisions relative to the protection of women and children in armed conflicts, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 1949, the Protocols Additional to the Geneva.

Conventions of 1949 relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) and to the Protection of Victims of Non-international Armed Conflicts (Protocol II); 24

- Respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law in armed conflicts and take all measures required for the protection of women and children, in particular against rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault.
- Strengthen the role of women and ensure equal representation of women at all decision-making levels in national and international institutions which may make or influence policy with regard to matters related to peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy and related activities and in all stages of peace mediation and negotiations.
- Encourage diplomacy, negotiation and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, in particular Article 2, paragraphs 3 and 4 thereof.
- Identify and condemn the systematic practice of rape and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment of women as a deliberate instrument of war and ethnic cleansing and take steps to ensure that full assistance is provided to the victims of such abuse for their physical and mental rehabilitation.

- Take into account gender-sensitive concerns in developing training programmes for all relevant personnel on international humanitarian law and human rights awareness and recommend such training for those involved in United Nations peace-keeping and humanitarian aid, with a view to preventing violence against women, in particular;
- Discourage the adoption of and refrain from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by population of the affected countries, in particular women and children that hinders their well being and creates obstacles to the full enjoyment of their human rights.

#### **Strategic Objective E.4**

*E*ncourage women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace. Actions to be taken by governments, international and regional intergovernmental institutions and non-governmental organisations include:

- Promote peaceful conflict resolution, peace, reconciliation and tolerance through education, training, community actions and youth exchange programmes, in particular for young women.
- Develop peace research, involving the participation of women, to examine the impact of armed conflict on women and children and the nature and contribution of women's participation in national, regional and international peace movements.
- Engage in research and identify innovations and mechanisms for containing violence and conflict resolution, and disseminate it for public use.
- Develop and disseminate research on the physical, psychological, economic and social effects of armed conflicts on women, particularly young women and girls, with a view to developing policies and programmes to address the consequences of conflicts.
- Establish educational programmes for girls and boys to foster a culture of peace, focusing on conflict resolution by non-violent means and the promotion of tolerance.

#### **Strategic objective E.5**

*C*alls for the protection, provision of assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women. Actions to be taken by governments include:

- Ensure that women are fully involved in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all short-term and long-term projects and programmes. Provide assistance to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women, including the management of refugee camps and resources; ensure that refugee and displaced women and girls have direct access to the services provided.
- Offer adequate protection and assistance to women and children displaced within their country and find solutions to the root causes of their displacement with a view to preventing it and, when appropriate, facilitate their return or resettlement.
- Take measures, at the national level with international cooperation, as appropriate, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to finding lasting solutions to questions related to internally displaced women, including their right to voluntary and safe return to their home of origin.
- Disseminate and implement the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women and the UNHCR Guidelines on Evaluation and Care of Victims of Trauma and Violence, or provide similar guidance, in close co-operation with refugee women and in all sectors of refugee programmes.
- Protect women and children who migrate from abuse or denial of their human rights by sponsors and consider extending their stay, should the family relationship dissolve, within the limits of national legislation.

#### **Strategic objective E.6.**

**C**alls for assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self governing territories and actions to be taken by governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations include:

- Support and promote the implementation of the right of self-determination of all peoples as enunciated, *inter alia*, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action by providing special programmes in leadership and in training for decision-making.

Raise public awareness, as appropriate, through the mass media, education at all levels and special programmes to create a better understanding of the situation of women of the colonies and non self-governing territories.

## **Improving Service Delivery**

### *I*ntroduction and background:

After several years of repressive rulership under different military regimes, Nigeria and Nigerians are experiencing another attempt at democratic governance. As in the past, hopes and expectations are high, as are fear that this might not come to pass.

Currently, a palpable sense of loss of confidence in the various institutions of governance generally and fundamentally even in the basic nature and rationality of their existence as institutions of state pervades the country. In the best of circumstances, there has been an endless spiral of crises, while in other instances, it has been an orgy of violence, genocides, disintegration or either of these. An outstanding lesson from this development is that existing socio-political and economic paradigms have not been synthesised into the interests of the Nigerian.

Thus, although, Nigeria has turned to competitive, multi-party elections as the preferred mechanism for ascending to, or remaining in power, it still looks like it is business as usual. It is to be expected that competitive elections will provide an effective opportunity for the electorate – and the citizens at large – to hold elected public officials accountable for their record during their term in office and, on the basis of assessment of said record, to mete out to them positive or negative sanctions that will ultimately decide who will hold elective office.

Implicit in this model is that on the one hand, elected officials have a constitutional authority to carry out the programmes for which they have won a plurality of the votes. On the other hand, at the expiration of their terms, their record will be a matter of close, public scrutiny to gauge their achievements, successes or failures, the balance of which will effect voter's decision to renew their mandate or vote in an alternate leadership.

Though competitive election makes the ballot box a potentially powerful instrument of continuous control, it is to be remembered that public accountability cannot rely solely on the stop-go ritual of periodic elections, unless, in between two consecutive elections, institutions, rules, and mechanisms are available to make accountability not just after-the-fact exercise, but a permanent, on-going, and as it were, real time process that clearly enables the citizens, either individually or in groups to pass political judgment on the actions, activities, results and behaviour but to drive out of office those public officials found to be wanting in the performance of their duties.

Such a need is indeed of critical importance at the local government level: that being the level of formal government closest to the people.

It is therefore imperative that a mechanism be put in place which will be designed

to serve as an institution through which, in between elections, local opinion leaders can effectively act as a watchdog on government behaviour and performance with a view to making sure that the needs and aspirations of the people are best served and preserved. In particular, such bodies can help to ascertain that budgetary choices, economic and social policies lead to a pattern of allocation of scarce public resources – economic, financial or otherwise – that is clearly in the public's interest. Public hearings on the budget and other instruments of economic and social policy-making and programming activities must and should reflect a modicum of transparency and enough pressure on government to make accountability a credible reality.

In Nigeria, community based organisations, (CBO's), Non-governmental organisations, (NGOs), do exist with the publicly proclaimed aim of assisting in improving the process and quality of governance. However, very few of them have been created with the explicit aim of acting watchdogs on corruption, ineffective execution of public programmes and projects, or public policy formulation and implementation.

The government operates more often than not a closed system. The people have over the years ceased to demand any form of accountability. Yet without an effective mechanism in place, corruption, mismanagement and non-performance will remain the hallmarks of regimes in Nigeria. Already, there is a growing realization that promoting accountability, transparency and openness in service delivery may not always be addressed at the top. Grassroots initiatives can hold the key to creative and effective ways to sensitize the people to making sure that government at the local level effect a mechanism for ensuring accountability, transparency and openness.

In competitive elections, the government is aware that at the expiration of their terms, the people (electorate) stand the chance of renewing its mandate or vote in an alternate manner depending on the measure of failures or successes of such government. Undoubtedly, the enabling environment for such action appears conducive and ripe in local governance in Nigeria. Attempts in the past to usher in transparency and accountability at the federal and state levels have not yielded the desired results.

It is therefore necessary that a method be put in place that would strengthen the capacity of local opinion leaders in demanding and securing accountability, transparency and openness in the process of governance. From time to time, such group must be able to harness available human and material resources for thoughtful and timely diagnosis of activities of government for proper appraisal. The scope of their activities may range from organising series of seminars, workshops and conferences for local government officials and the electorate to deliberate on issues concerning accountable governance, transparent leadership and openness in the conduct of state businesses. Sometimes, discrete intercession and other subtle initiatives to effect structured and effective governance at the local government level would be emphasised.

The Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) in collaboration with the Friederich Naumann Foundation organised a three day workshop on Improving Service Delivery to inculcate in participants the requisite skills which will enable them function in the mould of a Citizens-Action-Group that can and will engage elected officials in local governments in ensuring a transparent, accountable, and open system of government.

In attendance were several Nigerians over 150 persons from all the geographical zones, representing community based organisations, traditional rulers, head teachers, journalists and civil servants.

**Issues trashed at the workshop include:**

1. Promote the concept of transparency, accountability and openness in local government process;
2. Provide community leaders with necessary skills with which to demand and secure accountability from local government officials;
3. Increase stakeholder involvement in governance process;
4. Empower civil society members to demand and secure effective participation in governance;
5. Create the basis of enthroning a culture of popular participation in governance.

**Target Audience**

Specifically participants were largely drawn from a pool of opinion leaders, proven leaders within civil society organisations, community association leaders, local priests, school headmasters and chairpersons of pressure groups, the academia and research institutions, accomplished businessmen as well as traditional rulers or their representatives.

**4:3. Evaluation:**

The evaluation done of the workshop by the participants through the questionnaires administered indicates that the programme is as a response to a dire need among this level of government officers, many of who had gone into the office totally at a loss as to how to embark on their task. This was confirmed by a Need Assessment Questionnaires administered at the workshop asking the participants to state what particular area of their work or what particular difficult challenge they will like the ALF to assist them in resolving as a follow up activities. The results show that all of them have some difficult problems requiring some technical and professional assistance particularly in the areas of conflict resolution and advocacy. Many of the participants also proposed that the programme be replicated in their various constituencies to make the effect more enduring and comprehensive. Many have even indicated their willingness to sponsor a part of the cost for running such programmes.

# Democratic Leadership Training Workshop

Like most African countries, leadership crisis continues to pose a major challenge to Nigeria. The lack of a critical mass of able leadership with the necessary discipline and commitment to genuine national pluralism, popular participation, responsiveness, official accountability and transparency has been at the bottom of the country's crisis of governance for a larger part of its history. The complexities of this problem has largely indicated that the challenge of leadership in question must necessarily transcend the strictly political variation by empowering other sections of civil society such as Community Based Organisations (CSOs), business, professional associations, women, youth and students, farmers co-operatives, non-governmental organisations and other critical sectors with a view to facilitating the release of their creative and productive energies.

Some of the Courses taught were: Nigeria In the World Today, Our Vision of State, Understanding Political Liberalisation, Understanding Leadership, Leadership and the Issue of ethics, Adaptive leadership skills, Coalition Building, Strategic Negotiation, Effective Communication, Lobby and Advocacy, Personal Empowerment, Managing Expectations, Simulation Exercises, Case Studies, Individual Action Plan, Workshop Evaluation.

## **2:3. Evaluation:**

*A*t the end of the each workshop, an average of 35 participants per workshop has been trained. Although the original provision was for 25 participants per workshop, ALF was compelled to increase participation to 35 and in some cases, the size went up to 40. This is because of the high level of interest that the programme has generated across the country. And at the end of the workshop, not less than 230 participants have been trained, with the excess cost borne by ALF. Although this number exceeds the original projection, it is still insignificant when compared with the number of applications received from prospective participants to the workshop. At the end of the project, people who have seen the newspaper advertisement of the programme or who got to know of it through participants at the previous episodes have received from about 3000 applications all over the country. Many are still applying. And, apart from the testimonies given by participants to the quality and relevance of the project in the assessment forms, individual participants have felt sufficiently obliged to write letters expressing their gratitude for the opportunity they have had to participate in the programme.

The workshop is structured in such a way that at a particular chapter, every geo-political zone of the country is represented. This is another significant achievement of the programme in that it has brought young Nigerians from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds together to closely interact for a period of a week and therefore shed some of their age-long prejudices by understanding one another better.

A concrete achievement of this workshop is that even as it continued, coalitions have continued to form in each workshop among representatives of CBOs and NGOs present around such issues as poverty alleviation, waste disposal and corruption. The Africa Leadership Forum is committed to supporting and helping to nurture such initiatives.

What all this indicate is that the ISD has emerged at the appropriate time as a critical response to a need to feel an intellectual and training vacuum among Nigerians who are direct beneficiaries of governance at the local level, be they in urban, semi-level and outrightly rural setting in a position of leadership or who aspire to such position.

### **Quality**

*A*ccording to the participants, the quality of the Programme was very good as in choice of topic and the careful selection of resource persons, as they were all authorities in their various fields, very experienced and delivered their papers well. The presentations were all excellent; focused on the realities of problems confronting service delivery in our nation and the need to wake up and do something about it. The Programme taught, explained and articulated skills for proper service delivery for effective and quality development for the people. The workshop they say, has really inspired them more, to be actively engaged for the betterment of the society and has reawakened in them the need for greater action and new strategies for community mobilisation.

### **Ethics & Professionalism**

*T*he Africa Leadership Forum, in collaboration with the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) and active support of several professional and regulatory bodies in the country, convened at Otta, Ogun State, a workshop on ethics and professionalism from Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2002 to Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2002.

The theme of the three-day workshop was **The Role of Professionals in Nation Building: the Issue of Ethics and the Consequences of Failure**. The Honourable Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation, Mr. Kanu Agabi, SAN formally opened the workshop. The Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Lagos State, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, SAN represented by the state's Solicitor General, Mr. Fola Arthur-Worrey delivered the keynote address. The President and Chairman of the Governing Council of the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria, Mr. Sunday Aloba read a Welcome Address on behalf of the organisers of the workshop.

In attendance at the meeting were over seventy participants drawn from the core professional class in the country. They represented a cross-section of the various networks of distinguished professional women and men from, corporate bodies, government agencies and institutions; the organised private sector; chamber of commerce and industry; trade union leaders; employers' associations, professional bodies; civil society organisations and other interest

## **SECTION FIVE**

groups. (See list of participants, Appendix II)

The workshop was informed by the current democratic dispensation and changing socio-economic environment which invariably demand technically competent and ethically grounded professionals capable of aiding good governance through scrupulous adherence to the highest standards and ideals of ethical and professional conduct. Unfortunately, there is a discernible and palpable decline in professionalism and ethical conduct among professionals in Nigeria today.

Although there exist institutional frameworks designed to address these challenges, the continuous decline in ethical and professional standards suggests that the cause of the problem might be deeper.

This workshop was, therefore essentially served as a response mechanism to the challenges of ethics and professionalism. The workshop was designed to among other things offer the opportunity to call to action professionals, and leaders of thought to reflect on the current situation with a view to adopting a rapid response mechanism for addressing decisively our current, socio-economic and moral flight and move on to the part of rectitude.

### **The basic objectives of the workshop include:**

1. To re-assess the role of professionals in nation building and the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
2. To promote interaction amongst professionals, especially, professionals with a track record of integrity, professional competence and success;
3. To provide an opportunity for interaction and reflection with practitioners in various fields and in other lands;
4. To deepen and widen the practical aspect of participants training on their professional lives towards promoting the creation of an ethical society;
5. To create a framework and strategies for effective response to the newer emerging political challenges which must recognise the need for closer linkage between the requirements of economic development and the objective demands for professional ethics in the code of conduct of various institutions and establishments;
6. Generate possible recommendations and practical suggestions on stemming fraudulent practices.

The organisers of the workshop expressed their gratitude to the participants for considering the issues of ethics, professionalism and the essence of marrying the two to mitigate a calamitous future. Participants commended the organisers for

involving a vast network of personalities in and out of government, especially from the private sector and regulatory bodies as a way of enhancing quality control in the professions and a way of ensuring that sanctions and incentives are equal and appropriate. In particular, they lauded the present administration's unrelenting commitment to the goals of advancing the tenets of accountability, moral rectitude and transparency in governance. The workshop noted with satisfaction the quality of discourse, calibre of resource persons and service delivery throughout the duration of the workshop. Participants saluted these as rare coincidences.

The meeting also acknowledged the participation of key ministers and other government apparatchiks, underscoring the demonstrable efforts at improving the corruption index by which the nation has often been labelled and stigmatised.

The workshop served as an added opportunity for the professionals to evaluate their current control mechanisms, making constant evaluation and monitoring efforts basic desiderata in understanding the problems of unethical and unprofessional conduct and misconduct. It also touched on private ethical standards and the manner of how these standards are taught, nourished and nurtured individually and in public institutions.

Welcoming participants to the workshop, the President of the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria, Mr. Sunday Aloba, expressed gratitude to the participants for taking out time to fellowship and brainstorm on the all-important issue of ethics and standards in all spheres of our public and private lives.

He described this commitment as a readiness by Nigerians to deal with the realities of the problems in Nigeria. Mr Aloba lampooned the undesirable pedigree of our public and private sector chieftains who irreverently revel in unethical behaviour and professional misconduct. He berated the unabashed lack of scruples in organisations, institutions and among professionals. This sad development, he noted, is more often than not, merely a reflection of similar practices in the larger society and which cut across both the private and public sectors.

Commenting on the theme of the workshop, Mr. Kanu Agabi, the Attorney General of the Federation lamented the upsurge in unprofessional conduct. Although he blamed the decadence on the military rule, he complained that there is a palpable lack of will on the part of the professional bodies to do away with quacks in their midst. Also responsible for the rise in the wave of quackery, he said is widespread ignorance and poverty that would make the local populace patronise half-baked, fake and outrightly incompetent people who masquerade as professionals.

Mr. Agabi recalled that very often professional bodies relish so much in self-praise that an uncritical minds might think that they have accomplished all that there is to be accomplished; that the work of charity is complete and nothing more needs be done. He argued that in reality it is not so. He contended that for

as long as there is hunger in the land all must bring themselves to share in it. He urged all professional bodies to wade into the problem of unemployment by providing qualitative service and practical oriented syllabi for graduates and school leavers who would eventually move into these professions. This, he said should be part of a conscious effort at grooming the successor generation in all professions.

He reiterated the growing culture and tendency to abandon all else today in favour of politics. According to him, politics does not count among the professions. Politics, he remarked is a social responsibility of all because politicisation lays apathetic citizenry to the vagaries, whims and caprices of bad government. "We should stop looking at it (politics) as a profession", the minister contended. He cited the instance of the ancient times, when men were called from their professions to legislate and to lead. While doing so, he added they did not have to abandon their occupations.

He berated politicians who indulge only in acts of dressing well, eating well, using gold and silver spoons and plates even when the vast majority of the people live in hunger, abject penury and discomfiting want. He cited some of the excesses of the present corps of politicians who see political offices as an opportunity to live in good, well furnished houses, to speak well, to keep good company, to have good security, to accumulate wealth enough to guarantee that they do not have to share in the general poverty of the society, either while in office or when they leave office.

Mr. Agabi charged the professionals to uphold and propagate the truth even at the expense of their lives. He equally enjoined the citizenry to place the nation above self and be innovative in the discharge of their responsibilities so as to propel the nation forward.

In the Keynote Address presented on behalf of the Honourable Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Lagos State, Professor Oluyemi Osinbajo, SAN by the Solicitor General of Lagos State, Mr. Fola Arthur-Worrey, he described the professional class as a crop of special elite with special place in the affairs of any group, community or country.

For professionalism, it was his contention that, that denotes the status of the professional: the competence or the correct demeanour of those who are highly trained and discipline. He named the categories personnel such as lawyers, doctors, engineer, surveyor, pharmacists, architects, town planner, dentists, accountants, actuaries, auditors etc. He laid emphasis on the fact that those designated as professionals ought to have undergone an intensive training in a university or high calibre specialist institutes. In contradistinction to that, he similarly identified another group of well-trained, perhaps equally well-educated class of people who may not necessarily be classified as professionals. This latter group include bankers, artisans, broadcasters, public relations practitioners, teachers, lecturers, technicians etc. He stressed that the distinction is necessary in order to avoid the often pitfall of prefixes. According to him if care is not taken

to separate these two classes, a time might come when people penchant for titles might lead some people into using ludicrous titles like Banker... Teacher...etc

He pricked the conscience of the core professional class by asking if they really live up to the challenges of their callings as builders of a nation. He could not understand **why core values are daily being eroded and wondered why professionals lack the moral strength to positively influence their society by their conduct in their professional and private affairs.** He castigated professional organisations for also lacking the will to sanction their erring members in spite of several statutory provisions in their enabling Acts.

As recognised leaders, the professor of law insisted that by virtue of their training and social status the professional class ought to live above board always. But in reality, he lamented that the Nigerian professional does not lead by example and that to him is the bane of our developmental processes. He cited greed, self-aggrandisement, and battle of attrition over elections into leadership positions, hob-nobbing with despicable dictators and lack of self-esteem as contributory to the dwindling standards in all professions in the country.

To reverse this ugly trend, he enjoined professional associations to do some self-examination of their leadership, evolve a collective philosophical ethos that embodies the best practices. He cited the example of the Nigeria Bar Association that had to re-organise itself by prohibiting key leaders of the Bar from taking up government appointments while in office based on the experience of the past where successive Presidents of the NBA almost automatically conferred on the incumbent the position of not only the Attorney General of the Federation but as a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, the highest attainable position for lawyers in the country.

He indicted some associations who treat erring leaders with velvet gloves, like the Chartered Institute of Bankers and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria for not playing decisive and patriotic roles when some of their leaders are known to have connived with political helmsmen to siphon monies out of the treasuries. He cited a report in the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002 edition of *The Guardian* Newspaper where over N300billion was said to have been in circulation outside the banking system.

He then admonish professionals who find themselves in public offices to positively impact on the polity and ensure that integrity remains their watchword, as according to him: a professional or professional class without discipline is destined for irrelevance.

The first workshop session “**Professionals as Vanguard of Development: Now and in the Future**” was introduced by the chair of the session, Prof. Grace Alele-Williams, who expressed deep appreciation to the conveners (ALF/ANAN) for the initiative which according to her, is bound to enhance the capacity of professionals in making significant contribution to nation-building. She underlined the need for professionals, as custodians of public trust to demonstrate

leadership qualities and also bear in mind the need to develop ethical standards in their various professions. Prof. Alele-Williams provided her audience food for thought and asked whether it is the professionals that should lead the society or vice versa.

Mrs. Remi Oyo, President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors presented the lead paper at the session. She expressed gratitude to the convener of the workshop and thanked the organisers for affording her the opportunity to participate in what she described as the “august and epoch making assembly” and also for their anticipated tenacity in following – up some of the recommendations of the project. Oyo made her presentation in power points, enriched with colourful graphic illustrations. Oyo’s paper reflected more on her own personal thoughts as a journalist and the experience garnered in some three decades of active engagement in the profession.

She commenced her presentation by defining the three core components of her theme: **professional, vanguard and development**. In her own words, professionals are persons who, having undertaken a particular activity for the purpose of subsistence, shows skill, artistry, demeanour and a standard and or conduct appropriate for people of that profession. Vanguard on the other hand, she said, refers to persons who are at the forefront of a war, struggle on a cause, while development, viewed contextually, means *to bring to a higher and more developed state*.

Thereafter, she discussed the role of professionals in Nigeria and asked whether professionals are really vanguards for the development in Nigeria. For her, the answer is NO! Consequently, she named and discussed four major hindrances impacting on the ability of Nigerian professionals for making effective contribution to nation building. These are: lack of enabling environment, lack of proper motivation, fear of failure and rejection and lack of personal sacrifice. In the face of the damage done to the Nigerian society during the long years of military despotism and the inadequate or outright lack of basic infrastructures extending till the contemporary time, which can have a crippling effect on the mind of dedicated professionals, Oyo asserted that professionals of all categories deserve praise for their resilience in surviving the trauma that Nigeria has been through.

She acknowledged the role of civil society organisations and other professional bodies, who protested and spoke out in defence of human rights, the rule of law and democracy during the dark period of military rule, which according to her was the defining moment between the patriots, the vanguards and self-seekers. Further, Oyo told her audience that the development of a nation is best served when both personal and common gains are considered symbiotically and simultaneously. Therefore for professionals to be vanguards of hope, there must be a personal attitudinal change professional must become selfless individuals, Oyo maintained. Consequently, she enjoined professionals to always ask themselves in their various practises the question: will it be of benefit to me and the generality of the people? As she said, the national and personal interests must coincide at all times.

As a way forward, Oyo insisted that professionals must pay it forward. She stressed the need to pay back to the nation the various benefits afforded them in the past by devising a framework for doing the same for other less-privileged groups and the nation, and argued that this would make the wave of change unstoppable. A good way of doing this, she suggested, will be for professionals to devise a framework for sending professionals back to the institutions in order to teach courses in their old departments and faculties with a view to giving real life examples and experiences to the youth towards grooming them in a way that will make ethical professionals out of them. Further to this, she called on professionals to begin to make valuable input to the formulation of government policies. She enjoined them not to be afraid to speak out, to speak up and never to be afraid to speak for what they believe in.

In the plenary session that followed, participants commended the appropriateness of the topic and the employed mode of presentation. They however lamented that *ICAN* was not represented at the meeting. This, they attributed to the sour relationship between *Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN)* and *Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN)* and therefore recommended that a mediation mechanism be instituted to resolve the crisis between the two bodies.

The workshop **recognised the imperative of unity among professionals who have similar aims, aspirations and fields of specialisation and agreed that intra and inter professional synergy is a critical factor in nation building.** Further, participants resolved to work together in ensuring that the society is given value-added services and consequently charged the leadership of all professional bodies to double their efforts in this regard. The meeting also enjoined professionals to work towards acquiring relevance in their various locations and environment.

The workshop noted the imperative of an enabling environment and opined that, since morality or ethics is likely to be of no issue to a hungry person, the government has the onerous responsibility of providing a conducive environment for ethical professional conduct. Participants therefore recommended that an enabling environment where people will be free to express and experiment their ideas and creative abilities be created in Nigeria. They contended that the professionals too have a role to play in facilitating the enabling environment.

Further on ethics and morality, the workshop discussed the need for a thorough reorientation of the thinking of professionals along ethical conduct. Participants underlined the need to celebrate successful professionals who despite the disabling environment are able to uphold the image of their professions. Participants therefore expressed the view that the meeting should come up with goals and performance indicators for measuring ethical conduct among professionals.

The meeting identified two critical ingredients of true professionalism. One, he or she must be a convinced person in his or her profession and two; he must be

courageous in performing his duty. Participants also recognised the need for older professionals to share with young professionals their experience, as this is bound to impact on the future generations of professionals. Also, the workshop agreed that the younger generation should be given sufficient space to work in and therefore urged professionals to willingly give them opportunities to garner experience and expertise and not to remain in office beyond their functional limit and competence.

Subsequently, the workshop expressed regrets that the Association of Professional Bodies was not carried along and therefore suggested that conveners of future meetings of professionals should seek to carry every professional body along. Also, participants agreed on the need for ethical revolution among professionals and therefore underlined the importance of enlightenment and awareness creation on such issues among professionals.

The meeting also called on all professionals in the country to demonstrate a high degree of professionalism, as this will determine whether or not they will be called upon to take national responsibilities. Participants however warned professionals in critical positions of authority whether at the national state or even local government level to uphold their professional code of conducts and uphold the image of their professions. They therefore called on privileged professionals to be ethical in all their undertakings and not to tarnish the image of the professional bodies.

The workshop also discussed the concept of professionalism and sought to distinguish between professionalism and professionals. Participants argued that the mere existence of quarks in the various professions; the existence of draughtsmen as opposed to architects; means that the term professionalism deserves further explanations. Some participants wondered whether columnists, reporters, broadcasters etc., all belong to the journalism profession.

Responding to the issue, Mrs. Oyo in agreed with her audience. She however stressed the importance of unity within and among professional bodies. She informed the workshop that there is unity in the media industry. She mentioned the four component parts of the industry, which have formed themselves into respective associations: The Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), Owners of Broadcasting Houses, The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) and The Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE). As a practical demonstration of this synergy, she also told the meeting that these journalism bodies jointly endorsed 14 codes of conducts in 1990 to guide the practice of journalism. These include code of dressing and other ethical standards. She however posited that while it would not be wrong to seek perfection, perfection would ever remain an illusion.

In order to enhance the capacity of professionals and reposition the professional bodies for making positive impacts on nation building, Mrs. Oyo enjoined the leadership of professional bodies not to set too many goals at the same time in order to remain focussed. She urged every professional body to back up its goals

with monitoring mechanisms and performance indicators to ensure their efficiency and effectiveness.

On the issue of professionalism, Remi Oyo mentioned that the term could lead to confusion. She traced the evolution of professionalism from the time it embraced the Theology and Legal professions and its gradual expansion through the inclusion of journalism, medicine, etc. At a time, she noted, people who went through universities were not recognised professionals: to be a professional, one had to pass through apprenticeship or pupillage under more experienced professionals. She stated that the use of the term varies from country to country and illustrated this with Sweden, where prostitution is also a recognised profession. Simply put, she maintained that a profession is any association so registered and backed with professional codes of conduct and appropriate sanctions against default.

On journalism, Oyo told the workshop that journalism is a profession based on synergy between various organs of journalism. The media, she mentioned, is meant to reproduce whatever they are told or perceive. She also warned that people should not disclose anything they do not want publicised to reporters even off camera, because the reporter is bound by his profession to report everything to the society. The reporter knows the limit of his power; he needs the approval of the editor to publish. Oyo however declared that the columnist or broadcaster is not a journalist per se, unless he/she has had a journalist training.

The Minister of State for Justice, Musa Elayo Abdullahi presented the second paper on the ***Legal and Statutory Environment of the Professionals***. He underscored the cardinal duties of all civilised societies as being predicated on the regulation of activities of the various segments that make up the society. He highlighted the importance and necessity for the government to formulate policies and guidelines aimed at regulating the professional practices and traditions. He emphasised that the ultimate desire of the citizenry is to ensure that all trades and professions are carried out for the optimum benefit of the citizens.

He stated that **it is the duty of the government to create a conducive environment that would ensure that professional practices would be free from corruption, unethical conduct, immorality and other vices.**

Digging into the statute book in the country, Mr. Elayo contended that it is replete with many laws aimed at regulating the various professional activities that are practised in the country. These laws, he noted always set out to provide legislative cover for the establishment and practice of the various professions. In the exercise of this wholesome responsibility, he said measures are taken to set out administrative procedures to ensure orderliness, maintenance of set standards and discipline. The legislation, according to the legal luminary, also invariably makes provisions for supplementary or subsidiary legislation in order to ensure dynamic progressions in the practice of professions.

He stressed, however that legislative proposals for amendments ought to be submitted to the appropriate authority for consideration when the need arises to

either expand the scope of professional practice or generally improve on the existing legislation.

In spite of the elaborate legislative schemes, the Minister identified that there are always certain inadequacies that still hamper the attainment of excellence in the way professions are practised or managed.

He cited some existing laws regulating professional practices in the country, such as:

Legal Practitioners Act Cap 207; Medical and Dental Practitioners Act Cap 221; Pharmacists Act Cap 357; Institute of Chartered Accountants Act Cap 185; Town Planners Registration Council Act 425; Surveyors Registration Council Act Cap 421; Professional (Special Provisions) Act Cap 373; Nurses and Midwifery Registration Act Cap; Engineers (Registration etc) Act Cap 111; Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Act Cap 111

Since it was not practicable to make a comprehensive review of all the above Acts, he focussed attention on one of them - Law as case study, which will he related to the main theme of the workshop.

He described the Legal Practitioners Act, Cap 207 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990 as a compendium that seeks to establish and regulate the Legal Profession in Nigeria. Some of its provisions are the establishment of the Bar Council, which is the body vested with the power to oversee the affairs of the Nigerian Bar Association. The Council is headed by the leaders of the Nigerian Bar i.e. the Attorney General of the Federation, the Attorneys General of all the states and twenty other members who are usually elected by the Association.

The Act, he explained proceeds to make elaborate provisions as to how a person shall be entitled to practice as a barrister and solicitor in Nigeria. Section 5 of the Act, he said makes it the exclusive responsibility of the Body of Benchers established by Section 3 to formally call to the Bar persons seeking to become Legal Practitioners in Nigeria.

Provision, he said is also made under Section 5 for the lawyers who have excelled in the profession to be conferred with the rank of Senior Advocates of Nigeria by the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee established by the same Section. That Committee, he stated is headed by the Chief Justice of the Federation.

He observed that provisions are also made regarding the privilege of law officers, enrolment, and the right of audience and order of precedence as they affect the Legal Practitioners generally.

In order to ensure maintenance of standards, he noted that the Act also establishes the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee which is charged with "the duty of considering and determining any case where it is alleged that a

person whose name is on the roll has misbehaved in his capacity as Legal Practitioner or should for any other reason be the subject of proceedings, under this Act". The Body of Benchers, he informed participants, appoints members to serve on the Committee.

In order to ensure equity and fairness, he cited Section 12 of the same Act, which establishes the Appeal Committee of the Body of Benchers, which has the power to determine appeals from any direction given by the Disciplinary Committee. The Body of Benchers from among its own members also constitutes this Committee. Elaborate powers and duties of this Committee are spelt out under Section 12.

The Body of Benchers is generally charge with responsibility of prescribing the procedure to be followed in the conduct of the appeal.

Penalties are also created under Section 11 for unprofessional conduct exhibited by practitioners. Where a lawyer is adjudged by the Disciplinary Committee to be guilty of infamous conduct or he is convicted in any court of law or that he was fraudulently enrolled as a lawyer, the Disciplinary Committee may order the striking off of the such persons from the roll of lawyers, at best such persons he observed are suspended from law practice etc.

The Act, Musa Elayo commented also seeks to protect citizens who engage the services of Legal Practitioners against fraudulent practices and misuse of fund. He recalled that Sections 20 and 24 of the Act have provisions for this.

To protect the sanctity of the practice and prevent quarks from encroaching on the profession, he cited the provisions of Section 22 of the Act, which makes it an offence for any person other than a Legal Practitioners duly called to the Bar to engage in Legal Practice in Nigeria.

The Minister commended the Legal Practitioners Act as a well-documented piece of legislation, which seeks to establish, regulate and protect the legal profession in Nigeria. The success of the Legal Practitioners Act, he however pointed out lies in its ability to create conducive environment for Nigerians to practice the Legal Profession. He lauded the legal profession in Nigeria as exclusively manned by Nigerians. This, he submitted is one of the most important achievements of the Legal Practitioners Act.

He however refrained from making a categorical statement on whether the required level of perfection in terms of execution of the various provisions set out by the law has been attained. The Honourable minister observed that there is a slide in the intellectual competence of lawyers' in spite of the clear provisions for continuing Legal Education made under the Council of Legal Education Act. Since its establishment, he insisted that the Council of Legal Education has not been able to actualise to the fullest the requirements of the enabling Act. He cited the establishment of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, which provides courses to lawyers and non-lawyers alike, as further confusing the continuing

legal education element as provided for in the Act, because non-lawyers are allowed to benefit from legal training.

He suggested that further training for lawyers should be centralised and made affordable for willing practitioners. He called for a review to the provisions of both the Council of Legal Education Act and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Act in order to make necessary amendments.

Another lapse, he observed in the operation of the Legal Practitioners Act is the attitude of the Nigerian Bar towards the Disciplinary Committee established under the Act. Mr. Elayo said until very recently, this important body had not been functioning. This factor, he said is without doubt responsible for the waywardness exhibited by some lawyers.

Under the Legal Practitioners Act, he underlined, the Bar Council is empowered to design a Code of Ethics for Legal Practitioners. The Council, he recalled did this in 1980. To that extent, he described the compendium as relatively old, more so as no amendment has ever been effected to the rules. He emphasised that these rules have to be revisited in order to contend with the dynamic nature of legal practice vis-à-vis the general trend of events in the society.

He also observed that the General Bar Council exists only on paper. Having said that this Council has been assigned the responsibility of the general management of the Nigerian Bar Association, he argued that to let the legal profession function without this central body is tantamount to allowing it to drift.

In conclusion, he noted that all these observations are invariably applicable in the case of other professions. He asserted that that there is no dearth or inadequacy of legal provisions for the regulation of professions in the country, the element that he pointed out militates against the attainment of the objective however is the inability of the operators to actualise the provisions made under the various laws. He also blamed the failure of the Government to effectively monitor these bodies established by legislation as having taken its toll on ethics among practitioners of the various professions.

In his intervention, Prof E.S. Uwachue, the Director General of the Copyright Commission traced the degeneration of morals and professionalism to the school system. According to him **the present corps of professionals are not exposed to the high standards that their predecessors had.** Most trainers and teachers, he observed have internalised a lot of unprofessionally conduct that it becomes inevitable that they would compromise themselves in the training of the successor generation of professionals.

He cited the flight of research, cultism, prostitution and quota admission policy as elements that have eaten deep into the school system and that have turned our centres of excellence to citadel of mediocrity. Invariably the criteria take their toll on professionalism, as damaged products are inevitably what would be imported

into the society. These graduates in turn replicate these unprofessional habits in their dealings with clients, public and in their domestic lives.

The workshop also benefited from the experience of Mr. Akin Iroko, the acting Director General of the Institute of Director. He presented a paper on *Standards of Management of Professional Organisations in Nigeria*. He defined a profession as a vocation with the best training and education. He blamed inadequate training for the decline of etiquette and professionalism in the contemporary Nigerian life. Underscoring the relevance of the institutionalisation re-training programmes for young professionals to enable them catch up with the demands of their professions, Iroko called on the government to make it mandatory for would-be professionals to undergo, upon graduation from their universities and training institutes, continual training for them to keep abreast of new technologies and developments in their professions.

The workshop however submitted that some professional associations are better managed and can conveniently be said to have met international standards. The Society of Nigerian Engineers, for instance, it was posited is in this class of association, since it has taken over the training of engineers right from the university through postgraduate studies. For the accounting profession, the meeting noted that the formal university education only provides the basic training and that thereafter, young graduates have to acquire one year practical training in Nigerian School of Accountancy as applied to ANAN while ICAN has series of qualifying examinations. On the whole, participants observed that professionals still have need for adequate training opportunities for new entrants. They were however unanimous on the need for professionals to recognise the imperative of continuing private and corporate training for professionals.

The workshop also recommended that organisations should be mindful of the working hours of professionals irrespective of motivation in order to reduce stress and inefficiency.

Furthermore, the workshop called on professionals in the country to demonstrate a high degree of professionalism, this will determine whether or not they will be called upon to take national responsibilities. Participants however warned professionals in critical positions of authority whether at the national, state or community level to uphold the integrity of their professions. They also enjoined such professionals to be ethical in all their undertakings and not to tarnish the image of their professional bodies, as many see them as representatives of their various professions.

In response to participants' comments, the presenter agreed that training opportunities do exist for professionals and that professionals should not wait for the government to do everything for them. He however stressed the lack of continuity of programmes that typified not just the successive regimes of Nigerian government but also the leadership of professional bodies. He expressed concern that leaders of professional bodies often come with different programmes that are not in consonance with the programmes of their

predecessors when newly elected into office. He therefore urged participants to ensure that there is always continuity in programmes of government and professional associations, as opposed to disruption of programmes by their successors.

On the issue of motivation and de-motivation, the presenter asserted that the situation is the same for all professionals all over the world. Demotivation, he stressed, is not only a problem of the public sector, but that it is also based on the individual disposition. He therefore urged individual professional to put up sacrificial services and to refuse to give in to de-motivation.

Iroko also harped on the flagrant lack of implementation and follow-up strategies and lamented that often the government as well as professional bodies formulate policies and design frameworks that are not backed up with pragmatic implementation strategies. He stated that professional bodies only design code of conducts without strict adherence to them, and argued that professionals know the right standards to set and the right ethics to uphold, but do not do them.

In rounding off his presentation, Iroko underlined the importance of record keeping and enjoined professionals to keep records of all their activities and all necessary statistical profiles for the successor generation, as this will serve as templates for reference and consideration in the future.

Two papers were presented on this sub-theme of Professional Training and Capacity Building: Matters Arising. The first presenter, Dr. Olowo Gbeja the Director General of the Administrative and Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) started his presentation by underlining the tremendous importance of the opportunity offered by the meeting to deliberate on the survival and growth of Nigeria as a nation and stated that the most critical 'building blocks' of any nation are essentially two categories of human elements: professionals and non-professionals. Distinguishing the two categories, Gbeja asserted that whosoever is not a professional is a non-professional and thus established the focus of his presentation.

Gbeja's paper provoked thoughts on the definition and grooming of professionals. Further the paper delved into **the sustainability and challenges of professionalism**. Drawing from *The Encyclopaedia of Professional Management*, Gbeja defined *professionalism* as the process of improving various aspects of a field of endeavour to bring that field closer to the ideal profession, and *profession* as a calling that requires extensive academic preparation. According to him, the earliest known professions are theology, medicine and law.

Gbeja described the concept of *Capacity Building* as all the activities that are geared towards enhancing an individual's disposition to the acquisition of requisite knowledge, development of desired skills and adoption of relevant attitude and aptitudes, all of which enable the individual to have the ability considered invaluable for the satisfactory performance of a given task which cumulatively lead to the attainment of given targets and objects.

Underlining the imperative of training, Gbeja maintained that the survival and growth of any organisation does not necessarily depend on “any” labour but rather on competent labour. He told his audience that capacity building or the human element of an organisation encompasses the concept of training and that being a professional would not be enough and rather one must strive to be a competent professional.

Gbeja went further to distinguish between education, training and development. He described education on the one hand in general terms and stated that it provides an individual with the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes to qualify him for a given position and training on the other hand, focuses on improving competence to perform in that position, while development is concerned with enabling the individual to contend with higher responsibilities that accompany higher positions along his career path.

Subsequently, Gbeja highlighted two major types of skills critical to optimal performance of any organisation. He stated that the human resources at management level must master the special, technical or professional and managerial skills necessary for running an organisation. Each managerial post, he said, requires two types of training inputs: first, the education and training needed to perform the technical or professional aspect of the job, and second, the managerial training needed for an economic, efficient and effective performance of the job.

Further, Gbeja informed the workshop that Human Capacity Building has become critical for most corporate bodies in Nigeria. This he adduced to the rapidity of technological innovation, expansion in the scope of functions and coverage of corporate bodies, obsolescence of skills and heightened rate of labour turnover. Consequently, he said, a lot of institutions have been established in the country: 39 universities, 44 polytechnics, 56 colleges of education and 29 vocational colleges and schools, not to mention the professional training institutions.

He however lamented that the quantity and quality of service rendered or goods produced as well as the adroitness with which it is handled has betrayed the investments. He itemised certain criteria under which full benefits of training and capacity building of professionals are better realised. In a similar vein, he outlined five factors limiting the impact of training. These according to him are: improper planning, improper implementation of training programmes, diversion of training funds, inadequate utilisation of trained staff / resistance to change and inconsistent approach to training.

Finally Gbeja said that it is professionals on whose shoulders rest the attainment of the mandate or mission of the Nigeria as a nation. Recalling that the Vision 2010 document predicted Nigeria as an African Tiger, he warned that the private sector must assume its rightful position as an “Engine of growth”. He urged professionals, as partners in development, to work towards uniformity of training in both the private and public sectors.

Prof. Mike I. Obadan presented the second paper on the same topic. Obadan's paper examined the concepts of training, professional training and capacity building, which according to him constitute the ultimate basis of healthy nation building. The paper also discussed the imperative of preparatory training and continuing professional training. The Professor of Economics postulated that both the school curricular and continuing professional training in Nigeria should have a large dose of ethics in order to align professional practices with the development imperatives of the nation.

Acknowledging the relevance of the topic, the presenter told the workshop that since training and capacity building are catalysts for social development and economic transformation, human capital formation deserves to be accorded top priority. He also dwelt on the semantics of 'training' and 'education' and posited that though the two terms are occasionally used interchangeably, the meanings are not the same. Education, he mentioned, is a generalised process designed to imbue recipients with a broad cultural preparation before entering employment, while training focuses on the specific requirements of the job; it is job-oriented and narrower in conception than education, he submitted.

Obadan delved into the issue of professional training, which, essentially, he posited, refers to the training of professionals. He informed the workshop that the term professional in the context of the paper refers to any field of practice defined by a body of knowledge and requiring specific education for entry into practice. Further Obadan clarified that professional training, though includes the formal education, and is supposed to build on this foundation through continuing professional training. He stated that without this type of training, professionals would lack the ability to keep abreast of new technology and thus the ability to advance their careers.

Subsequently, the presenter underlined the importance of capacity building and the human component of it, which has to do with the stock of trained and productive people capable of performing key tasks necessary for achieving corporate objectives or national development agenda. Thus, Obadan posited that capacity building is synonymous with training and maintained that human capacity building simply refer to competence acquisition through the accumulation of work or practice-related knowledge, skills and attitudinal orientation.

The Director General of the National Centre for Economic Management and Administration went on to elaborate on pre-membership training of professionals and continuing professional training after registration and posited that the training of professionals should have three distinctive phases: the preparatory which is done at the tertiary school level, the pre-membership phase which comprises studying and passing professionally prescribed and validated examinations, and the informal phase, much of which is done through conferences and seminars, professional meetings, private reading and experience on the job.

Obadan commented on the apparent **inadequacy of the course content for each of the professional courses in Nigerian tertiary institutions and**

**argued that they generally lack a deeper appreciation of the ethical environment in which the trainee-professional will eventually operate.**

In this regard, he underscored the need for ethical grounding, especially in the case of accountants, whose professional work impinges directly on the fortunes of the Nigerian economy. He therefore enjoined professionals in various organisations to formulate codes of conduct relating to standards of behaviour expected of their members. Conclusively, Obadan reiterated that professional training programmes in Nigeria should have a large ethical content to enable professionals optimise their contributions towards reversing the ravaging impact of bad governance on national development.

During the discussion session that followed, participants underscored the importance of collaboration among and within professional bodies and agreed on the need to remove all obstacles impacting on collaboration. Participants also recommended that professional ethics and management should be incorporated into the curriculum of professional institutions.

The workshop noted that though the country is blessed with good professionals, Nigeria is riddled with a lot of bad practices. Participants agreed that this is due to lack of adequate training on the issue of ethics. They expressed dismay that professionals in public offices are not upholding the integrity of their professions, thereby leading to a situation where some professionals now fear or outrightly refuse to take up public appointment while some are bowing out of public offices. Participants called on all professionals to shun all forms of unethical conducts that might be inimical to professionalism and nation building.

The workshop commented on the current situation in the country whereby heavy contracts are awarded to foreign companies due to the inability of Nigerians to afford heavy duty and often cost-intensive equipment and facilities needed to execute complex tasks and projects and therefore called on the government at both national and state levels, in collaboration with affected professional bodies, to remedy the situation.

The workshop also expressed regrets that **Nigeria is not producing enough professionals, especially in the engineering, science and technology-based professions.** This they, warned, is a dangerous trend. They reasoned that the economy of the nation is the worse for it as profits made by foreign firms are always repatriated to their headquarters in their home countries. Participants therefore recommended that Nigeria should make adequate investment in training and capacity building programmes for indigenous professionals. They called on the government to design a strategy for training of professionals and to offer them the requisite employment opportunities needed to operationalise and enhance their skills. The workshop recommended that the government should identify the peculiarities of each profession, their strengths and weaknesses with a view to according them the necessary recognition and support in the larger interest of the nation.

The workshop identified the inability of professional bodies in Nigeria to speak

with one voice as the main obstacle to the sanctity of professionalism in the country. It consequently called for the strengthening of the Association of Professional Bodies of Nigeria (APBM). In the same vein, it recognised the existence of another body at the government level: The Advisory Body on Professional Matters, and the office of the Special Adviser to the President on Professional Matters. They therefore called on the two bodies to work together in mainstreaming the input of professional associations into policy development in Nigeria.

Responding to participants' comments, the presenters underscored the significance of collaboration and posited that the more professionals synergise the more they will be able to surmount their problems. They then urged professionals to take up their cross as nobody will fight their cause for them. They warned professionals in Ministerial positions or other public offices to desist from self-seeking pronouncements, but to work for the development of the nation.

***P*reamble:**

**Nigeria's national independence day had one unique stance in the year under review. It was a day of sober reflection on how well the nation and the citizenry have fared. Auspicious it also was for the public presentation of the Hope project. That programme was the only event for the National Day celebration.**

I See Hope both as concept and as a project is aimed towards creating greater understanding among the citizens (young and Old) of Nigeria's current development constraint and increase awareness of responsibilities in creating a better Nigeria through rigorous enlightenment campaign that mobilises people to take positive action.

It is aimed at promoting universally accepted core values and principles of social cohesion among the general populace and with specific focus on the children and the youth in whom the future of Nigeria is enwombed, through civic education.

The Project also aims to draw attention to the issue of collapsing social norms and standards which are fundamentally significant in the development and maintenance of any and all societal statute that are the source of regulation and the strength of identity for societies the world over and with the overall aim of rejuvenating public spiritedness and communal discipline.

**SECTION SIX**

**Core Objectives**

*A*part from realigning social cohesion towards ensuring an open and liberal society that would accommodate an enhanced and qualitative expansion the core objectives include:

- Articulating vision of hope and transform same into citizen re-orientation document, to be known and referred to as the Hope texts.
- Publish on behalf of the President, the Hope texts, interactive CD and Audio tapes and T Shirts.
- Develop and implement strategies for effective distribution of the Hope texts across Nigeria;
- Mobilise the citizens especially the Youth into a National Movement: Vanguards of Hope; and
- Conduct a periodic review and monitoring of the project

## Strategy

The basic aim of the distribution is to ensure a widespread distribution of the children and youth texts to a wide number of the non-voting public. The idea is also to target school children as they, essentially are the future. Committee is optimistic that the interest generated from among this target audience will also promote the interest of the adults and will generate the grounds for the distribution for the adult texts.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

The Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) designed supervisory mechanism and the Vanguard of Hope is expected to take over the monitoring and supervisory aspect of the operationalisation process. The ALF and the Vanguard of Hope will conduct evaluation periodically through a well-structured evaluation mechanism to assess programme content, resource input and beneficiary output.

## SECTION SEVEN

### Publications: Africa Forum

The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) graced the cover of the edition of the Africa Forum in the year under review. The former World Bank Chief shared with us his experiences at the Bank, his new assignment at the ECA, his views on globalisation, leadership, development, Information and Communication Technology and the issues of women and Africa development generally.

It is one intellectual compendium that churned out incisive thoughts, stimulating papers of great statesmen and scholars like that of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa who declared that Africa's time has come, Dr. Hans d'Orville, the UNESCO Director, Bureau for Strategic Planning who wrote on the Challenges of the Contemporary World, Allassane Ouattarra, the Deputy Managing Director of the World Bank who discussed Africa in the Context of Globalisation, Mike Moore, the Director General of the World Trade Organisation who dwelt on the Imperative for the New Comprehensive Round and Arvind Panagariya, a Professor of Economic at the University of Maryland who demystified the need for the new comprehensive round. Also featured are Dr. Olumide Ajayi, the Deputy Director and Chief of Programme at the ALF who sent in an article on: An Assessment of Government Incentives to Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in a Globalised World and finally Martin Khor of the Third World Network, based in Malaysia who dissected the Issues of Investment Liberalisation within the context of Globalisation.

In the last decade of the 20th century, the African country had witnessed a significant and impressive degree of political liberalisation. This, in many countries of the continent translated to mean the collapse of military rule and other forms of dictatorship and the institutionalisation of multi-party democracy, thereby setting the stage for improving the qualities of life of the people.

Civil Society Organisations have played a leading role in bringing about these changes. Nevertheless, in many countries democracy has failed to take hold, has been reversed or remains tenuous and troubled. The effectiveness of the civil society in continuing the expansion and defence of liberal political space in Africa depends significantly in creating a broader understanding of transition related issues and strategies. Indeed, there is an intellectual and strategic crisis confronting Africa's democracy movement, as alternative models of one-party states, military insurrection and authoritarian rulership, corruption, armed conflict, economic instability, and social underdevelopment. The civil society often seems too powerless in the face of government repression and war; activists are often isolated or divided; and creative approaches to solving problems of human rights and governance go unrecognised and unsupported. Yet, a dynamic democratic leadership potential still exists in Africa. It has grown wiser and more effective with experience, and its resolve to continue the struggle for democracy has not been broken.

As one of the outstanding repositories of the potentials for sustaining the struggle, Africa Leadership Forum has located a responsibility for itself in terms articulating and disseminating information on issues that will continue to drive the process of democracy and development on the continent. Since inception, ALF has maintained a database of over 10,000 African policy makers and top intellectuals who receive her occasional conference reports. An important addition to this was in 1991 when the Africa Forum was launched and published, up till 1998, with the active financial support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The Africa Forum, a journal of leadership, democracy and development has significantly complemented other ALF efforts in democratic nurturing and sustenance by helping to establish an active link with policy makers who, through the journal, are kept informed of new democratic policy ideas and developments. It has also reached out to a broader audience of youth, women, and civil society leadership.

The specific objectives of the journal include:

- Building a consensus among African democrats on how to sustain political liberalisation in Africa.
- Increasing the capacity of ALF leadership to network for active promotion of democracy on the continent.
- Providing the instrument for active interrogation and analysis of conceptual issues of leadership, development and democracy.
- Providing informed opinions of issues and events of national, continental and global concern for the benefit of substantive and potential leaders.

## 5:2. Project Activity

*Africa Leadership Forum* publishes quarterly, 20,000 copies each of the *Africa Forum*, focussing on democratisation and leadership across the continent of Africa and beyond. As a main complement of other publications of ALF, the journal has focussed on and highlighted debates on the democratisation process in Africa, security and demilitarisation, the crisis of succession, gender and other sundry issues. The interview is a major feature of the *Africa Forum*. Besides acting as information pot-pourri for readers in terms of exchange of ideas and views, analysing of trends and policies, it also serves as a signpost and caution for leaders and players on the leadership scene. Ultimately, it helps in projecting and portraying role models for the successor generation of African leaders.

The *Africa Forum* is concerned with the issues of leadership, democracy, and development within the African continent. Published since 1991, the journal has served as an instrument for projecting the dynamics of effective leadership as a basis for sustainable development on the continent. The *Africa Forum* has served, in its 10 years of existence, as an independent, authoritative magazine for disseminating the ideas and ideals that the ALF has striven for.

Thus far, we have featured interviews with African statesmen and technocrats such as former Tanzanian President, Mwalimi Julius Nyerere, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, former President of Cape Verde, Aristides Pereira, Kenya's Professor Thomas Odiahmbo, Botswana President Quette Ketumile Masire, former President of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Dr. Kingsley Y. Amoako, among others.

### Editorial Strategies

*The Africa Forum* publishes well-researched and original articles from seasoned scholars, leaders, and journalists all over the world. It has, however, always preferred works by Africans. Since inception, the journal has covered a broad range of issues of development, leadership, and governance, conflicts, crises and security, people, culture and literature, regional integration and co-operation etc. A regular feature of the *Africa Forum* is a series of in-depth interviews with African leaders, past and present, and men and women who have stamped their imprint on the history of the continent. And it is for this all-important reason that we require your kind assistance.

### Circulation

*The Africa Forum* is a quarterly, and has a worldwide circulation targeted at individuals and organizations that in their various capacities are concerned and involved in development generally, but African development in particular and who appreciate the fact that effective leadership is key to progress. Copies are usually circulated to heads of governments, top government officials, decision makers,

top business executives, entrepreneurs, private individuals, educational institutions, research organizations and libraries all over the world. *Africa Forum* is also available as an electronic journal and can be accessed by thousands of visitors to our website.

### **5:3. Evaluation**

*D*uring the year 2002, one edition of the journal has been published. Over the years, ALF has relied on various impact assessment parameters for evaluating the relevance and quality of the Africa Forum. Editions of the journal have been widely reviewed in national newspapers and have been circulated widely across the continent to individuals, research organisations, tertiary institutions, Presidents, embassies and high commissions in Nigeria, the Senate, the House of Representative and the State Assemblies in Nigeria, all governors and government ministries, and Nigerian Embassies and High Commissions all over the world, among others. We have received feedbacks, responses, and comments from these quarters as well as subscription orders for more copies, especially from governmental institutions, NGOs and CSOs.

The most important challenge facing the Africa Forum now is that of sustenance. Since the funding contract agreement signed with the National Endowment for Democracy expired in 1999, the journal has been sustained through advert revenue, which is often supplemented from ALF internal resources, thus further depleting the ALF resource base. This obviously cannot continue forever. To ensure that the journal is institutionalised, and to broaden its scope of coverage and circulation, it requires a solid financial backing that will guarantee its regular publication.

### **Conclusion**

*T*his report set out to provide a general overview of the activities of the Africa Leadership Forum in the year 2002. It has focussed on the major activities and therefore is not an exhaustive account of all the programmes, activities and events of ALF. For instance, our activities, invitation, collaborations and technical support services were not discussed here. However, ALF will be willing to provide information on all this and additional information on those cooperation with other NGOs and multilateral regional bodies to which we serve as engine room. Even the gender focal point of ALF, a new unit in ALF was not touched on, even though it has been a cardinal section of its organisation and promises to offer more challenges in the days ahead.

Excerpts from the Evaluation report on the ALF

Early in 2002, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa undertook an evaluation of its support to the ALF under its project RAF/97/022. The consultants, Ahmed Mohiddin, a Professor emeritus of Political Science from Kenya as well as Prof Aminu Diyo of a professor of management sciences from the Othman Dan Fodiyo University consulted far and wide in order to obtain an objective view of the activities and impact of the Forum. Below are excerpts from the final report of the two consultants

#### “.....**Profile of the Project**

**Description:** the development and improvement of leadership in Africa is the primary objective of the Project. Specific initiatives aimed at improving leadership capabilities will be undertaken, taking into account strong gender perspectives with a view to enhancing the capacity of African women to assume critical leadership positions.

Africans replaced non-Africans. There was, as well, the ‘scourge of conflicts’ haunting many African countries and deterring development. The abundant human and natural resources of African countries remained unutilised. The launching of the CSSDCA [Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa] by the ALF in collaboration with the OAU and UNDP in 1991 was at once recognition of the challenges of the time and a resolute response to those challenges. **Development Objectives:** to develop leadership capabilities with a view to enhancing the performance of African leaders in various fields: governmental and parliamentary, business and other activities of the civil society, as well as in other areas conducive to the promotion of the overall development of the continent in an environment of peace, stability and security.

More than 200 students and middle-level trade union leaders will have been trained in leadership, enhancing their managerial capacity in response to the economic and political reforms in Africa.

Effective training programmes, network and consultative forums for democratizing African parliaments and political parties in at least 10 African countries

Modalities for effective revitalization of the African Union of Parliaments as the major Africa based, African managed forum for African parliamentarians

An African Women’s Forum to deliberate and act on matters affecting women and in response to challenges facing women in Africa.

Recommendations on military expenditures, security and stability needs in Africa; to be forwarded to African parliaments, NGOs, CSOs as well as intergovernmental organizations throughout the continent. Undertaking net-working missions

“.....We consulted the relevant documents and reports, held intensive interviews and prolonged discussions with ALF Executive Director, Mr. Ayodele Aderinwale and his senior colleagues with the working knowledge of the Project. We consulted with Prof. Anyang’ Nyong’o, a Member of Parliament, Kenya National Assembly; Ms L. Muthoni Wanyeki, Executive Director, African Women’s Development and Communication Network; and Prof. Edward Oyugi, Coordinator, Social Development Network, people who have had working relationship with the operation of the Project, and are familiar with the mission, objectives and goals of ALF.....”.

“.....ALF has been in existence since 1988. ...ALF has no political baggage. The capacity of ALF to be focused and bold in the promotion of its mission and advocacy of its goals and objectives were typified by its resilience and commitment to the evolution and adoption of the Kampala Document ---**Conference for Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA)**. ALF practices what it preaches.

One of ALF's major weaknesses is the absence of stable and long-term funding

“.....In light of the paucity of leaders with the requisite competence and quality of leadership needed to steer Africa towards the African Renaissance---as well as promoting CSSDCA, AU and NEPAD---ALF should regard the convening of an annual Youth Leadership Forum a matter of the highest priority. In spite of the great need for leaders and leadership for a continent that is confronted with pressing domestic demands and formidable global challenges, at the moment there are no leadership training institutions in Africa.....”.

**In general ALF operated within the confines of the budget as provided for in the Project document.**

**On future programmes of the ALF**

ALF has reached a critical stage in its development. Obviously ALF has a very important role in the promotion and popularization of these initiatives, explaining their implications and importance for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Africa to a wide spectrum of the African societies.....We strongly urge ALF to include schools as sources of its future participants—an immense reservoir of the future generation of African leaders.....