

AFRICA COORDINATION GROUP (ACG)

(Caux meeting, 13-21 July 2014)

COMMUNIQUE

The newly elected members of the Africa Coordination Group (ACG) had their first face to face meeting in Caux, Switzerland, from 13th to 21st July, 2014 during the Just Governance Conference. The conference was well attended by many from Africa. The ACG took the opportunity to meet with different African teams present, with a view to introducing the aims and objectives of the group and in turn get acquainted with details of the work of national and programme teams. The ACG aims to provide encouragement and practical support to teams across the African continent.

Some of the groups we met include teams from the Sahel region, (Mali, Chad, Niger), Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Burundi (Great Lakes Region), Farmer's Dialogue, South Africa, Workshop for Africa (WfA), the International Council, Kiran Ghandi representing the IC Training portfolio and members of the Asia-Pacific Coordination Group and the Arab Coordination Group.

Of particular interest is the Sahel region where no major lofC activity is in place and yet some individuals and groups are part of the fellowship. This also raised the whole question of how best to support the French-speaking part of Africa and maybe further inspire them to develop specific initiatives and programmes, especially in the field of training. In the following months, Adalbert Otou Nguini, on behalf of the ACG will liaise with friends from the Great Lakes and Sahel regions of Africa to find ways to take this forward.

The focus of the ACG meetings was:

- the implementation of the Strategic Framework adopted at the Consultation in Ethiopia in March 2014.
- **Training**, an essential element of our work, warrants special emphasis.
- Building on major milestones made with Workshop for Africa (WfA) in 2013; a review to make it more effective and cost-effective will take place in South Africa, 2 - 4 October 2014. A report on this programme was presented to the Global Assembly, highlighting the need to continue, but at the same time recognising lack of appropriate skills and funding.
- An offer of training was received from Asia Plateau and will be communicated to lofC bodies around the continent. National lofC bodies are encouraged to use the "Living Differently" modules as a starting point for their team training arrangements.

The ACG reviewed its activities for the next 12-24 months. Some of these include:

- Implementation of the Strategic Framework adopted at the Consultation in Ethiopia in March 2014,
- The next **All-Africa Conference in 2016**. Venue to be announced later.

- Guidelines to govern the organization of our programmes and events
- ACG election procedures
- Workshop for Africa
- The “Living Differently” initiative
- ACG financial arrangements, budgeting and accounting procedures.

The ACG was informed that the **International Council meeting** will hold its next meeting in Nigeria in January/February 2015 and called on neighbouring countries of Nigeria who may welcome some IC members for visits to neighbouring countries. It was also informed that the IC is considering mobilizing the Response Teams to attend to the needs of teams across Africa who may request assistance. A call is therefore addressed to African teams across the continent who may have specific requests, especially in the field of training, to make them known to IC for possible deployment of the Response Teams to such countries.

The ACG is convinced that the **lofC Africa website** remains a powerful tool and an avenue to showcase our work on the continent. Sadly it is still underutilized and needs to be supported financially as well as by contributing articles and reports for publication. The ACG renewed its appeal to African teams to provide support for the website by making an annual financial contribution. The funds will be placed into a proposed **lofC Africa Fund** to be created, to which all African teams are urged to contribute a minimum of US\$ 200 per year. The balance of the money will be used as a start-up fund for the organizing of consultations. For the current year, the website fee of 750 CHF (Swiss Francs) was paid by the following lofC bodies: Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and South Africa.

The ACG recognized the work of some individuals who have undertaken major initiatives that have contributed significantly to the visibility of lofC worldwide and more specifically in Africa. This includes **Allan Channer, Ginn Fourie and Lethlapa Mphahlele and Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye**. The ACG will be pro-active in supporting these partners and their initiatives.

Amina Dikedi-Ajakaiye (Nigeria/UK) Convenor/Communication/PR; Roy Ncube (Zimbabwe) Secretary; Adalbert Otou-Nguini (Cameroun) Liaison with Francophone Africa; Joanne Nabbanja (Uganda/Djibouti) Training; Abiodun Owoseni (Nigeria) International Council/Training; Stephen Kimaru (Kenya) Finance.