



THE FUTURE OF AFRICA IS NOW! THE CRITICAL ROLE OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT¹

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Abstract: African countries experienced severe macroeconomic shocks in the 1980's, which put them on a reform path that has generated resilience visible in their ability to recover and even grow from the fiscal and economic crises of 2008-2009. Critical to the success of the reforms was a cadre of skilled people, focused organizations and effective institutions for macroeconomic management, put in place in large part, by the efforts of key stakeholders involved in capacity development. The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) is the single most important entity that was created to focus on building capacity in Africa. The choices made and successes achieved by ACBF tell a story of Africa's attempt to build the capacity needed to develop. Emerging challenges on the horizon call once again for attention to capacity; focus that ACBF is ready for after 20 years of existence. This keynote speech was delivered during the 20th Anniversary Summit of the African Capacity Building 8-9th February, 2011.

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INTRODUCTION

Poor development results caused leaders in Africa at the end of the 1980's to orient state economic policies and efforts more directly

towards poverty reduction. Lack of visible results also led African leaders to reflect on options for tackling development challenges, including the role of capacity. And that was the environment in which

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the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) was born.

ACBF had three parents, also known as the founding institutions, which were the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank. Ownership and governance structures were composed of African member states and nationals. The midwife was Sweden and the birth was celebrated in the streets of Harare, Stockholm, and Gaborone.

ACBF'S EARLY MANDATE

Africa experienced severe macroeconomic problems in the 1980s, which spawned talk of the “lost decade” for Africa. Initially, a run of robust economic growth and notable improvements in infrastructure, health and education in the 1960s ended when severe external shocks hit African economies in the 1970s. Shocks were in the form of the fuel price crisis and the deterioration in the terms-of-trade for the sub-region’s primary commodity exports – leading to heavy international borrowing to shore up declining revenues and a consequent debt overhang. This pattern of events shaped ACBF’s early mandate to have it focus

on economic policy and management. It did so by supporting the creation of autonomous and semi-autonomous policy units and developing a critical mass of experts in economic policy and management.

ROLE OF MACROECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Macroeconomic performance dramatically changed for the better over the last ten years since 2000, marking the longest growth episode since the 1960s. In 2000-2008 Africa’s annual GDP grew at an average of 5 percent at purchasing power parity, twice as fast as in the 1980s and 1990s and above the global average of 3.8 percent. Similarly, annual GDP per capita rose from 1.1% in the late 1990s, to 4 percent between 2004 and 2006, and the number of people living in extreme poverty decreased notably from 47% in 1990 to 41% in 2004 and was even forecast to reach 37% by 2015. The average inflation rate fell from 22 percent in the 1990s to 8 percent since 2000.

EXPANDED MANDATE OF ACBF

With the early success in skills building and economic analysis, attention shifted to other

constraints to Africa's growth. The need for financial management and accountability, the importance of the private sector for growth and job creation, and the balancing role of civil society and parliaments. So ACBF's mandate was expanded to take on new areas of focus.

Platforms for dialogue between the public and private were created, equipping states with the skills and capabilities to deal effectively with the private sector. Visible results in the last 10 years, include the trends in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows to the region, which according to UNCTAD are estimated to have risen to a pre-crisis level of \$88 billion in 2008, more than India's \$42 billion and comparing rather favorably to China's \$108 billion. Much of the FDI has gone to resource-rich countries such as Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan, as their extractive industries, particularly mining and oil, attracted the lion's share of the FDI.

In general, the non-banking sector has been the main beneficiary of FDI flows. Estimates by the Boston Consulting Group show that since 1998, Africa's largest 500 non-banking companies have grown at an average of

8.3% per year. But development has also taken place in the banking sector, which has gained recognition in recent years. External interest in African banking has also grown as can be seen in acquisitions as represented for instance by the International Central Bank of China's (ICBC's) purchase of a 20 percent stake in South Africa's Stanbik for \$5.5 billion in 2007.

This strong performance comes down to sound macroeconomic management, a dynamic outcome of previous structural economic reforms. Many central banks and treasuries have been able to strengthen their fiscal positions and build reserves, thereby conferring a greater ability to manage external shocks than previously. Increased aid flows and quality of aid in the form of predictable budget support and debt relief, predicated on a greater commitment to sound governance on the part of recipient countries, has been a major boost for many (especially resource poor) countries.

African countries have been among the top reformers on the World Bank Doing Business Index, with post-conflict Rwanda claiming the top spot in 2007 and 2008 as the world's best reformer.

There is wider acceptance of the crucial role of the private sector by African leaders, and the importance of integration into the global economy through trade. The dynamism in mobile telecoms has provided a vibrant source of growth for many countries. Modernizing banking systems have also provided further sources of growth, with a broadening product offering (such as mortgages) to cater for an emerging middle class. Indeed, recognition of the importance of the middle class in securing stability is increasingly being recognized as can be seen by the recent strategy of the AfDB to put closer attention to the creation of an African middleclass.

A number of factors enabled Africa to recover quickly from the global financial crisis, not least strong macroeconomic fundamentals including a larger fiscal space and quick recovery in international commodity prices, the Continent's erstwhile lack of deep integration with the global financial system, and the substitution of Western FDI flows with South-South flows from the emerging markets. The World Bank reports that even in oil-exporting countries, the temporary loss of momentum in oil exports was made-up for by growth in non-oil sectors.

As a result of seeing real capacity in the areas of macroeconomic management, ACBF turned its focus to issues of governance and accountability, seeking to professionalize the voices of civil society and the private sector, strengthen the capacity for analysis and research for parliaments, and empower women and women-lead organizations to take space in the development policy arena.

Today, political governance has been steadily improving across Africa, if fitfully. At least two thirds of African countries now have presidential term limits, leading to at least 14 leaders obliging to step down from office in the last decade. Multiparty political systems and the discourse of political accountability are gaining wider acceptability among the key stakeholders, and the media has become more open a fortiori with the rapid spread of the Internet and mobile phones. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation tracks an index of African governance, and offers a prize for exemplary African leadership that makes a difference and voluntarily relinquishes power. While there has been some slight increase in the index, sadly no prize has been offered for exemplary leadership for the past two years.

SOURCES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

There is little doubt much of the economic growth and FDI inflows is accounted for by the extractive industry that has been enjoying firm international commodity prices. Natural resources are fraught with the downside risks of terms-of-trade deterioration, with the downward pressure on agriculture production in resource-rich countries. Other fears in natural resource rich countries include corruption and political conflict, and the fact that few countries have the capacity to manage the resource depletion points and their consequent effects on unemployment. Recent studies have shown that provided there is continued commitment to sound economic management – which includes investment in infrastructure for development, economic diversification, and the establishment of natural resource funds – as well as transparency and accountability for natural resource windfalls, the curse of natural resources can be averted. This is the frontier that ACBF now seeks to focus on resource rich but capacity poor countries.

Beyond the Extractive Industries, It is estimated that mining

accounts for merely a third of Africa's GDP growth. The region is also producing a growing number of world-class companies outside the extractive industry, from SAB-Miller, the world's second largest brewer, and Aspen, the largest generic drug maker in Africa (both South African), to niche players such as Tunisia's Coficab which is one of the most successful suppliers of wiring for the global automotive.

Non-extractive foreign firms are also pouring into Africa in anticipation of continuing increase in per capita incomes and a growing working age population due to the region's high fertility rate, thereby raising the specter that Africa may yet become the next workshop of the world given rising labor costs in India and China. Western world-class consumer-goods companies such as Proctor & Gamble are increasingly setting shop or expanding across Africa, as are emerging-market car-manufacturing companies such as China's Great Wall and India's Tata Motors.

ACBF is turning its attention to supporting public-private sector platforms for enhancing capacity in the productive sectors and is also seeking to diversify

its membership base to include the private sector so as to enrich the milieu of its activities on the continent.

PRO-POOR INNOVATION

In conjunction with India and Bangladesh, Africa has also been leading in pro-poor innovation, particularly in mobile telecoms that have seen the emergence of pro-poor business models that have phenomenally improved the penetration rate of mobile phones beyond cities and transport corridors to rural areas particularly for those countries that have opened up to competition in the mobile phone sector.

The increased convergence between mobile telephony, computing and internet technology is being harnessed for the provision of public services, such as the provision of agricultural extension and marketing information across remote agricultural regions, the provision of public healthcare and disease surveillance (mobile health) in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and other countries across the continent.

With more countries laying out the backbone infrastructure for fibre-optic cable especially

those along the coast – the cable has landed even in cash-strapped Zimbabwe – which is a lot cheaper than the erstwhile wireless broadband thereby permitting the emergence of high data transmission services such as international banking and business process outsourcing (BPO), itself a global multi-billion dollar industry. English-speaking countries with large pools of unemployed but well educated labor are good candidates for emergence of BPO centers, for example Kenya. However, the availability of sound public services and a favorable business environment (including tax codes) are in order to take on established players in India and other emerging Asian countries given the industry's thin margins.

ACBF is shifting its platform of support to encourage more innovation and creativity in the public and private sector and share successes more broadly.

GOVERNANCE

With the African Union Commission, ACBF seeks to work on the issue of governance and the values underpinning modern concepts of governance such as democracy, human, rights, and freedom of speech—such that the

average citizen can understand these concepts and own them for a more stable and peaceful society in the long run.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Regional integration is an integral part of Africa's development efforts, particularly in light of Africa's poor international trade competitiveness, a fortiori with the current impasse at the Doha Round of trade negotiations that seeks to accord developing countries unrestricted access to high-income markets. In that circumstance, north-south bilateral trade agreements provide a second-best option to multilateral trade access under the WTO. Examples of such bilateral trade agreements are the United State's Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the European Union's Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and conceivably similar agreements with the emerging markets such as China.

However, many African countries have been incapable of exploiting the opportunity of bilateral trade agreements due to weak supply-side capacity to meet the stringent sanitary and phyto-sanitary requirements. To the contrary, regional integration offers a

much more comfortable platform for African countries to learn how to export pending trading with more demanding partners.

It is noteworthy that there has been significant progress in that regard, with COMESA, SADC, and EAC moving to common-market status. These regions are tackling trade facilitation through such measures as, for example, one-stop border posts as is the case between Zambia and Zimbabwe, and a planned one between the Zimbabwe-South Africa borders. ECOWAS in West Africa has been lauded at doing more, either alone or in strategic partnerships with external players, to stem the region's historical vulnerability to military coups and political instability. The sub-region was lauded for moving swiftly to resolve the Guinea and Niger crises. There is still more to be done to catch up with other regions of the world in terms of regional integration and to develop capacity for managing inter-country conflicts. This is an evolving challenge that impacts regions other than Africa. Consider that on January 1st 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union, bringing the membership from 6 in 1957 to 27 countries in 2007. A few days later, on January 8th 2007, Russian

oil supplies to Poland, Germany and Ukraine were cut due to the Russia-Belarus energy dispute. So regional integration, as important it is for securing stability and economic opportunity, is not a panacea.

ACBF is working with all the RECs to support their secretariats and help them push along in implementing key initiatives. This is done in partnership with the AfDB, the World Bank and Canadian CIDA.

CAPITAL MARKETS AND INVESTMENT POTENTIAL

Many countries in Africa celebrated their 50 years of independence between 2007 and 2011, with Ghana being the first one to reach the 50-year mark. In the years since Ghana's independence, there has been a changing attitude towards the role of the private sector in the development of African economies that has facilitated the development of capital markets. Currently Africa has close to 20 securities exchanges, eleven of which began operations in the 1990's.

Africa has seen a remarkable growth in market capitalization from 5.5 billion USD in 1988

to nearly 70 billion USD in the 2000's. Yet, in the 2010 rating of Global Financial Centers, only two African centers made it- Johannesburg, an established player, which rated number 54 and Mauritius, a local node, which rated number 61. Not a single African center was considered an emerging global or transnational contender, or an evolving center. Nevertheless, African stock markets are advancing. Since 1995 there have been at least one African equity market among the top 10 best performing markets in the World. In 2006 it was Malawi, which posted a 125% gain in US dollar terms. The growth has not only been in market capitalization but also in innovation such as the integration of regional markets in the francophone countries of West Africa under UEMOA, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, which created the first Regional Stock Exchange-Bourse Regionale des Valeurs Mobilières (BRVM). The BRVM has used innovative approaches such as electronic and satellite communications equipment to leapfrog the bottlenecks in underdeveloped telecommunications infrastructure in member countries making up the exchange.

A sector that has been on the move in Africa is the intra-African FDI, which is at USD2 Billion annually in 2010, but expected to grow in the coming years from the current 13% of FDI to approach the more than 30% of FDI seen in other economies such as Asia. The source of intra-African FDI is also expected to grow beyond the few countries of South Africa, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt and to diversify beyond concentration to the extractive industries, going also to telecommunications, retail sectors, and agri-businesses. African transnational corporations are expected to grow due to innovations in the use of domestic savings to finance expansion beyond single country borders and beyond small companies and the informal sector.

Africa has made tremendous progress in the area of regional integration, as seen by the expansion of the East African Common Market to five countries of Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Burundi. However, there is room to go in terms of integrating its financial markets and attracting investment from domestic sources. There is growing interest to invest in Africa, bolstered by a number of bullish reports, such as the one issued by Renaissance Capital, Africa 1.01: Unlocking Investment

Potential well before the effects of the global financial crisis were felt, that concludes that the Continent had probably bottomed out from the previous economic decline. The report also notes that the binding constraint for most African countries had shifted from foreign exchange shortages and high cost of capital, to “chronic infrastructure bottlenecks” which is par for the course given the surge in GDP growth after decades of investment neglect.

Similarly, Goldman Sachs – the author of the term BRICs – issued a bullish report in January 2008 entitled Africa Rising, which notes that the largest 500 stock-market-listed companies in 15 African countries excluding South Africa had a combined market capitalization of nearly \$100 billion. Investors seek the relative “independence” of African markets from shocks in other markets – as there is low correlation between African and other global markets that provide for opportunities for diversification of investor portfolios. Africa is less vulnerable to movements in other markets being less affected by crises at present.

ACBF is working in partnership with the IMF’s AFRI-TACS and a series of regional

training institutions like MEF-MI, WAIFEM, and partners like BCEAO/BEAC to spearhead further strengthening of the financial sector skills and policies. The IMF once hazarded that a select group of countries had attained the threshold economic and political stability to pass-muster for consideration as emerging markets, including Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. The World Bank has recently mused about reclassifying Ghana as a Middle Income Country.

REMAINING CHALLENGES

Legitimate concerns subsist regarding the sustainability of Africa's recent run of macroeconomic management and transition to a truly emerging market. Already, Africa's macroeconomic performance has been variegated, with much of the gains accruing to the resource-rich countries notably Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan; followed by the leading reformers including Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, and post-conflict Rwanda; and then fragile countries such as DRC, Central African Republic and Ethiopia.

Among the key challenges facing Africa are the needed

infrastructure investments to stitch together the economies and societies and expand the transport and communication network connectivity to become the foundation for opportunities for the growing youth demographic. In this area of challenge, Africa remains sadly quite behind. Progress is being made within countries but Africa has yet to integrate its inter-country railway lines and highway networks.

On the whole, Africa will not be able to meet most of the MDGs by 2010 despite some notable successes by a good number of countries for some goals particularly pertaining to primary education. Analysis by the Economic Commission for Africa concludes that the region is particularly lagging with respect to the poverty (food security and hunger), health and environment related MDGs. The major missing link has been the region's underinvestment in smallholder-based agricultural productivity growth, given that sector's special characteristics as a major provider of food, labor intensiveness and ability to harness the participation of the poor in the very production process, most of who reside in rural areas and directly involved in Agriculture. In other words, agriculture plays

a direct role for the achievement of the hunger, poverty and environment related MDGs and also is the potential source for much of Africa's innovation.

There has also been growing stability in Africa. Fifty years after Ghana gained independence, there were 19 elections held in Africa at either the Presidential or Parliamentary level or both. Close to 95% of the elections held in Africa in 2007 were peaceful—the exception being Kenya. The recent experience of Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire have heightened international concern over Africa's fragility even for countries that were previously deemed stable. There is also concern with the low level of governance particularly in the area of accountability and transparency for the management of natural resource rents, as well as the region's inadequate capacity for national stakeholders to successfully analyze, formulate, plan, budget resources, implement and monitor—and evaluate development policies and programs. The youth bulge facing the continent is experiencing is a source of potential in the ability of new ideas to come to fruition but also a source of risk if the investment in this generation of young is not appropriate, and

the economies unable to provide employment and opportunities for gainful advancement.

The importance of national capacity as a key requirement for successful development management is enshrined in the Paris Declaration and its kindred the Accra Agenda for Action.

ROLE OF CAPACITY AND ACBF

Accordingly, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) is the premier African-owned institution that was formed in 1991 in response to the severity of Africa's capacity needs. ACBF is dedicated to the development, utilization and sustenance of indigenous human and institutional capacity for development management in Africa. Founded against the backdrop of the structural adjustment programs, the Foundation initially focused on strengthening economic policy analysis and management through a variety of strategies including supporting the establishment and sustenance of African policy units to improve policy analysis and research, training to increase the supply of qualified economic managers, and strengthening the core public sector for sound policy formulation and management.

The Foundation's Mandate was later expanded in 1999 to include other core competency areas, namely, public administration and management, financial management and accountability, parliaments and parliamentary institutions, strengthening voices of the private-sector and non-state actors, and building national statistics.

To-date the Foundation has committed 450 millions of dollars in technical and financial support to capacity development interventions across Africa. These interventions include support to core public-sector institutions relevant to development policy formulation and management – notably ministries of finance and planning, central banks, internal revenue authorities, prime ministers' offices, auditor generals' offices, courts of accounts, national statistics offices – policy units or think tanks in development policy analysis, management, and advocacy; training institutions and programs to generate a steady supply of qualified economic and development policy managers; interface projects to strengthen the capacity of non-state actors and foster their participation in national development and policy processes; national and regional

parliaments to foster citizen representation and improve governance; knowledge networks to facilitate knowledge generation, harvesting, sharing, and policy advocacy; as well as national focal points for coordinating capacity building interventions in the respective countries.

A number of evaluations have noted that ACBF's greatest impact as being in the area of economic policy analysis and management (EPAM), although emerging results have also been registered in financial management and the professionalization of voices of civil society and the private sector. ACBF's support to strengthening EPAM is mostly directed to economic policy units and regional training programs. Such policy units have gained notable visibility among the key development actors in their respective countries and even attracted the attention of other donors. Examples of these successful policy units are: the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), the Centre d'Analyse des Politiques Economiques et Sociales (CAPES) in Burkina Faso, the Centre d'Etudes de Politiques pour le Développement (CEPOD) in Senegal, the Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA) in

Ghana, the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), and the Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC) in Uganda, among others. These institutions have collectively helped build pools of experts in development policy analysis and management as well as strengthen national policy dialogue. Policy units have also built strong relationships with national and international institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and the UNECA, thus strengthening socio-economic management on the continent.

Another mechanism via which ACBF has used to build skills is the Economic Policy Management (EPM) Programs – regional training programs that aim at increasing the supply of qualified economic policy managers. Hosted by established universities, thus helping to strengthen the capacity of the latter, seven EPM programs have been operational across the Continent, namely in Ivory Coast, Cameroon, the DRC, Ghana, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia. Similarly, regional training programs such as the BCEAO/BEAC macroeconomic training program, the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) and the

Programme de Troisième Cycle Inter-Universitaire (PTCI), the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute (MEFMI), and the West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management (WAIFEM) have decisively increased the supply of specialist economic management skills in the region, such as financial sector regulation, debt management, etc.

ACBF interventions have also demonstrated results in the area of financial management and accountability through their work with auditor generals' offices, courts of accounts, state audit institutions and respective committees of parliaments. For example, apart from increasing the supply of competent auditors to improve the management of strategic national development programs, ACBF interventions in Djibouti decisively contributed to the improvement of the quality and credibility of public financial reporting by institutionalizing the annual budget implementation report. Auditors that were trained through ACBF-supported projects contributed to the unveiling of several cases of fraud in the use of public resources leading to the initiation of administrative and court proceedings of the

implicated public officials. Based on the recommendations of the ACBF-supported CCDB project, the Chamber of Accounts of the Supreme Court of Djibouti was upgraded to a Court of Accounts, an institutional reform that gives it more autonomy and leverage for the planned formulation of a State Audit Strategy.

ACBF has also scored important results through its support to strengthen the oversight capacity of national parliaments and civil society for meaningful participation in the national development processes. This support has been channeled through projects such as: CAPAN in Benin, PARP in Nigeria, and the SADC Parliamentary Forum in the Southern Africa Region. These initiatives have enhanced parliamentarians' effectiveness in discharging their responsibilities as representatives, mostly through targeted training.

Equally, a number of ACBF initiatives have made a notable contribution in increasing the effectiveness and participation of civil society in national development processes, particularly in view of the national budget processes (e.g. NGOCC in Zambia) and other public policy issues. IDEG in Ghana has been

widely consulted by different stakeholders on public policy issues, including state-civil society relations. The institution has also been widely cited in the national media on issues of poverty reduction, good governance and other areas of development policy. ACBF support to civil society has been an important main vehicle through which the Foundation has enhanced gender and women's participation in the development. As such, interventions such as the *Projet de Renforcement des Capacités des OGN Femmines au Mali (RECOFEM)*, the *Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Committee (NGOCC)* in Zambia, and the *Capacités des réseaux des Femmes pour Lutter Contre la Pauvreté en Republic du Camaroun (CAREF)* have decisively enhanced women participation in national development processes and dialogue. In Mali, RECOFEM contributed to public awareness about the plight of women, leading to the formulation of the national policy on gender equity for the country.

ACBF is currently building on its lessons learnt and success stories over the last twenty years, to expand its strategic focus to include other emergent areas in African development in addition to

the six core competency areas, notably capacity building for agricultural transformation and its close nexus with water and climate change. Being able to manage shocks and deal with uncertainty is of critical importance as a skills area in Africa. Also in the focus of the Foundation are the skills and tools for innovation and entrepreneurship and the importance of readiness to handle risks and manage in increasing uncertainty. Benefits from untapped capacities embedded in bigger regional spaces and the wealth of ideas that can come from better harnessing diversity, all call for increased attention to capacity of regional institutions. Partnerships with universities, training centers, and networks of thinkers are paramount in speeding up the extraction of lessons and sharing of ideas. How Africa navigates its relationships with the rest of the world is also of critical importance in the coming years.

As part of assessing the achievements of the past and getting a sense of where Africa is in terms of capacity development, the Foundation commissioned an assessment of the status of capacity in Africa. The full report was launched officially on February 9th 2011. Africa

will need to seriously seek ways to address and/or negotiate its emerging challenges. The Continent will be required to demonstrate its democratic credentials, embrace transformative leaders and privilege good governance. Africa must be more than just a commodity play! To achieve this, capacity needs to be enhanced, knowledge assets harnessed and shared/disseminated more strategically, and more creative solutions encouraged.

This is why the 20th Anniversary Celebration in Kigali has focused an exciting two days on issues of leadership, innovation and the role of the private sector, tapping into networks of skills and knowledge, rebuilding after conflict, sustainable support to capacity development, the role of S&T and looking beyond the MDGs to build capacities for emerging challenges.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Frannie Léautier is the Executive Secretary, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). A Tanzanian national, she served as Vice President of the World Bank and Head of the World Bank Institute from December 2001 to March 2007. She also served as

Chief of Staff to the former President of the World Bank from 2000-2001. Cumulatively, Dr. Léautier served in various capacities at the World Bank from 1992-2007. From 2007 - 2009, she was a Managing Partner at The Fezemat Group, a company focused on risk management and leadership development. Dr. Léautier holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Dar es Salaam (1984); a Master of Science in Transportation from MIT (1986); and a PhD in Infrastructure Systems from MIT (1990). She is also a graduate of the Harvard University Executive

Development Program. Dr. Léautier has published a number of articles in top-tier economic journals and magazines; she has also edited three books, including a recent one on Cities in a Globalizing World. She is currently Founding Editor for the Journal of Infrastructure Systems, Advisory Board Member for the MIT Open Course Ware, and Secretary of the Board for the Nelson Mandela Institute for Science and Technology in Africa. Dr. Léautier is a charter member of the Advisory Board for EuropeFE and a founding Board member for the Africa Institute for Governing with Integrity.