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Communication on Engagement (COE)

Period covered by this Communication of Engagement:

From: June 2016

To: June 2018

Statement of Continued Support

The Africa-America Institute (AAI) is pleased to reaffirm its support of the UN Global Compact and ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to continue to advance these principles within our sphere of influence and will make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also pledge to take part in the activities of the UN Global Compact in ways including but not limited to the following: engaging with Global Compact local networks; joining partnership projects with other stakeholders as well as events and special initiatives to support development objectives in line with the Global Compact and our mission; and encouraging our existing international partners to join partnership projects on Global Compact-related issues. In this Communication of Engagement, we describe and report on the actions and activities that AAI has taken and implemented in order to uphold the UN Global Compact and its Principles. AAI supports public accountability and transparency, and therefore welcomes stakeholders' review of our periodic report.

Sincerely,

Brian McGinley

Brian McGinley

Vice President & Chief Development Officer

AAI

Description of Actions and Activities in Support of the UN Global Compact and its Principles

AAI joined the UN Global Compact in 2014 and has actively worked to implement the Compact's Principles and ideals by advancing AAI's mission through the following practical actions:

- Engaging with Global Compact local networks;
- Joining and proposing partnership projects on corporate sustainability;
- Engaging companies in Global Compact-related issues; and
- Participating in Global Compact global, and local events.

Here are some notable activities and accomplishments that support the values of the UN Global Compact:

- AAI successfully executed the **3rd State of Education in Africa Conference** in May 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya. The event was co-hosted by the Ford Foundation. The conference created a platform where presenters shared their bold visions and transformative ideas for handling the challenges presented by a rapidly changing political, cultural and educational landscape in Africa. The topics addressed the need to promote innovation and solution-driven conversation to build a globally competitive higher education for Africa. Full outcomes report can be found here: <http://www.soeafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/SOE2017-OutcomesDocument.pdf>
- AAI in partnership with the Jim Ovia Foundation launched the **Jim Ovia Foundation Leaders Scholarship**. The scholarship is available to African students attending African universities notably Ashesi University in Ghana and Covenant University in Nigeria. Through the Jim Ovia Foundation Leaders Scholarship, AAI provides full scholarships to smart yet under-resourced African students to obtain a bachelor's degree at a high-performing African university. Mr. Jim Ovia founded Zenith Bank, one of the largest commercial banks in Nigeria with branches all over West Africa. The Jim Ovia Foundation serves as a tool for Mr. Ovia to invest and empower the citizens in the communities in which they operate.
- AAI is entering its third year in partnership with the **East African Development Bank (EADB)** to train teachers and lecturers in the STEM field in East Africa (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda). Since 2016, the partnership has funded 8 high-school teachers to obtain a graduate degree in the U.S., then return to their home countries to provide advanced training at their respective secondary schools and help strengthen STEM fields in their respective countries. Ten scholars will attend Rutgers University (NJ-USA) during the 2018-2019 school year to obtain a Master's degree in science, technology, engineering or math.
- AAI is engaging in an internal exercise to position its future work under two strategic approaches: **Africa Illuminated** and Pathways for Youth to Livelihood. Africa Illuminated will leverage AAI's convening power to improve the quality and accessibility of formal and informal educational resources about Africa. This pillar of work will combine a portfolio of

programs and initiatives with the aim of challenging monolithic and anachronistic narratives about Africa. The premise for this work is to promote a shift in the narratives of Africa and Afro-descendants through an improved quality of the information produced, data distributed and stories told. Africa Illuminated will realign Africa with achievement, opportunity, and innovation while actively disassociating perpetual crisis and corruption from the Continent.

- The second strategic approach is through **Pathways for Youth to Livelihood** which will build on AAI's long-standing legacy of supporting Africa in exercising and leveraging its full human capital potential, for economic and social advancement and sustainability. This pillar of work will combine a portfolio of programs and initiatives to provide education and training programs relevant to 21st Century careers and strengthen education institutions and systems to anticipate and respond to rapidly changing market demands. With the commitment of increasing African access to globally competitive education, AAI will further its mission to establish and strengthen education and training pathways for the future of Africa's youth.
- In April 2018, AAI partnered with **Empatico**, the philanthropic initiative of the Kind Foundation, an online learning tool that is providing young people ages 7-11 with an opportunity to learn about – and with – peers from different backgrounds and cultures. To this date, 6000 teachers have signed up to the platform and AAI has launched it in Nigeria and Ghana, where 87 teachers have already joined.
- July 2017: AAI Global Programs Director participated in the 2017 Symposium: Making Global Goals local business.

Measurement of Outcomes

- The *AAI-East African Development Bank STEM* program will contribute to an increase in quality STEM education in East Africa. In August 2017, the first class of three teachers graduated with a Masters in Science education, Statistics and Math Education respectively from Rutgers University. Upon returning home and continuing teaching in their schools, some of the teachers organized teacher training workshop. The first two workshops had an attendance of more than 200 people in Uganda. The next class composed of five teachers is due to complete their Masters degree in August, 2018.
- Empatico as a e-learning tool is a scalable project, using technology to connect teachers from all over the world. Empatico has an ability to engage teachers and to introduce the students to different cultures and backgrounds, thus building empathy and kindness. AAI is in its early stage of the partnership, launched in Ghana and Nigeria, but has thus far signed up 86 teachers from Nigeria alone. More than 6000 teachers from all over the world have signed up so far.

- On the strategic approaches, AAI, through developing the right performance indicators, will better understand where narratives are developed, how they are influenced and the impact they have on the world once they are consumed. The nodes of connection will decide if, how and why there are new understandings of Africa and the world. AAI will focus on the quality and accessibility of those connective nodes to propel this work. By selecting key network partners whose project outcomes are measured and analyzed along a broad spectrum of the language, frame, content and patterns of the narratives on Africa and Afro-descendants, we will see the needle shift in positive and productive directions.
- Furthermore, if successful over a three-year period, this workforce preparedness work could provide a solid foundation for a more ambitious effort, in which AAI works with institutional, corporate, and governmental partners to pilot flagship examples of how Africa can enjoy a demographic dividend from its youth bulge. By convening government officials willing to commit to reform, potential employers with skin in the game of skills development, AAI can act as a catalyst for systemic change. AAI will consider convening regional or sector-based groups of universities to participate in this effort and bring technology innovators in education from both sides of the Atlantic to the table.