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present

The

African Development Partnership

“Advancing Leadership Renaissance”

Background

In Africa, there is a lack of structures for the development of human capacity for leadership. Poor links exist between the generations of leaders so that there is no transmigration of ideas and experience between the leaders of today and the leaders of tomorrow.

Furthermore, Africa suffers from a crippling human capacity constraint for leadership as a result of the lack of opportunities for the youth, the *leaders of tomorrow*, to engage on serious policy discussions with the leaders of today. “Youth in developing countries lack a platform for civic engagement. Therefore, policy makers need to improve access to services that help the young develop and preserve their own human capital.”¹ It is through such opportunities that young people can develop the multitude of skills required to become informed and constructive decision-makers.

Yet, in low income developing countries the platform for youth engagement tends to be either inaccessible or simply non-existent.

“A new leadership style and culture are gradually emerging.”² It has become paramount for the youth of today to tap into the cumulative experiences of the current generation of leaders in order to chart a way toward a leadership style and culture suited to the current situation Africa finds herself in, particularly given the critical period of change that Africa is undergoing. In this era of unbound globalisation, it is important to have leaders prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

“Building human capacity is important not just for future opportunities open to young people but also to mitigate the intergenerational transmission of poverty.”³

However, one of the challenges across the African continent is for tertiary institutions, to keep pace with the rest of the world and adapt to the demands and aspirations of the developing state. Tertiary institutions are the primary resource pool from which leaders are drawn; yet the misalignment of tertiary institutions in addressing the demands of business and the state; result in a leadership base that is unsuitable for the challenges of leadership in the global village.

This limits the prospects of business, the state and of Africa as a whole. There develops seemingly insurmountable tasks for any individual or institution to overcome. This *‘reduces the already low quantity of skilled manpower available in African countries and needed for their development, reduces numbers of dynamic and innovative people, whether entrepreneurs or academics, increases dependence on foreign technical assistance, slows the transfer of technology and widens the gap between African and industrialized countries, negatively affects the continent’s scientific output, [and results in] money los[s] in income tax revenues and in potential contributions to gross domestic product’*.⁴

The only way to tackle the leadership gap on the continent is through the experience and knowledge that is gained from generating discussion and cross-sectional partnerships with existing and former leaders; that will feed into policy development as a separate initiative, a trend not prevalent on the continent.

1 The World Bank. World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation. 2006. World Bank. Washington, DC. p46

2 <http://www.africaforum.org.za/html/background.htm>

3 The World Bank op.cit. p28

4 Brain Drain in Africa: Facts and Figures. op. cit. p4

Thus, the African Development Partnership seeks to incorporate in the agenda the necessary engagement of Africa's youth with today's leadership, for the development of responsible, capable leaders across all sectors of society in creating a network of African youth aspiring toward leadership. Which means, the bringing together of expertise across sectors of society for a partnership that will integrate these institutions towards developing institutions that will build human capacity leadership suitable for the continent.

Project Description:

The African Development Partnership is an initiative by African youth that attempts to bridge the divide between today's leaders and the youth by creating an environment for engagement between the two generations.

Each year, the African Development Partnership will seek out key areas in which there is a lack of structures for the development of youth leadership. The inaugural African Development Partnership will focus on sustainable development with the overall theme being, "*Creating an Environment for Sustainable Development*". This will be an attempt to find ways in which the youth can engage as leaders in sustainability-oriented action on focused themes.

The African Development Partnership will be an impartial and non-profit, non-political initiative that will be held annually under the auspice and advisory guidelines of Business Leadership South Africa.

A variegated panel of experts on the topic will be chosen to enrich the field of strategies for discussion and engage the floor in debate after presenting their own views. The whole process will be presided over by moderators, who will manage discussions.

The moderators will be persons of impeccable discretion, capable of conducting their respective sessions without influencing the opinions of guests and panellists and at the same time, able to steer the focus of the African Development Partnership away from potentially and needlessly digressive subjects. The moderators will be well versed with the theoretical and practical background of the topics in order to effectively preside over their session. The moderator will open their session by outlining the basic question to be discussed during the session and allowing panellists to present their views and engage the floor in discussion. It will be the responsibility of the moderators, at the end of the deliberations, to produce a report detailing the events of their sessions which will be distributed to the attendees and other interested parties.

The themes to be covered include:

- Youth Leadership in Sustainable Development
- Creating New Ways for Breeding the Next Generation of Leaders for Sustainability
- The Role of Universities in Developing Leaders for Sustainability
- Update on Progress since World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002
- Panel Sessions
 - What is Sustainable Development?
 - The Role of Fiscal Policy in Creating an Environment for Sustainable Development
 - Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Effectively harnessing labour, science and technology in the pursuit of Sustainable Innovation Processes

Following the panel sessions, students in smaller groups will participate in breakaway sessions. The breakaway sessions serve as the platform for youth to engage in themes covered during the conference through discussions among each other. Therein the conference report, together with findings from the panel sessions will be compiled. The themes for the breakaway sessions are:

- Grooming the Next Generation of Business Leaders for Africa
- What is Sustainable Development for Africa?
- Youth Involvement in Macro-Significant Sustainable Development Initiatives

Project Strategy

The African Development Partnership is based on the premises that collective action is greater than the sum of individual and isolated actions taken by government, tertiary institutions, civil society and business. A capable state is dependant on strong partnerships between the Big Four; the state, the private sector, civil society and, tertiary institutions.

The African Development Partnership attempts to create a social setting where the integrated interaction of the cross sector partners will create the framework to influence behaviour and actions towards sustainability orientated practice and policies. A “*social setting*” that can, at the macro level, be taken as ideal practice.

By “recognizing the wealth of knowledge and experience these leaders have accumulated during their tenures in office and also considering their individual and collective will to continue to support, in their private capacities, development initiatives at national, sub-regional and regional levels, it is incumbent upon Africa and African institutions to develop capacities and mechanisms that facilitate and allow for the optimal utilization of their experiences. Consequently, former and current African leaders should be encouraged to contribute with their views and advice on how best to promote better political and economic governance on the continent. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that these former African leaders are included in the debate and efforts towards providing African solutions to the social and economic problems facing the African continent. Their individual and collective experiences are treasures that must be tapped and used for the benefit of the African peoples.”⁵

Rather than addressing individual problems, the African Development Partnership will tackle the overriding cause, engaging leaders across all sectors in partnership to shape the course of the future, impacting on industrial, societal, economic and political agendas.

The project strategy will be to:-

- i. See the design of a comprehensive youth strategy that will involve all key sectors incorporate a youth policy in their objectives.
- ii. Ensure capacity will be built in the mainstream via the tertiary institutions to guarantee the continuity and sustained impact of the incorporation of youth.
- iii. Strengthen the youth movement in civil society.
- iv. Establishment of adequate systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of youth policy specific

⁵ <http://www.africaforum.org.za/html/rationale.htm>

undertaking.⁶

The vision is an ambitious one: to be the platform from which the voice of the leaders of tomorrow, can be heard alongside those of the leaders of today; to be the foremost organisation in the building and energising of society; to be the creative force shaping industrial, provincial and nationwide strategies; to be a catalyst for change for communities undertaking initiatives to improve their lives; to be the central reference point for leaders and policy makers in creating an environment for a better Africa.

Long-Term Objectives

After the talking, and the debating; the African Development Partnership wants to see effective institutional reforms, in the form of a network of African youth aspiring toward leadership.

The Africa Development Partnership will hold the unique stimulus of continued engagement with practical projects and theoretical debate which will prove to be an internal balance and cheque system on how the initiative is developing and the impact that it ensues.

For this, the initiative will:

1. Identify and breed the next generation of leaders according to agreed upon criteria.
2. Design innovative multi-media based platforms for dialogue & learning, e.g. e-journals, for future and present leaders, and the general public.
3. Promote the creation of structured long-term youth leadership development programmes, e.g. fellowships or internships in business associations, global institutions, non-governmental organisations and the public sector.
4. Mentorship by business, civil society, and political leaders.
5. International Exchange programmes in partnership with global leadership institutions.
6. Research into the lessons of leadership.
7. Virtual library & resource centre linked to archives, depositories.
8. Provide guidelines for practice-orientated activities of oikos Johannesburg

⁶ ibid. p216. Box 9.2

Programme

The inaugural African Development Partnership will take place Wednesday, 27 February 2008 at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

08h30-08h50: Registration and breakfast snacks

08h50-09h00: Welcome

09h00-09h20: Keynote address: Creating an Environment for Sustainable Development

09h20-09h40: Creating New Ways for Breeding the Next Generation of Leaders for Sustainability

09h40-10h00: The Role of Universities in Developing Leaders for Sustainability

10h00-10h20: Update on progress since World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002

10h20-10h40: Tea

Panel Sessions

10h40-11h40: Plenary Session: What is Sustainable Development?

And

The Role of Fiscal Policy in Creating an Environment for Sustainable Development

11h40-11h50: Break

11h50-12h50: Sustainable Development and Infrastructure

And

Effectively harnessing labour, science and technology in the pursuit of sustainable innovation processes

12h50-13h10: Closing remarks

13h10-14h00: Lunch

Closed Session

14h00-16h00: Breakaway sessions

- Grooming the Next Generation of Business Leaders for Africa
- What is Sustainable Development for Africa?
- Youth Involvement in Macro-Significant Sustainable Development Initiatives

16h00-16h30: Close