

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO



Under the High Patronage of His Majesty the King Mohamed VI
that God the Glorified in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicraft
and Social Economy

 International Co-operative
Alliance – Africa
A Region of the International
Co-operative Alliance

مكتب تنمية التعاون
Office du Développement de la Coopération



Report on the Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference

Theme: *“Propelling Co-operatives in Africa to End Poverty”*

24 - 26 May 2017


**Farah Hotel
Casablanca, Morocco**

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INTRODUCTION

The theme of this conference, *Propelling Co-operatives in Africa to End Poverty*, is a culmination of a series of discussions had since 2014, and more specifically the profound one of 2016 which wholistically focused on Co-operatives in Africa Embracing Sustainable Development Goals. The idea was to unpack on a more general level, and raise awareness on what the SDGs are, and how co-operatives should wholly embrace these Goals and work, together with other stakeholders, towards achieving them. It has indeed been duly acknowledged in several strategic documents, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Financing for Development (FfD) Action Agenda that co-operative will play a significant role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals.

The main objective of this conference, that was organised by the International Co-operative Alliance, Africa (the Alliance Africa) and the Kingdom of Morocco under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohamed VI, and in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicraft and Social Economy was to bring together government officials and co-operative leaders to deliberate on how they can best address the first global goal, which calls for an end to poverty in all its manifestations by 2030. SDG 1 also aims to ensure social protection for the poor and vulnerable, increase access to basic services and support people harmed by climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. This would be through repositioning co-operatives in Africa to interact with and take advantage of strategic partnerships in existence.

Co-operative work should be made a leverage for the work that the government does and it is now time to recommit to the agenda to grow the co-operative enterprises so as to distribute wealth equitably using this enterprises as a vehicle.

The conference was enriched by a background paper which demonstrated the link between the co-operative model and delivery of the SDGs, which opened up the discussions through a thought provoking high level debate on the ACP-EU Post Cotonou Agreement, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), and climate change adaptation and mitigation, all of which aim to address poverty in Africa by reducing vulnerability to trade and income deficits as well as the adverse effects of climate change.

An exchange of experiences from the consumer sector and the Latin America Region, as well as from the host country, Morocco inspired participants to explore the numerous options available in their contexts.

The conference drew Ministers from Co-operative Development Ministries from Morocco, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe; the Permanent Secretary from Lesotho, as well as 311 participants from, Morocco, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Japan, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Wednesday 24 May, 2017

Official Opening

Following an inspiring video showcasing the achievements of the tourism, crafts and social economy sectors in Morocco, the 3rd Africa Co-operative Conference was opened with **Key Note Address** being given by:

Mr Mohamed Sajid, Minister of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts and Social Economy, who after welcoming all guests present, said that his ministry is committed to reducing inequalities between territories of Morocco, and also between men, women and youth and this is being done through support to the co-operative sector in the country.

Mr Sajid emphasized the need to improve the legal and policy framework and governance structures such as provision of tax incentives and marketing and distribution platforms in order to strengthen the role of social development actors, including co-operatives in socio-economic development of Morocco and indeed the whole African continent.

He acknowledged the role of social protection systems so that the most vulnerable in society are supported, and also recognized the importance of monitoring these social systems in order to streamline service delivery.

Mr Sajid committed to work with respective ministries in Morocco to facilitate improved access to finance, resources and networks for co-operatives in order to foster a more just and fair economy in which every citizen participates and benefits, since there is evidence that co-operatives help to boost the social economy.

Ms Jamila El Mossalli, Secretary of State Responsible for Crafts and the Social Economy urged all participants to actively share respective experiences and take advantage of the presence of co-operators from across Africa in order to build linkages that would foster trade in the future.

Mr Abdelkarim Azenfar, Director Office for the Development of Cooperation (ODCO) of Morocco added his voice by welcoming all participants to the conference and to Morocco, reiterating that this was a valuable learning opportunity for all to learn and network. Since ODCO is in charge of implementation of the Co-operative Law, Mr Azenfar expressed satisfaction about the good progress made in amending the co-operative law so that it is more supporting co-operative development in Morocco.

He further reiterated that co-operatives were pillars for solidarity and the social economy. Since historically, culturally and socially Moroccan crafts were made in different territories, the knowhow of craftsmen and women is centred in the various territories with each producing different grades and qualities. Through co-operatives, Moroccan crafts have attained labels of products from the different crafts, and these labels became the flag-bearers of the territories, which is both a mobilising factor and also allows the co-operatives in the different territories to preserve this local knowledge and an important means to fight counterfeit goods. The labels are a marketing tool regionally, nationally and also internationally and the traceability factor ensures that safe products are available for consumers.

There is currently a huge international debate for the establishment of regional coalitions to protect indigenous knowledge, and co-operatives therefore have a major role to play in preserving this indigenous knowledge.

Dr Chiyoqe B. Sifa, Regional Director for the International Co-operative Alliance, Africa (the Alliance Africa) opening remarks focused on the need to trigger action within the co-operative movement in Africa by providing knowledge on international frameworks upon which development cooperation, trade and political dialogue between African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) nations and the European Union (EU) revolve.

One of the international frameworks of focus was the Cotonou Agreement, whose core objective is poverty eradication, ensuring that the political, social, cultural and environmental circumstances of people living in developing countries change for the better through its three closely interrelated pillars. This core objective resonates well with the theme of this conference. The three interrelated pillars are:

- i. Development Cooperation, which refers to technical and financial assistance provided to developing nations through the European Development Fund (EDF).
- ii. Trade Negotiations at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, which influence the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The EPAs are relatively new trade agreements that were designed to enable ACP countries to integrate in the world economy. The terms of these agreements are meant to facilitate regional integration that would allow for example, nations in Africa to negotiate trade terms as a block and therefore have more bargaining power. Careful examination, and knowledge of the EPAs would allow the co-operative movement in Africa to also become a significant stakeholder for the benefit of members for poverty alleviation.
- iii. The third Pillar is Political Dialogue which is considered as a strategic and continuous tool in the partnership between ACP nations and the EU, in which non state actors are also involved. Political dialogue can be organized around a wide range of issues such as asylum and migration, trade, human rights and so on. Through political dialogue, the EU is able to influence policies in ACP nations to be more coherent with EU policies, and enforce essential elements of the partnership such as human rights, democratic principles and respect for the rule of law. The level of influence is, however waning especially in Africa, with the coming of China as a formidable trade and development cooperation partner, which does not tag its level of technical and financial support to the aforementioned elements.

Dr Sifa further spoke about the Africa Union Strategy on Climate Change which provides the AU as a whole, the Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), Member States and other stakeholders with a reliable source of strategic guidance to enable them effectively address climate change challenges through climate change governance; promotion of research, education, awareness raising and advocacy; mainstreaming and integrating climate change imperatives in planning, budgeting and development processes; as well as promotion of national, regional and international cooperation. Given that no sector of any economy, be it agriculture, water, health, energy, infrastructure, and so on has been spared from the damaging ramifications of climate change, governments the world over have the responsibility to together proactively take lead in tackling climate change. This is an urgent and significant challenge for all of us who are charged with promoting economic development to take up in order to quicken economic growth so as to contribute to the elimination of extreme poverty in the region.

Mr Japheth A. Magomere, Member of the Alliance Africa Regional Board read a speech on behalf of the President of the Alliance Africa Regional Board, Mr Stanley Muchiri, who reiterated that with the co-operative movement bringing together over 1 billion people around the world - the UN estimated that the livelihood of nearly 3 billion people was made secure by co-operative

enterprise - these social enterprises play significant economic and social roles in their communities. In Africa, co-operatives are significant economic actors in national economies with one in seven people, including women and youth, being members of a co-operative. This translates into a significant contribution to national and regional economies, an asset that should be nurtured and harnessed in order to contribute to ending poverty on the African continent. He further emphasized that eradicating poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the biggest challenge for the global community today. During the last 25 years, the number of poor has doubled from 150 million to 300 million, half the population surviving on \$1 a day or less. According to the report of the Commission for Africa, "the continent needs successful African entrepreneurs and a strong and vibrant small enterprise sector to provide the innovation and productivity growth necessary for long-term poverty reduction."

Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale, Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana and on behalf of the Chair of the Alliance Africa Ministerial Conference. He started by first appreciating and commending the Kingdom of Morocco for the excellent facilities that have been provided for the Conference and their warm hospitality, expressing his honour and privilege to be amongst co-operators and stakeholders from within and from outside Africa at the APMC that would afford all present to reflect on the progress made the October 2015 APMC in Gaborone, Botswana. He further said that it was time to recommit to the set objective of growing the Co-operative Business Enterprises in our respective countries and the Continent as a whole. The theme for this conference; "Propelling Co-operatives in Africa to End Poverty", resonates well with the aspirations of the region of ensuring sustained employment, improving the livelihood of our people thereby ending poverty.

Hon. Butale further said that the conference was also about Africa's Co-operative family's contribution to the Global Co-operative family's impact on the global economy, citizen economic empowerment, poverty eradication and employment creation, emphasizing that it was therefore important for us as a region to be in synch with the rest of the world, recognizing that Africa is one of the world's fastest-growing Continents. Despite challenges facing the global economy, Africa has defied the pessimists, accelerating its economic growth and continues to register significant improvements in its Human Development Indicators. He emphasized that this growth must be sustained to create jobs and opportunities for all, as well as to bring about economic transformation.

It therefore remains critical that the Africa continent continues to close the infrastructural gap, speed up economic integration, address challenges related to conflicts and developing our human capital. Taking into consideration that the recently launched African Union (AU) Agenda 2063: the Africa We Want, echoing these concerns and advocating for an integrated, prosperous as well as peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena the Agenda recognizes the role of the Co-operative Movement in growing Africa's social and economic development.

The role of the Co-operative enterprise in the global supply chain is relevant to provide solutions to these challenges. However, all need to be cognizant of the sophisticated business environment and competitive market place that co-operatives operate within, both regionally and globally. There is therefore, need for a coordinated approach and need to speed up different efforts towards regional integration in order to more fully compete in the global arena. This is the opportunity to inspire and equip the next generation to join Co-operative businesses, to grow Co-operative enterprises and build their competitiveness.

Given that the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020 would be officially launched on the 26 May 2017, and is based upon the same principles adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance and AU Agenda 2063. The aim of this Strategy is, to unite the different sectors of the Co-operative industries and will give its members the opportunity to speak with one voice on issues of common interest, hence, the theme “Inclusive Growth”, trusting that the Strategy would cement the shared vision and common bond of the Co-operative Movement.

He further emphasized that co-operatives drive their agenda, it is pertinent for Co-operatives and governments to engage all stakeholders to participate in the process of accelerating Co-operative-driven prosperity in Africa, encouraging an honest debate and full engagement of all stakeholders for the Continent to realize the goals set in the Strategy since global challenges require concerted effort from all of us across all sectors of the economy.

He concluded by imploring all to network and share experiences to build a rich knowledge base for the Co-operative Movement, hopeful that all would leave Casablanca with determination and renewed vigor to pursue the Co-operative Agenda and build the Africa we want.

Background Paper on Linking Co-operatives with SDGs Indicators and Delivery

Mrs Simel Esim, Head and Senior Technical Specialist of the Co-operatives Unit, International Labour Organisation (ILO) presented the background paper on linking co-operatives with sustainable development goals (SDGs) indicators and delivery stressing that co-operatives are recognized as key players in meeting the SDGs, but there are no indicators related to co-operatives to measure progress. Co-operatives need to not only sit at the table where decisions on international and regional socio-economic development are made, but must also articulate the need for the work of co-operatives to be deliberately measured with regard to progress made in relation to implementation of SDGs.

Co-operative to co-operative trade can make global supply chains shorter and more effective. For this to happen there is need to capitalize on such meetings to exchange information on best practices and successful cooperatives. The question that needs to be answered is: how can cooperatives have access to international markets?

There is need to have statistics on co-operatives' contributions to the SDGs, not just statistics showing the increase in the number of registered co-operatives. National statistical offices need to help the co-operatives disaggregate the data they collect on how co-operatives are doing on employment, climate change mitigation, poverty reduction and other SDG indicators.

The International Labour Conference organized by ILO is due to take place in Geneva between 05 and 17 June, 2017. This is the ILO's highest decision-making body which meets annually, and brings together the tripartite delegations from the ILO's 187 member states. The Conference is composed of a plenary and of technical committees during which African governments will talk about their priorities, but unfortunately, in spite of repeated requests, African countries speaking about support needed by co-operatives in development are often absent, and therefore forgotten when strategic that inform budget priorities are developed.

ILO is also planning to roll out training and capacity building to strengthen apex organisation in order to enhance financial literacy and management of co-operatives in general. This will first be piloted in Zambia before being rolled out to other countries.

Ms Esim concluded her background paper by reiterating that there is need for bigger programmes and projects to help catapult innovation, harness technical advancements and get involved in new sectors such as renewable energy, engage youth and women as well as with worker and consumer co-operatives in order for African co-operatives to be able to more meaningfully implement the SDGs and track the socio-economic benefits emitting from the same. The ILO is ready to work together with African co-operatives and respective governments to ensure successful implementation of the SDGs, particularly on the Goals that are most relevant to the co-operative movement.

High Level Debates on ACP-EU Post Cotonou, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Climate Change

Presenters:

- 1. Hon. Minister Sithembiso G.G. Nyoni, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development in Zimbabwe**
- 2. Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale, Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry in Botswana**
- 3. Mrs Jamila El Mossalli, Secretary of State Responsible for Crafts and the Social Economy in Morocco**
- 4. Dr Motseki Mofammere, Principle Secretary of the Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing in Lesotho**
- 5. Mr Hans Lind, Regional Director, We Effect Regional Office for East Africa**

From this high level debate moderated by Dr Chiyoge B. Sifa, Regional Director of the International Co-operative Alliance - Africa, on the whole, nations in Africa are supportive of the pillars of the Post Cotonou Agreement, the EPAs and the need for concerted and urgent action to mitigate the devastating effects of climate change, particularly as this negatively affects food production and productivity. However, not all countries in Africa have signed on to the EPAs although the Post Cotonou Agreement and the EPAs are instruments that are useful and can help in alleviation of poverty. It is important that the co-operative movement in Africa holds respective governments accountable and ask to be involved as co-operatives in these discussions because co-operatives are key players in inter and intra-trade and development. Co-operators need to identify specific chapters that need to be revised in these key policy documents, and ensure that the revisions are included and implemented.

More specifically, it was noted that Zimbabwe was the first country in Africa to establish a Ministry of Co-operatives, and Hon. Nyoni was the first ever Minister of the same. Other countries have copied the same model, which is commendable. The Ministries of Co-operatives must therefore take on a more proactive role, not only in ensuring that co-operatives have an enabling environment within which they operate, but also in working with their respective trade ministries to seek out inter and intra trade opportunities within and outside their countries.

A lot of work still needs to be done by Africans on development to lift the economic and social situation. Countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho and Botswana, among others have embraced the Post Cotonou Agreement and have benefited from development cooperation in terms of infrastructure development. This has eased the movement of people, goods and services within and across the national boundaries. In addition, it has facilitated increased trade and enhanced regional integration that improved the nations' bargaining power since individual nations are trading as a regional bloc. The SADC countries are also benefiting from the EPAs as trade barriers have been removed. The Post Cotonou Agreements will continue to have a positive impact on the co-operative movement in Africa at large if true partnership in terms of development trade and finance are maintained and devalued to benefit all parties.

It was critical that the Ministries of Trade and Industry and that of Co-operative Development work closely together to ensure fair trade negotiations, market access, assurance of quality, adherence, to standards and bulking up produce so as to benefit the wider community for ending poverty.

Ensuring access to finance for traders, farmers and others through savings and credit co-operatives (SACCOs) has proven successful in Morocco, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Lesotho. SACCOs are recognized as a means of making finance accessible to the "unbanked" thereby mopping up excess liquidity that causes runaway inflation. This has enabled the "unbanked" to participate in economic activities that have lifted them out of poverty, and in the same vein, these nations have supported programmes aimed at improving access to finance in order to make finance accessible to co-operatives and SMEs, so that they grow and have the opportunity to bulk up produce for trade.

Co-operatives work with values that are based on solidarity that are aligned to African values, and international experiences like this Conference and the COP 22 help the Moroccan Co-operative sector, and indeed co-operatives from other African countries, to learn and grow, and in this regard, the Moroccan Cooperation Department (ODCO) is planning to launch a participatory study that will examine what incentives exist for young entrepreneurs to join co-operatives, and thus be helpful in building the nation's social economy.

The new European Consensus on Development signed in May 2017 now recognizes co-operatives as key development actors in eliminating poverty and building prosperity, and also in partnership as both private sector actors as well as part of civil society. This is an opportunity for co-operatives the world over, and in Africa as well to get as much information and capacity as possible in order to be better placed to engage with the European Union Delegations in their home countries so that they can access resources, as well as provide information about the co-operative model as a vehicle for development and socio-economic transformation, as well as data on the impact of co-operatives in communities in Africa.

It was agreed that co-operatives strengthen and nurture democracy - members own the co-operative and are thus able to participate in the decision making processes - good co-operatives attract more members.

We Effect is linking co-operatives to markets by enabling better quality, quantity and price negotiations. To access international markets co-operatives need to think about consumer needs, branding and supply chain design.

We Effect also works towards achieving 50-50 gender parity in participation in co-operatives in decision making - so far there is 34% participation of women in management boards in co-operatives in Africa, indicating that there is still room for improvement before we reach the ideal situation. Various affirmative action programmes and incentives for women in leadership, as well as capacity building to enhance women's participation in leadership are ongoing and tracking of progress is also being carried out.

In relation to climate change, knowledge and resources are needed for farmers to learn to adapt to climate change. There is need for agricultural co-operatives to advocate for increased extension services to enhance knowledge on climate change mitigation measures, and also support to link agricultural co-operatives to financial co-operatives so as to bridge the gap between the two and mitigate climate change.

The negative effects of climate change (the severe and prolonged cycles of droughts and floods) have caused food shortages, decimated the environment, and have particularly negatively affected the rural poor who depend on agriculture for their food and income security. However some of the mitigation measures being rolled out in the SADC countries include rain water storage and harvesting, promoting the use of organic fertilizers, exploring the use of renewable energy such as solar and bio gas, rolling out drought resistant crop varieties, and focus on improving value chains in agricultural production. Morocco too has made efforts to mitigate climate change at all levels, and indeed hosted the COP22 where the emphasis was on the protection of nature and traditional assets / resources, including handicrafts and traditional medicinal plants that are all vulnerable to climate change.

It was concluded that the countries represented had made an attempt to mitigate climate change for example Morocco with its focus on a green economy; water harvesting in Lesotho and planting of trees in Zimbabwe.

There is also a need to make governments accountable and ensure that co-operatives are involved in EPAs discussions and making constructive contributions.

Co-operative Experiences from the Latin America Region and the Consumer Sector

Presenters:

- 1. Dr Ariel Enrique Guarco, President of the Confederation Co-operative de la Republica Agrentina Ltd (COOPERAR)**
- 2. Mr Todor Ivanov, Secretary General of the European Community of Consumer Co-operatives(CCW)**

Moderators:

Mr Houcine Gabi, Director of the Promotion of the Social Economy
Mrs. Amina Kchirid, Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences of Casablanca

Dr Ariel E. Gurrco made a presentation about the Co-operative Confederation of the Argentine Republic (COOPERAR) in order to capacitate and inspire African co-operatives to also explore the

formation of workers' co-operatives and other innovative co-operatives given the changing world dynamics. COOPERAR, the umbrella co-operative in Argentina has been in existence since 1926 ; it represents over 70 entities from different sectors throughout the entire national territory and has a membership of over 10 million people. One in two people in Argentina receives products or services from co-operatives, and there are around 20,000 cooperatives, representing about 10% of GDP. COOPERAR has survived and thrived through the years through building sustainable enterprises that respond to members' needs, and not the other way around, for example, during economic down turn, instead of letting workers go and increasing unemployment, COOPERAR buys the struggling enterprise and together with the workers form a co-operative and find ways and means of turning around the enterprise and thus retain their workers at a decent wage, with decent working conditions. This is a good lesson for African co-operatives to emulate.

There is great potential for public service co-operatives that take into consideration the strength of members' participation, and aim to produce products that respond to people's needs. Worker co-operatives are a good example of this, where the multinationals have failed. Worker co-operatives are enterprises that are managed by workers; working conditions are democratically defined - an excellent tool for protection of worker rights, such as the Red Graphic Co-operative in Argentina, which is worker managed and has been able to successfully improve their competitiveness through utilization of new technologies and without letting workers go in spite of the financial crisis in Argentina.

Worker co-operatives in Argentina have had positive experiences with recovering struggling companies being revived where workers that had been abandoned or fraudulently let go have been received through worker co-operatives and retained thus continuing to contribute to the national economy.

Programmers' co-operatives and recyclers' co-operatives are all examples of innovative co-operatives that the movement in Argentina has successfully explored, and dignified the work of its members

Mr Todor Ivanov made a presentation about consumer co-operatives in Europe, which satisfy consumer needs through retail, giving the example of the case of Coop Denmark, who have a turnover of 7 billion USD and operate retail stores in a variety of outlets all over Denmark.

Under their Savannah branch between 2014 - 2016, Coop Denmark worked with Kenya, Ghana and Namibia and raised awareness of African production and fair-trades issues. After 2016, Coop Denmark began to work with African producers on making shelf ready products where the whole supply chain would be in Africa thus ensuring employment locally, and provide accountability across the entire supply chain.

Africa Coffee Roasters, a company registered in Kenya produces shelf-ready coffee for co-operative retailers in Denmark. It employs up to 3,500 people. They source coffee from farmer co-operatives in Kenya, Tanzania, DR Congo, Uganda, Ethiopia, Burundi, and Rwanda. The coffee is purchased directly from farmers and farmers are paid immediately they provide the coffee beans worth up to 20million USD. Farmers are paid unto 10% more than others - premium rates.

Co-operative Experiences from Morocco

Presenters:

1. **Mrs Khalid Rahel, Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicrafts and Social Economy: Crafts Co-operatives**
2. **Mrs Khadija Bendriss, Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Water and Forests (Agricultural Development Agency): Agricultural Co-operatives**
3. **Mr Abdelkarim Azenfar, Office for Development Cooperation: The New Sectors of the Moroccan Co-operative Movement and the Future Prospects**
4. **Mr Mustapha Chehhar, Groupe Credit Agricole Maroc**

Moderators:

Mr. Houcine Gabi, Director of the Promotion of the Social Economy
Mrs. Amina Kchirid, Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences

The national initiative for human development launched in 2005 by His Royal Majesty the King of Morocco Mohamed VI - a new approach that is participatory in nature is one of the public institution that looks after the vulnerable in society in Morocco.

The Moroccan crafts industry is based on territory and knowhow of the crafts men and women in a particular territory. The branding of these products is a mobilization factor, a flag bearers of a territory that allows co-operatives to preserve this knowledge, and is also an important means of fighting fake goods. The branding / label is a marketing tool at regional, national and international levels, safeguards consumers and helps maintain high international standards of products.

In response to the current international conversations about preserving indigenous knowledge, co-operatives have a major role to play in this regard. The promotion of homegrown products is supported by the ministry and co-operatives in this sector continue to grow and thrive.

Credit Agricole has managed to provide financing to agricultural co-operatives and the agro industry in through the Department of Cooperation in Morocco. Credit Agricole is a bank that has become a development bank by segmenting the market into different products in order to develop appropriate financing products for each segment thereby easing access to finance for co-operatives.

At the end of this day, participants were hosted to a Gala Dinner where all experienced the excellent Moroccan cuisine and music.

Thursday 25 May, 2017

Ministerial Conference Technical Committee Meeting (MCTC)

Introduction

The 2017, Ministerial Conference Technical Conference (MCTC) was organized by the International Co-operative Alliance, Africa (the Alliance Africa), and hosted by the Government of Morocco under the patronage of his Majesty King of Morocco Mohammed VI. The meeting was organized in order to take stock of the progress made within the co-operative movement in Africa since the last MCTC meeting in Maseru, Lesotho.

Highlights of the 3rd Commissioners / Directors / Registrars / and Co-operative Managers / Leaders Forum held in Maseru, Lesotho presented by Dr Chiyoge B. Sifa, Regional Director of the Alliance Africa

During the 2016 MCTC meeting Country Progress reports (in annex) were received from Lesotho, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, during which the contribution of co-operatives to national economies was discussed. One of the major challenges highlighted was the lack of reliable co-operative data, an ongoing challenge which makes measuring impact of African co-operatives' contribution to national and global economies difficult to measure. There is a research that is about to be launched on the status of ICT uptake within the co-operative sector in Africa, which will provide suggested solutions on a user-friendly ICT system that can be utilised by primary co-operatives and also unions, apexes and federations to enhance data collection.

Capacity building on strengthening federations, as well as on policy dialogue, co-operative related themes and relations with the EU Delegations is also planned for selected Alliance Africa members in order to contribute to strengthening the co-operative movement in Africa.

May 25 is Africa Day, where we all celebrate successes and achievements from the African continent, one of which is the re-admittance of Morocco into the African Union. We are glad to have Morocco back and are happy to share experiences and learn from each other for the benefit of the entire co-operative movement, and Africa's development as a whole.

Presentation of Africa Country Progress Reports Moderated by Prof. Faustin K Bee, Vice Chancellor of the Moshi Co-operative University, Tanzania and Mrs Asmae Diani, Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences of Fes, Morocco

This year, 8 out of 18 Country Progress Reports were received; a slight improvement from 2016, but still below half. It is important to analyse the reason for the low level of commitment to improving the co-operative movement in Africa. Country Progress Reports were received from Botswana, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Swaziland, South Africa, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

Prof. Faustine K. Bee and Mrs. Asme Diani moderated the sessions of the day where the following key highlights were noted:

1. The reports presented indicated that the co-operatives are still very vital in contributing to sustainable economic development and growth as well as in alleviation of abject poverty.

2. Most reports highlighted that registration of Non Traditional Co-operative, exist and such as in Grass Harvesters, Multipurpose Co-operative Society, Small stock Producer, Fish Marketing, Solar energy
3. Co-operative have been enhanced and are at least in every sector of the economy. Good examples are co-operatives from Rwanda dealing with post-harvest financing and transport of production.
4. The Co-operative policies are in place and have a clearly defined strategy for autonomy of Co-operatives. Presenters emphasized that an enabling policy environment is key to cooperative development
5. Recognition of best performing co-operative is critical to motivate others. This will lead to increased participation of every person in co-operative activities.
6. The reports also indicated that the number of women and youth participating in co-operative activities is increasing slowly by slowly but more sensitization is still necessary. Governments are keen in promoting such enterprises as they are key to development. Sensitization is done at various levels and popularization of the co-operative philosophy is reaching more people at the grass root level.
7. Many co-operatives are still struggling and creation of co-operative banks will help ease financial constraints by facilitating access to affordable capital. Where they do not exist it was noted that it is critical to establish some.
8. There is need for continuous training. Co-operative Board members need to receive continuous training for better governance of the co-operatives. Board members to receive at least basic knowledge on financial management or accounting and that co-operatives should employ qualified and professional personnel basing on their size, operations and criteria set by the regulator.
9. Through government support co-operatives have come to the realization of value addition, and a number of them are now practicing the same. This has led to increased income and reduced wastage.
10. The existing of co-operative institution has continued to provide technical support to the co-operatives and various governments for better learning and management of co-operative activities.
11. Co-operative should stick to the purpose for which they were formed and members should not join the co-operative movement with the aim of self benefit, or fall into the trap of reliance on donor.
12. Countries that have managed to negotiate for tax and bank interest rate reductions for their national co-operative movements were requested to share their experiences so that others can have the possibility of replicating the same.

The above highlights were presented to the ministers present during the Mid Term Review of the Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference of 26 May 2017.

Friday 26 May, 2017

Mid Term Review of the Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference

The meeting was called to order at 09:20am by the Master of Ceremony

Min. No. 1/05/2017 - Adoption of the Conference Agenda / Programme:

The Chair of the Alliance Africa Ministerial Conference President, Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale, and Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana welcomed all participants, and Ministers, Assistant Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Leaders, Commissioner and Managers of national co-operative ministries and departments, Presidents and Secretary Generals of national co-operative apexes and unions in Africa in particular.

The purpose of this midterm review was to take stock of achievements within the co-operative movement in Africa and make recommendations for improvements, as well as launch the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020 as well as the Africa Co-operative Enterprise and Development Awards (ACEDA) and the SADC Project.

The agenda proposed for adoption by Hon. Minister Sithembiso G.G. Nyoni, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development in Zimbabwe, and seconded by Ms Elisabeth Lekoetje, Registrar of Co-operatives from the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Min. No. 2/05/2017 - Summary of Conference Proceedings and Findings:

Prof Esther Gicheru, Director, Institute of Co-operative Development of the Co-operative University of Kenya presented a summary of the draft pre-Conference and main Conference communiqués (in annex) that had been previously shared via email with all participants for their inputs.

There were no comments following this presentation.

Min. No. 3/05/2017 - Presentations of Summary Recommendations from the MTCT Meeting:

Ms Elisabeth Lekoetje, Registrar of Co-operatives from the Kingdom of Lesotho presented to the ministers present, a summary of the recommendations from the Ministerial Conference Technical Committee meeting that had taken place on 25 May, 2017. These were also well received.

Min. No. 4/05/2017 - ACEDA and the SADC Project:

Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale, Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana presented the proposal for the Africa Co-operative Enterprise and Development Awards (ACEDA), which would be presented at an awards ceremony that would take place after every two years. Details of selection categories and criteria were available in the detailed documentation shared with all ministers. It was envisioned that ACEDA would be modeled after the Rochdale Pioneers Award that was established by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) Board in 2000. The Rochdale Pioneers Award recognizes a person or, under special circumstances a co-operative organisation, having contributed to innovative and financially sustainable co-operative activities that have significantly benefited their membership.

ACEDA will recognize a person or co-operative organization that has significantly benefited the co-operative movement in Africa. ACEDA will further recognize persons or co-operative organizations for their business excellence and contribution to the community, as well as their members. Winning ACEDA has the potential of delivering many opportunities in both the public and private sectors, will raise the profile of the individual and the co-operative organization where the winners will have a mark of credibility and thus instantly become a role model for others within the movement to emulate.

Judges comprising selected co-operators from Africa will receive nominations for the agreed upon categories and will make a selection based on the criteria provided.

The SADC Project aims at assisting cooperative enterprises in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through an increased participation in intra-regional trade in SADC countries. The strategy seeks to build synergies between analytical work and research (e.g. studies, surveys, assessments) and operational, tailor-made activities related to capacity building of cooperatives and business development service providers.

The minister encouraged co-operators to take home the theme "Propelling Co-operatives in Africa to End Poverty" and suggested that in the next meeting co-operatives need to report on tangible results.

Min. No. 5/05/2017 - Progress Report from 2015 - 2017 and the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020

Dr Chiyoge B. Sifa, Regional Director of the International Co-operative Alliance, Africa (the Alliance Africa) presented the progress report from 2015 to 2017, and the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020.

Key highlights on the progress made on commitments made during the 2015 and 2016 Ministerial Conferences in Gaborone, Botswana and Maseru, Lesotho respectively were presented. Dr Sifa emphasized that the biggest challenge was the inadequate funds to establish Alliance Africa sub-regional offices in southern, western, and northern Africa that would enable the Alliance Africa to better serve its members across the region.

On the **Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020**, which sets out the opportunities and challenges for the sector, the vision for the co-operative movement by 2020 and how it will be achieved, with recommendations for both the movement and African governments. The Alliance-Africa shall continue to implement the Co-operative Blue Print 2020 within five thematic areas: Participation, also referred to as Engagement in order to deepen active and meaningful collaboration between the Alliance Africa and its members, Sustainability, Image and Identity, Cooperative Environment and Cooperative Capital, each with two goal areas: Members Services, Regional Economic Integration, Education and Skills Development, Policy and Legal Framework, Accelerating Access to Finance, and Mobilizing and Leveraging Resources.

The plan for the formation of a Africa Co-operative Bank still on the table and will be further discussed in the course of the year 2017.

With regards to the **Endowment Trust Fund (ETF)**, Namibia, South Africa and Botswana have each paid 100,000USD to the fund and are the only three nations that have fully paid their commitments.

Nations that have partially paid up on their commitments include Rwanda, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Swaziland.

Signatories to the agreement where nations made commitments to pay a total of USD100,000 to the ETF over a five year period who are yet to contribute include Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar, Malawi and Egypt.

Other countries who are not signatories to the ministerial resolutions are also invited to do so.

Not only governments contribute to the EFT, others include cash collections, contributions from CIC Insurance that is the biggest insurance co-operative in Africa, Uganda Co-operative Alliance, Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU), Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives (TFC), NNPC CMS, Co-operative Bank of Kenya and Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives Ltd (KUSCCO).

The EFT contribution formula was discussed and agreed during the 12 Regional Assembly that was held in Kigali in October 2016 and members agreed to contribute an equivalent of 50% of their yearly subscriptions to the EFT for the next 5 years. Using this formula, only Botswana has fully paid all in advance.

A video of how EFT funds were used in purchasing the Alliance Africa House, and the land on which the house sits, as well as the additional land for further office block development.

Dr Sifa ended her address by stating that together we can sustain the office and more so be able to render more services to our members, and appealed to members and governments to contribute to the ETF.

Min. No. 6/05/2017 - Launch of the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020

The Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017 - 2020 was officially launched by Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale, Dr. Chiyoge B. Sifa, Mr. Mike Duru and Mr Japheth A. Magomere, representing the Alliance Africa Regional Board and Mr Abdelkrim Azenfar and thus became the official guiding documents for co-operative development in Africa.

Min. No. 7/05/2017 - Closing

Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale's closing remarks centered around commending Morocco's initiative to re-join the African Union and also the Alliance, explaining that there was need to cement the solidarity between all countries within Africa. The field visit to the women-led cooperatives and a whole sale super market selling cooperative products in Casablanca was eye-opening and a great learning experience for all present.

Hon. Butale reiterated that co-operatives have their footprint in every corner of the African continent, and that the co-operative concept was indigenous to the African culture where solidarity was the centre piece. He urged all present to continue to strive to broaden their knowledge base, explore innovations and potential in order to grow the movement in Africa.

He ended by thanking His Majesty the King of Morocco, Mohamed VI, under whose high patronage this event was organized. He thanked the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicrafts and Social Economy and the State Secretariat for Handicraft and Social Economy for co-organizing the

Conferences with the International Co-operative Alliance, Africa. He further thanked Mr Mohamed Sajid, the Minister of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts and Social Economy Responsible for Crafts and the Social Economy; Mrs Jamila El Mossalli, Secretary of State Responsible for Crafts and the Social Economy together with the people of the Kingdom of Morocco; Hon. Sithembiso G. G. Nyoni, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operative Development in Zimbabwe; Dr Motseki Mofammere, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing from the Kingdom of Lesotho; Dr Chiyoge B. Sifa, Regional Director of the Alliance Africa; all Permanent Secretaries, senior government officials, chairs of apex bodies and all participants for their active participants.

Mr Abdelkarim Azenfar congratulated all participants for reaching the end of the 4 days conference that was an intense experience of discovery and networking of fellow African countries to build the future. He also appreciated the exchange of experiences from outside Africa, specifically Latin America and Europe, commending this as the right step towards developing and opening up to international experiences.

He reiterated and expressed his pride about the return of Morocco to the African Union, and this conference was one of the ways in which this return was celebrated.

The conference saw the participation of over 311 participants from various African countries, proving that the co-operative model is popular across the continent, deserving even more support from all actors.

With the beginning of the season of Ramadan, a month of solidarity for all citizens of the Kingdom of Morocco, he called on all participants to reflect upon the convergence of Ramadan and universal co-operative principles of solidarity and concern for the community.

He expressed pleasure at hosting the conference, which marked an important milestone in co-operative development in Africa, concluding by commending the Ministers from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana and Lesotho who had been present throughout the conference, showing their commitment to developing the co-operative movement in Africa.

He warmly greeted the delegation from the Cameroon Network.

He thanked the following:

- The Moroccan delegation for the great national representation from all over the country
- The Solidarity Centre for hosting participants at the wholesale supermarket
- The local authorities and security services
- Thank Dr Sifa and team for all the preparations
- Strive partners, including the hotel, moderators, translators, drivers, tour guides
- The ODCO team, expressing that he was very proud to work with the team that displayed skills and commitment at administration level - experience and good dynamics of young people striving to organize the conference well.

He welcomed all the international guests to experience touristic Morocco - old medina for crafts and other touristic experiences.

A message of gratitude to His Majesty King Mohamed VI was read by Ms Hakima Halowes for the hospitality and the commitment to supporting the co-operative movement in Africa, the social economy in general and co-operatives in particular.

He called for more South-South cooperation, build relationships, share expertise and experiences through the exploitation of the material and non material wealth of the continent of Africa, while also acknowledging the ravages of climate change , and called upon all, including CSOs and Cooperatives to work together to mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

Mr Sajjid, on behalf of everyone present thanked His Majesty and all his family, and asked God to protect him and also bless his initiatives.

The meeting ended at 12:30pm

Annexes

Conference Communiqué

<http://icaafrica.coop/sites/default/files/publication-files/acmc-midterm-communique-may-2017-1319680392.pdf>

Individual Country Progress Reports

<http://icaafrica.coop/sites/default/files/publication-files/co-operative-ministerial-conference-midterm-review-2017-131661227.zip>

Full presentations

<http://icaafrica.coop/sites/default/files/publication-files/co-operative-ministerial-conference-midterm-review-2017-131661227.zip>

The Alliance Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference Midterm Review - 2017

DAY ONE: 23 May, 2017

08:30 – 09:00:

➤ Registration

09:00 – 17:30:

➤ Pre-Conference Event- EU Project (All are invited)

DAY TWO: 24 May, 2017

08:00 – 08:30:

➤ Registration

08:30- 10:00:

Official Opening

➤ Introductions and Entertainment

➤ Welcome Note; Mr. AZENFAR Abdelkrim, Directeur Office Du Développement de la Coopération (ODCO), Morocco

➤ Remarks The Alliance Africa; Dr. CHIYOGÉ B. Sifa, Regional Director

➤ Remarks The Alliance Africa President, Mr. Stanley MUCHIRI

➤ Remarks, Chair Alliance Africa Ministerial Conference; Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana

➤ Chief Guest; Mrs. Jamila El MOUSSALI, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts, Social Economy
Mr Mohamed SAJID, Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts and Social Economy Responsible for crafts and the social economy

10:00 – 10:30:



Group Photo/ Tea and Coffee

10:30 – 10:45:

➤ Background Paper on linking cooperatives with SDGs indicators and delivery; Simel ESIM Head and Senior Technical Specialist at the Cooperatives Unit, ILO

10:45 – 12:00:

High Level Debates on:

➤ ACP-EU post Cotonou

➤ Economic Partnerships Agreements (EPAs)

➤ Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

1. Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry Botswana

2. Mrs. Jamila El MOUSSALI, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts, Social Economy, Responsible for crafts and the social economy

3. Hon. Sithembiso G.G. NYONI, Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development in Zimbabwe

4. Mr. Hans LIND; Regional Director- We Effect

5. Dr. Motseki MOFAMMERE, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Small Business Development, Cooperatives and Marketing, Lesotho

Moderator: Dr. CHIYOGÉ B. Sifa

12:00 – 13:00:

➤ Feedback from the Floor; Moderator: Dr. CHIYOGÉ B. Sifa

13:00 – 14:00:



Lunch Break

14:00 – 14:30:

➤ Co-operatives experiences from Latin America: Ariel Enrique GUARCO, President Confederacion Cooperativa De la REPUBLICA ARGENTINA Ltd

➤ Todor IVANOV Secretary European Community of Consumer Cooperatives

14:30 – 16:00:

➤ Co-operative Experiences from Morocco:- Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicrafts and Social Economy: Craft Cooperatives

➤ National Initiative for Human Development:- Office for Development Cooperation: The new sectors of the Moroccan co-operative movement and the future prospects

➤ Accompanying initiatives of the social and solidarity economy: South-South cooperation:- OCP Foundation

➤ Testimonies of cooperatives in the fields of agriculture, crafts and the environment:- Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Water and Forests: Agricultural Cooperatives

Moderator: Mr Houcine GABI: Director of the Promotion of the Social Economy

16:00 – 16:30:

➤ Plenary Discussions (Q/A); - Moderator: Mr Houcine GABI : Director of the Promotion of the Social Economy

16:30 – 17:00:

➤ Conclusions and Recommendations; Moderator: Prof. Esther GICHERU

19:00 – 21:00:



Gala Dinner – By Host; All invited

DAY THREE: 25 May, 2017

08:00 – 08:30:

➤ Registration

08:30 – 08:45:

➤ Highlights of the 3rd Commissioners / Directors / Registrars and Co-operative Managers / Leaders Forum; Dr. CHIYOGÉ B. Sifa

08:45-10:00

➤ Presentation of Country Progress Reports; Moderator: Prof. Faustine BEE/ Moderator: Mrs Amina Kchirid; Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences of Casablanca

10:00-10:15



Health break

10:15 – 13:00

➤ Presentation of Country Progress Reports; Moderator: Prof. Faustine BEE/ Moderator: Mrs Amina KCHIRID: Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences of Casablanca

13:00 – 13:30

➤ Summary Conclusions and Recommendations; Moderator: Prof. Faustine BEE/ Moderator: Mrs Amina KCHIRID: Teacher Researcher at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences of Casablanca

13:30 – 14:30



Lunch Break

14:30 – 17:00

➤ Field Visit to Co-operatives; Host, All invited

DAY FOUR: 26 May, 2017

08:00 – 08:30:

➤ Registration

08:30 – 10:00:

➤ Conference Called to Order; Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana.

➤ Adoption of Conference Agenda / Programme; Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE

➤ Address by Chairperson Ministerial Conference; **Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE**

10:00 – 10:30:



Health break

10:30 – 10:45:

➤ Presentation of Summary Recommendations from the MCTC Meeting; Mrs. Elisabeth LEKOETJE, Registrar of co-operatives, Lesotho

10:45 – 11:15:

➤ ACEDA and the SADC project; **Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE**

11:15 – 11:45:

➤ Progress Report from 2015-2017 and Africa Cooperative Development Strategy Presentation; Dr. CHIYOGI B. Sifa

11:45 – 12:00:

➤ Plenary Session

12:00 – 13:00:

Launch of the Africa Co-operative Development Strategy 2017-2020

- Dr. CHIYOGI Sifa, The Alliance Africa
- Mrs. Jamila El MOUSSALI, Morocco
- Mr. Stanley MUCHIRI, President of the Alliance Africa
- Launch of Africa Co-operative Development Strategy by Hon. Biggie G. BUTALE.

13:00 – 13:30:

Closing Ceremony by Mr Mohamed SAJID, Ministry of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts and Social Economy

13:30: LUNCH

13:30: Visit to Touristic sites

Host



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A Region of the International
Co-operative Alliance



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ACMC Concept Note

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development builds on what the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not complete. The Agenda has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) namely: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health And Well Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and Partnerships for the Goals.

The 169 Targets corresponding to the above mentioned 17 Goals, are integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development which are economic, social and environment. The Goals and Targets are designed to stimulate action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet, which are also at the core of the co-operative movement in Africa.

The theme for this year is a culmination of a series of discussion we have had since 2014, and more specifically the profound one of 2016 which wholistically focused on Co-operatives in Africa Embracing Sustainable Development Goals. The idea was to unpack on a more general level, and raise awareness on what the SDGs are, and how co-operatives should wholly embrace these Goals and work, together with other stakeholders, towards achieving them. It has indeed been duly acknowledged in several strategic documents, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Financing for Development (FfD) Action Agenda that co-operative will play a significant role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals.

Given this recognition, co-operatives have an opportunity to demonstrate their value as partners in achieving sustainable development. The year 2017 marks the beginning of a vigorous analysis of each Goal, starting with Goal number 1, to see how co-operative enterprises interact with each Goal, hence settling on the theme '**Propelling Co-operatives in Africa to End Poverty**'. Propelling co-operatives in Africa entails strengthening them through empowerment actions, uniting them so that they work better together and re-positioning them to better engage in policy advocacy and other strategic engagements so as to work towards ending poverty in Africa.

The objectives of this meeting is to bring together government officials and co-operative leaders to deliberate on how they can address best the first global goal through repositioning co-operatives in Africa to address issues of climate change and take advantage of the strategic partnerships in existence. The meeting also will take a review of the progress made since the last Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference in Gaborone Botswana since the year 2015.

Poverty in Africa

There has been marked progress on reducing poverty over the past decades; the world attained the first Millennium Development Goal target to cut the 1990 poverty rate in half by 2015, five years ahead of schedule, in 2010. Despite the progress made, the number of people living in extreme poverty globally remains unacceptably high with 836 million people still living in extreme poverty today. One in five of these persons live in developing regions and subsist on less than \$1.25 per day, and more sadly, most of these people come from sub-Saharan Africa. The global growth report forecasts that poverty reduction may not be

fast enough to reach the target of ending extreme poverty by 2030, and many are still living on the edge with a very real risk of slipping back into extreme poverty¹

The Goal to End Poverty in all its Forms Everywhere focuses on meeting the following broad targets detailed below:

- Eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030.
- Reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions² by 2030.
- Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable
- Ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including micro-finance by 2030.
- Build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters by 2030.
- Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions
- Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

There is need therefore to scan for the African macro-economic environment in search for current debates which have a major bearing on the poverty alleviation/eradication as one of and the first SDG in pursuit of the better World and position co-operative based development as one key contributor.

ACP-EU Relations Post Cotonou

Since 2000, the Cotonou Partnership Agreement has been the framework for EU's relations with 78 countries from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP). The relationship focusses on the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and the gradual integration of ACP countries in the world economy. It seeks to increase peace and security, and to strengthen the democratic political environment.³

Europe and the ACP countries share principles which should remain the foundations of our societies: peace, democracy, good governance, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. In view of creating sustainable development, our common objectives should be to foster sustainable growth and decent jobs for all, ensure human development, tackling climate change, turn migration and mobility into opportunities as well as speak with one voice on key global and common challenges on the international scene. On top of that, a renewed partnership would strengthen the political dialogue and consolidate our trade agreements.

Africa is a continent of huge opportunities, but still faces a number of conflict situations and challenges; as such then poverty, unemployment and inequality remain high. The priorities

¹ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>).

² Each country has a poverty reduction benchmark

³ [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-16-3885 en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-3885_en.htm)

proposed by the European Commission and the High Representative for the EU Africa partnership are to focus on achieving peace and stability, consolidating democracy and good governance, unleashing economic opportunities, managing migration and mobility as well as reaching human development standards leading to reduced poverty. Post Cotonou Partnership Agreement caters mostly for the socio-political environments of the ACP-EU countries and Economic Partnership Agreements concentrate on the economic one.

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

While the Post Cotonou Agreement is the overall document guiding the collaboration and partnerships between the European Union and the 78 countries from Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, the Economic Partnership Agreements are trade and development partnerships being negotiated between the EU and the 78 ACP countries (+ south Africa) and regions. The trade agreements aim at creating a shared trade and development partnership backed up by development support which will, through gradual and controlled liberalisation of trade in goods over a reasonable period of time, and a set of rules on sectors such as services and investments, contribute to development, growth and job creation.⁴

Development must be backed by trade, without an increase in trade, there can be no development. Regional integration needs to bring small markets together and instil free trade principles so that poverty can eventually be eradicated. EPAs establishes a legal framework for economic and commercial relations, and for developmental aspects as well. The EPA includes binding commitments related to technical and financial assistance that will help recipient countries adjust to the opening of trade, promotes regional integration, which means countries can gain more from the different markets across the world.

While the EPAs are concerned with the socio- economic environment, The physical one is being threatened by the climate change, hence urgent need to put climate change adaption and mitigate on the African Agenda.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Climate change is a serious risk to poverty reduction and threatens to undo decades of development efforts. The adverse effects of climate change are already evident, natural disasters are more frequent and more devastating, and developing countries more vulnerable more so those in Africa. While climate change is a global phenomenon, its negative impacts are more severely felt by poor people and poor countries who are more vulnerable because of their high dependence on natural resources, and their limited capacity to cope with climate variability and extremes.⁵

The best way to address climate change impacts on the poor is by integrating adaptation and mitigation responses into development planning and this is inherent to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

Increasing the resilience of livelihoods and infrastructure as a key component of an effective poverty reduction strategy. Similarly, effective adaptation and mitigation strategies should build upon, and sustain, existing livelihoods and thus take into account existing knowledge and coping strategies of the poor. Traditional risk sharing mechanisms, such as asset pooling and kinship, could be complemented by micro-insurance approaches and infrastructure design and investment, both for private and public use, taking into account the potential impacts of climate change.

The impacts of climate change vary across geographical regions, where tropical, subtropical areas and countries with the fewest resources are likely to bear the greatest burden of cli-

⁴http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2011/october/tradoc_148327.pdf

⁵<http://www.oecd.org/env/cc/2502872.pdf>

mate change in terms of loss of life and relative effect on investment and the economy. This calls for concerted efforts from all stakeholders to counteract these effects.

Co-operatives Ending Poverty in Light of Consumer Co-operatives

Co-operative enterprises put social justice and equity at the heart of economic progress. As member-owned, member-run and member-serving businesses, co-operatives empower people to collectively realize their economic aspirations, while strengthening their social and human capital and developing their communities. With their ownership structures and goals that are different from those of investor-owned enterprises, co-operatives encourage diversification and innovation, and enable a fairer distribution of income.

One person in every six is either a member or a client of a co-operative, and some 2.6 million co-operatives employ 12.6 million people worldwide. Co-operatives' assets are worth about \$20 trillion and they generate about \$3 trillion in annual revenue⁶. Co-operatives in Africa play an important role in achieving social stability and social inclusion.

Consumer co-operatives are businesses which belong to the people who use them. They provide services to their communities that are not readily available from for-profit businesses. In other cases, co-operatives enhance the level of competition in the marketplace by providing consumers with an alternative source of products and services. The consumer co-operative system helps to reduce the cost of the goods by eliminating the middleman's profit, meaning that the consumer will benefit as there will be reduction in cost, thus saving. The savings will in return be used to cover other costs thus improving standards of living hence reducing poverty.

Co-operatives in Africa have not really embraced the concept of consumer co-operatives and thus need to be enlightened on the advantages they accrue, and thus be enabled to form and / or strengthen those that already exist.

Conclusion

African co-operators do indeed need to work better together (co-operation among co-operatives) to enhance their efficiencies and take advantage of economies of scale, and also reposition themselves in order to engage, and also get involved in policy dialogue and strategic actions at different levels that will lead to reduced poverty.

SPEAKERS



Ms. Jamila El Moussali, appointed by Her Majesty King Mohammed VI on Wednesday, 05 April 2017, Secretary of State to the Minister of Tourism, Air Transport, Crafts and Social Economy, in charge of crafts and Of the social economy, was born on October 19, 1969 in Ouazzane.

He holds a bachelor's degree in literature from Ibn Zohr-Agadir University (1992), a post-graduate diploma (1999) from Mohammed V Rabat University and a Doctorate in History (2010) Hassan 1st University of Oujda, Ms El Moussali, held the post of Deputy Minister to the Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Executive

Training.

She has held a number of positions, including visiting professor at the Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences - Mohammed V University in Rabat and an expert in women's issues, family and development with several Arab and regional organizations.

El Moussali, a member of the General Secretariat of the Justice and Development Party (PJD), was Vice-Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, National Defense and Islamic Affairs in the House of Representatives.

Ms. El Moussali is a founder of several active associations in Morocco and at the Arab level and is the author of books on the feminist movement, the family and development.



Honorable Sithembiso G. G. Nyoni has been a government Minister in various portfolios since 1997. In 2001, she was appointed as the Minister of the Informal Sector which was upgraded to a Cabinet post of Small to Medium Enterprises in 2002, then Cooperative Development was added to this Ministry in 2009. She has been at the helm of this Ministry to date. In this portfolio, Hon .Nyoni, according to the World Bank Report of April 2013, managed to grow a Ministry that assisted the poor to create 3.5 million micro, small to medium businesses, owned by 2.8 million Zimbabweans. They in turn created 5.7 million jobs. Her vision is to mobilize resources for this sector to form an

SME Bank. Her greatest concern is that economic growth in the world is for a few, there is need for economic democracy and without this there will always be exploitation of resources and of other people

She also sits in the House of Assembly as the Member of Parliament for Nkayi North. She has a wealth of experience in entrepreneurship and grassroots development that spans for over years. She has been invited by a few governments in Africa, including Uganda and Swaziland, to advise them on strategies for SME and Cooperatives strategies. She also founded one of Africa's biggest and most effective development organizations, the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), a Zimbabwean Non – Governmental Development Organization. She sits on several national and international boards. She is a winner of several awards that span decades for her contribution to the development of SMEs and cooperatives, for the upliftment of women and for her humanitarian work. Among these Awards are:

- The 2016 Women's top Leadership Excellence Award for championing women leadership roles in SME Development (Women's Leadership Institute)
- The 2013 Times of Africa Excellence Award by the Government of India for her role in championing SME Development in Zimbabwe
- The United Nations 50 Communities Award for effective mobilization of communities around environmental issues
- The InterAction 1999 Award for her commitment and work in sustainable development
- The 1993 Right Livelihood Award for outstanding leadership in grassroots mobilization against hunger.

She currently holds the First Vice Presidency for the Conference Of Ministers Of The Coordination Committee For The Development And Promotion Of African Handicraft (CODEPA), an organization whose mandate is to promote the development of African Handicrafts and ensure that handicrafts contribute meaningfully to the economy of countries in Africa.

She holds a Master's Degree in Rural Social Development from the University of Reading and is currently pursuing her Doctor of Philosophy studies, her area of research being on social entrepreneurship in rural Zimbabwe.



Hon. Biggie Ganda Butale was elected Member of Parliament for Tati West Constituency in 2014 and appointed to Cabinet as Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry on 1st October 2016. Honorable Butale has vast experience in the legal field, business industry and religion. Prior to being elected to Parliament and pointed to Cabinet, he has been the Managing Director of Morong-

wa Enterprises (Pty) Ltd. He previously served as a State Counsel at the Attorney General's Chambers-Republic of Botswana and at Moupo Motswagole and Dingake Attorneys heading their Gaborone office. Honorable Butale has also contributed enormously to the community as he has been a member of the following boards and organizations; High Level Consultative Council-HLCC, National Employment Manpower and Income Council-NEMIC as it was then, Gaborone Academy of Education, National Population Council, and Human Resource Development Advisory Council. Moreover, he has led the Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations-BOCONGO, Church Radio Council, Evangelical Fellowship Botswana and the Bible Society.

Before his appointment as a Cabinet member, Honorable Butale served in the Public Accounts Committee and also in the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security as Chair. Honorable Butale's religious practice covers being a Senior Pastor, Preacher and a Teacher of God's word Counsellor and Marriage officer at the End Time Ministries.



Dr. Motseki Mofammere is the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Small Business Development, Cooperatives and Marketing in Lesotho. He was previously with the National University of Lesotho where he lectured on business administration. Dr Mofammere holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the National University of Lesotho, a Master of Business Administration from Ball State University, USA, and a PhD from Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. His past professional activities include holding academic administrative positions of head of department and faculty dean at the National University of Lesotho; consulting to both private and public institutions; serving on the boards of directors of national and regional quasi-government entities such as the Basotho Enterprises Development Corporation (BEDCO) and the Institute of Development Management (IDM) for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland; membership of taskforces, such as the Ministerial Cooperatives Policy Review and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) on Lesotho.



Mr. Hans Lind is a Swedish Citizen, since 2014 Regional Director for We Effect in Eastern Africa— a Swedish NGO with roots in the Swedish cooperative movement, established 1958 by larger Swedish cooperatives. Previously he has worked in several African and Latin American countries for 20+ years in the area of children's rights.



Simel Esim, is a political economist, working in social and economic development for the past 25 years. She is the Head of the Cooperatives Unit in the Enterprises Department of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva since 2012 working on cooperative and social and solidarity economy development. Between 2004-12 she was a Senior Technical Specialist in the ILO's Regional Office for Arab States covering a range of portfolios including informal economy, gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Prior to joining the ILO, she worked in a number of international NGOs (DAI, ICRW, and WIEGO) and the World Bank in Washington, DC. In addition to program management Simel has policy advocacy, research, and capacity building skills. Simel holds an MA in International Economics and Middle East Studies and a Ph.D. in economics. She speaks Turkish and English, and has a working knowledge of Italian and Arabic with an intermediary level in French.



Dr. Ariel Enrique Guarco, Born 48 years ago in Coronel Pringles; Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina. He's a Vet and Magister in Agrarian Economics. Also have postgraduate studies in Social Economy and Nonprofit Entities.

His activity within the cooperative movement includes, among others: President of the Cooperative Confederation of the Argentine Republic – COOPERAR. He has served as the President of the Cooperatives Federation of Electricity and Public Services of the Province of Buenos Aires – FEDECOBA, President of Coronel

Pringles' Electric Cooperative Ltd, ICA's Global Board Member, and Vice-president of Cooperatives of the Americas. He is a regular speaker on subjects related to the cooperative movement and social and Solidary Economy during Conferences, Seminars, and Congresses and at local and international universities.



DR. TODOR IVANOV, PhD is the Secretary-General of Euro Coop, the European association of consumer co-operatives, and of Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW) - the global sectoral organization for consumer co-operatives of the International Co-operative Alliance. He holds both positions since January 2014. Euro Coop brings together 19 national co-operative organizations in Europe, engaged in retail; while CCW unites 26 such organizations. The main policy issues in both associations are co-operative retail, food policy, sustainability policy, co-operative

distinctiveness, and as of late, a strong focus on co-operative youth policy.

List of Participants

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/hao0qr15ec223fe/ACMC%20Participant%20list.pdf?dl=0>

Conference evaluation

The Conference met my expectation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Strongly Agree	6	23.1	23.1	26.9
	Agree	11	42.3	42.3	69.2
	Neutral	4	15.4	15.4	84.6
	Strongly Disagree	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
The content for the Conference was helpful					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Strongly Agree	5	19.2	19.2	23.1
	Agree	17	65.4	65.4	88.5
	Neutral	2	7.7	7.7	96.2
	Strongly Disagree	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
The Keynote session was relevant and helpful					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Strongly Agree	10	38.5	38.5	42.3
	Agree	11	42.3	42.3	84.6
	Neutral	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
the overall speakers were knowledgeable and dynamic					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Strongly Agree	4	15.4	15.4	23.1
	Agree	16	61.5	61.5	84.6
	Neutral	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Preparatory communication and logistics					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Excellent	8	30.8	30.8	34.6
	Good	14	53.8	53.8	88.5
	Fair	2	7.7	7.7	96.2
	Poor	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Venue of the event					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Excellent	10	38.5	38.5	50.0
	Good	11	42.3	42.3	92.3
	Fair	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	
Registration process					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid		2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Excellent	11	42.3	42.3	50.0
	Good	8	30.8	30.8	80.8
	Fair	5	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Hotel accommodation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Excellent	6	23.1	23.1	34.6
	Good	13	50.0	50.0	84.6
	Fair	4	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Length of sessions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		5	19.2	19.2	19.2
	Excellent	2	7.7	7.7	26.9
	Good	9	34.6	34.6	61.5
	Fair	9	34.6	34.6	96.2
	Poor	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Conference touristic visits

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		14	53.8	53.8	53.8
	Excellent	4	15.4	15.4	69.2
	Good	7	26.9	26.9	96.2
	Fair	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Co-operative tours

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Excellent	15	57.7	57.7	69.2
	Good	7	26.9	26.9	96.2
	Fair	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Were the sessions informative and did they address the stated topics in depth

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		2	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Yes	22	84.6	84.6	92.3
	Neutral	1	3.8	3.8	96.2
	No	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

What did you like most about the Event?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		8	30.8	30.8	30.8
	Coop visit	1	3.8	3.8	34.6
	Cooperative tours	1	3.8	3.8	38.5
	Cooperatives progress	1	3.8	3.8	42.3
	Dynamics of co-operatives associations	1	3.8	3.8	46.2
	Networking	4	15.4	15.4	61.5
	Organization	1	3.8	3.8	65.4

Presentations	1	3.8	3.8	69.2
Shared experiences	5	19.2	19.2	88.5
The content of topics	1	3.8	3.8	92.3
Thematic and presentations	1	3.8	3.8	96.2
Well organized	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
Total	26	100.0	100.0	

What did you like least about the event?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		13	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Absence of francophone countries in the panel	2	7.7	7.7	57.7
	Attendance rate for the last 2 days	1	3.8	3.8	61.5
	Intervention of Morocco	1	3.8	3.8	65.4
	Organization	2	7.7	7.7	73.1
	PowerPoint presentations	1	3.8	3.8	76.9
	Presentations	1	3.8	3.8	80.8
	Questions and answers session focused on local cooperatives	1	3.8	3.8	84.6
	Sessions started late	1	3.8	3.8	88.5
	The Welcome	1	3.8	3.8	92.3
	time management	1	3.8	3.8	96.2
	Time table was very tight	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

What are the areas of improvement for future events such as this?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		13	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Associate with francophone countries	1	3.8	3.8	53.8
	Critically discuss areas in the development of the movement	1	3.8	3.8	57.7
	Engage more Francophone countries	1	3.8	3.8	61.5
	Give time for discussions	1	3.8	3.8	65.4
	High level sessions - need for ideas that can be transformed to make revenues	1	3.8	3.8	69.2
	Involve more countries	1	3.8	3.8	73.1
	Marketing the conference	2	7.7	7.7	80.8
	Speakers preparation	1	3.8	3.8	84.6
	Strict time Management	1	3.8	3.8	88.5
	Time management	2	7.7	7.7	96.2
	Time Management and Presentations	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Will you be interested in attending the future meetings of the Alliance Africa?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		3	11.5	11.5	11.5
	Yes	23	88.5	88.5	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

What is the overall assessment of the Conference

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		4	15.4	15.4	15.4
	0	1	3.8	3.8	19.2
	Good	4	15.4	15.4	34.6
	Very Good	12	46.2	46.2	80.8
	Excellent	5	19.2	19.2	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Please give any comment in general that will help us better organize future events

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		16	61.5	61.5	61.5
	Alliance Africa to be rendezvous of all regions: francophone and Anglophone	1	3.8	3.8	65.4
	Consider having a Portuguese translator; Improve on logistics	1	3.8	3.8	69.2
	Give more time to discussions	1	3.8	3.8	73.1
	Good job	1	3.8	3.8	76.9
	High level ideas shared - should be broken-down for knowledge seekers	1	3.8	3.8	80.8
	Inclusion of francophone countries in the conferences	2	7.7	7.7	88.5
	Meeting with more African countries represented	1	3.8	3.8	92.3
	More cooperatives to share their experiences	1	3.8	3.8	96.2
	More cooperatives to share their experiences and challenges	1	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

Upcoming Alliance activities



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