



USAID
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KSA-AGCI Brief – April 2008

1st AFRICAN GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS HUB MEETING, GHANA, MARCH 3-5, 2008

PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND DIALOGUE AMONG THE AFRICAN
COMPETITIVENESS HUBS AND THEIR STAKEHOLDERS



APRIL 2008

This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by SEGURA-IP3 Partners LLC.

COMPETITIVENESS HUB MEETING, GHANA, MARCH 3-5, 2008

Photographs on the cover:

(l to r) Ron Black, Amanda Hilligas, and Jean-Paul Gauthier discuss performance monitoring indicators during a group exercise; David Fischer speaks at the opening session; The group celebrates a successful first meeting of all four African Global Competitiveness Hubs and the three Regional Missions; Jeff Cochrane poses a question to the panelists; Christine Nicolino, Paulina Elago, Jeff Malick, Nathan van Dusen, and Jeff Cochrane collaborate on a group exercise.

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ACRONYMS

ACTIF	African Cotton and Textiles Industry Federation
AGCI	African Global Competitiveness Initiative
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
ARC	AGOA resource center
BGI	Business Growth Initiative
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	East African Community
EAFCA	Eastern African Fine Coffee Association
ECA	East and Central Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GAPP	Government Assistance PC Programs
GDA	Global Development Alliance
IESC	International Executive Service Corps
IRTG	Improved Road Transport Governance
ITC	Information Communication and Technology
MATEP	Market Access, Trade, and Enabling Policies program
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
PPP	Public-private partnerships
RADDEX	Revenue Authorities Digital Data Exchange
RATES	Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support program
REC	Regional economic communities
RERA	Regional Electricity Regulators Association
RRTC	Reduced Road Transport Costs program
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAGCH	Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub
SME	Small and medium size enterprise
SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary
TIFI	Trade, Industry, Finance, and Investment
TTCA	Trade and Transit Coordination Authority
UEMOA	Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
WATH	West Africa Trade Hub

INTRODUCTION

The first annual USAID African Global Competitiveness Hub Meeting was held in Accra, March 3-5, 2008. Facilitated by the Knowledge Sharing and Analysis contract and hosted by the West Africa Trade Hub, the meeting brought together implementers from each of the four hubs, staff from USAID Washington and each of the three regional missions in Africa, hub beneficiaries, and private sector partners to discuss best practices and lessons learned in implementing USAID's African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI).

The Hub Meeting's main objectives were to:

- Achieve an exchange of best practices and lessons learned from past activities
- Identify and promote areas of technical collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Develop a common message to highlight at the 2008 African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum in Washington
- Refine the common understanding of the goals and implementation strategy of the Hubs and AGCI at large.

The meeting was officially opened by USAID West Africa Mission Director Henderson Patrick, who spoke about the importance of sharing knowledge and best practices among the hubs and remarked on the significant accomplishments achieved by the hubs under AGCI. Presentations from staff at the hubs focused on best practices in technical issues such as: *Supporting Regional Economic Communities*, *Export Business Development*, and *Reducing Constraints in Transport and Energy*. Complementing the hubs' presentations, USAID staff facilitated discussions on: AGCI strategic priorities, managing regional-bilateral relationships, and the future and sustainability of the hubs.

Highlights of the meeting included a moving presentation by Addis Alemayehou, Director of Ethiopia's AGOA program, in which he described how the East and Central African Trade Hub provided critical technical assistance to nearly double Ethiopia's AGOA exports in two years. The Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub illustrated how they facilitated more than \$15 million in export deals in apparel and processed food through 2007. In addition, to illustrate the enormous potential of public-private partnerships, Intel Corporation gave a presentation on its cooperation with the West Africa Trade Hub to develop a pan-African policy network and associated Information Communication and Technology (ICT) projects across the region.

The three-day meeting concluded with a unanimous declaration of support for an annual series of meetings as well as a request to determine the feasibility of a series of meetings at the regional level to discuss best practices in trade-related economic growth with the broader AGCI stakeholder community in each region. The Knowledge Sharing and Analysis contract will also be continuing its research agenda on best practices on trade-led economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa to maintain the dialogue established among the participants towards the 2009 African Global Competitiveness Hub Meeting.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- *There needs to be more coordination among the hubs (e.g., programmatically, planning)*
- *There is a need for an AGCI Plan/Strategy – how are the hubs to survive/function in the future. Need to first agree on stated goals of the hubs*
- *More work on disseminating what the hubs have done is needed*

DAY 1: OPENING SPEECH

Presenter: Henderson Patrick (Director, USAID West Africa)



(l to r) Henderson Patrick, Tom Herlehy, Sutherland Miller, and David Fischer open the 2008 Annual USAID African Global Competitiveness Hub Meeting.

It's truly a pleasure to welcome all of you to Ghana, especially those who have traveled far. Fortunately, as you've discovered, it's getting easier and easier to get here, with direct flights from New York, Nairobi and Johannesburg. I hope you had a good flight, are now well rested, and ready to get to work!

What you've come here to do is very important. One of your key objectives—perhaps the most important one—is to develop a common message for presentation at the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum in Washington this coming summer. At that Forum, there will be important delegations from Africa, certainly, but because

this Forum will be held in Washington, one of your key audiences will be the U.S. government itself.

Never forget that when you are preparing presentations and submitting them for clearance, you are all teachers. The people clearing your documents may themselves know very little about your program. That process of review and discussion is itself one of the principal ways the U.S. government educates itself about the intricacies of its own programs. Take full advantage. Take every opportunity to spread the good word about the good work that you're doing. Be a good teacher.

One of the best things you can do to prepare for that is to be sure you have a common message, tightly focused, logically organized, and well supported with a few key charts. When you get to the actual floor of the meeting room in Washington, if past experience is any guide, people will be talking in the aisles or participating in side meetings while you're making your presentations. You'll know you've succeeded if they stop for a moment to listen to you. For that to happen, you've got to be well prepared.

And if they don't listen to you in the plenary sessions, then you need to work the coffee breaks and the luncheons. And if they don't listen to you there, then be prepared to work the evening cocktails and special dinners. And if that doesn't work, make sure you have a 60-second, knock-me-dead, "here's what you need to know about my program" kind of speech that you can deliver in the hallway or elevator of your hotel.

But no matter where you talk to them, they won't listen unless you have a solid and cogent message to deliver. That's why you're here today—to make sure that we're all on the same page, that we have a common set of objectives, and that we are all speaking about those objectives in the same language.

So, prepare well for the AGOA Forum in Washington. All the trade hubs do excellent work. Let's make sure that our senior management in Washington knows about it.

If there's anything I or my staff can do to make your stay here in Ghana more comfortable and productive, please don't hesitate to let us know. And do try to have a bit of fun while you're here. Ghana's a wonderful country with lots to see and do. Take advantage of it if you can.

Thank you, and akwaaba!

DAY 1: SESSION 1: AGCI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PRESENTER: JEFF MALICK (USAID WASHINGTON)

The session began with a brief introduction regarding what are the African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI) priorities. The presentation as outlined was intended to address:

1. Reaffirm AGCI priorities
2. AGCI and IEHA
3. FY 2008 and Beyond

Jeff Malick began by outlining the general funding strategy of AGCI as a means of reiterating AGCI priorities. These included:

- Infrastructure \$70.5 million
- Enterprise Development \$51.5 million
- Access to Finance \$31.0 million
- Improved Climate \$22.0 million

He then asked the group about what the field offices are focusing on, particularly in terms of AGCI vs. Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA). Amanda Hilligas responded that they are linking up and used the Market Access, Trade, and Enabling Policies Program (MATEP) program in Zambia as one example. Candace Buzzard then went on to describe that both IEHA and AGCI are integrated in the Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support Program (RATES) program. The presenter then went on to describe the situation in Washington that there was seemingly not enough communication between IEHA and AGCI despite the obvious linkages and potential.

Jeff Malick reiterated the desire of USAID/W to work more on the leveraging of infrastructure and that it was likely to be an emphasis of AGCI in the future. He also emphasized the need of AGCI to work on getting its message out, particularly vertically as a means of not only trumpeting our successes but also to ensure the future relevance of AGCI in the future.

In terms of FY 2008, Jeff Malick explained that there were several issues regarding the allocations for the coming year and that certain financial pressures (earmarks in particular) are creating a situation in which missions can expect less money than they might have hoped for, particularly in terms of discretionary spending. The presenter also drew attention to the upcoming, African Entrepreneur Fund Initiative and the role it may play in the future. There is also an apparent desire of USAID/W to fund and leverage a great deal of money into private-public partnerships (PPP) and use it in conjunction with other donors.

At this point the participants asked how AGCI would fit into initiatives such as the Global Development Alliance (GDA). The presenter responded that the Administration is very much involved in Africa and business development and will continue to use the GDA to best implement these goals.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- AGCI is guaranteed to be funded but upcoming budget constraints are a reality
- AGCI priorities remain the same – as a whole
- There is a need to “talk up” AGCI more
- AGCI and IEHA need to collaborate more despite the obvious linkages and potential
- PPPs and infrastructure will be a future emphasis of AGCI
- The new Administration will have an impact on AGCI and its successor (if any)

The presenter then reiterated that AGCI priorities will remain the same as a whole, but admitted that there is a lot of transition at USAID and it will be difficult to say with any certainty what the new leadership will think of the AGCI program. This reality makes the need to “talk up” the AGCI program all the more relevant. Regardless, the presenter offered his own view that regardless of overall directions that there will be a large emphasis on infrastructure in the future.

DAY 1: SESSION 2: BEST PRACTICES IN SUPPORTING REGIONAL TRADE BODIES
PRESENTERS: RON BLACK (ECA), ANDY COOK (CARANA), ROBERT KIRK (AECOM)

Part 1: East and Central Africa (ECA) Hub

The meeting began with a brief description by Ron Black regarding the East and Central African Trade Hub’s (ECA Hub) activities with Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

For the East and Central Africa Region these RECs include:

- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
- Trade and Transit Coordination Authority (TTCA)
- East African Community (EAC)

Mr. Black went on to describe the strategy employed by the ECA hub of placing a permanent advisor within these organizations, specifically COMESA and TTCA (the latter for the Northern Trade Corridor). The benefits of these advisors included:

- Developing smooth working relationships between the REC and the project/donor
- Performing core functions of REC officers
- Leading major technical studies
- Strengthening the REC institutionally
- Installing and configuring a local area network to facilitate internal communications at TTCA
- Designing and establishing a Web site and an electronic newsletter
- Developing training materials, technical/user manuals and training staff on software such as the MS Office package
- Assisting in the development of a business plan for the regional cargo tracking project

Ron Black then described some of the specific programs that the ECA hub had engaged in including reducing customs guarantees, providing selective support to specific REC initiatives and other national agencies including the Revenue Authorities Digital Data Exchange (RADDEx) and one-stop border crossings, and providing support to the private sector.

Part 2: West Africa Trade Hub (WATH)

Andy Cook, from the West Africa Trade Hub (WATH), took up the next brief presentation. He began by describing in detail the nature of the two primary RECs in the West Africa Region: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA). Dr. Cook pointed out that ECOWAS is the larger group (and all of the UEMOA countries are actually part of ECOWAS), but that UEMOA tended to have a more coherent nature and at least subjectively was able to accomplish more through its organization than its larger cousin.

Andy Cook then stated that USAID and the Trade hub had decided that within New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the focus would be on ECOWAS given its broader reach. From 2003-07 the trade hub supported ECOWAS in policy & infrastructure, particularly with:

- Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems
- Road transport
- Customs connectivity

Andy Cook went on to describe each of these major initiatives beginning with the SPS systems and the work to harmonize all ECOWAS nations in their standards. Dr. Cook described the process as on-going and not without its share of setbacks, largely due to difficulties with communication and the bureaucracy within ECOWAS.

In terms of Road Transport Activities, Dr. Cook described their efforts in better terms. In this case, because much of the previous effort by the RECs had been done by UEMOA—which already had experience, a plan, and a mandate for the initial work—the trade hub ended up working with UEMOA in the name of both organizations. Dr. Cook made the point that in this case, WATH had produced a very good working relationship with UEMOA and expressed optimism for eventual benefits.

Dr. Cook then described the Regional Trade Information System, noting that it was hard to get buy-in from all participating governments and that the plan of having WATH administer the funds while ECOWAS would maintain technical control was a huge debacle. ECOWAS simply did not communicate enough and it was only recently (February 2008) that the hub heard back from ECOWAS that they are finally committed.

For the implementation of a Common External Tariff, WATH will be placing a permanent advisor in the ECOWAS Department of Trade and Customs. Challenges include:

- Nigeria's stated desire to include a fifth tariff band
- The fact that customs revenues are a significant portion of public finances in many countries
- The weak capacity for implementation

Andy Cook then concluded that while there were many challenges, the hope is that with the advent of a resident advisor for ECOWAS in Abuja, the level of communication and cooperation will improve in the near future.

Part 3: Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub (SAGCH)

Speaking for the Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub (SAGCH), Robert Kirk began by describing the history of SAGCH and how it has evolved over the years. He then went on to describe some of the work they have done with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Generally speaking, they tend to focus on using Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) in lieu of having advisors in place. For the SADC Trade, Industry, Finance, and Investment (TIFI) Directorate, SAGCH is doing an audit on trade protocol and working with the directorate to see what would be required to set a free trade area.

The SAGCH is also working to shore up SADC's capacity, particularly as it has been found lacking. So far the reengagement with SADC has been positive. In the transport sector, SAGCH has signed an MOU with SADC's Infrastructure Directorate to improve the corridor initiatives as well as complete studies on various other initiatives and work with SADC and their subsidiaries on regulatory and tariff issues regarding energy.

In terms of best practices, SAGCH has found that the policy of using MOUs is superior to having a resident advisor. Such a policy clearly delineates which party is responsible for which actions and when and also helps to overcome some of the challenges associated with internal communications within the REC. The successes of the SACGH were also manifested in having developed and executed several MOUs that had produced high-level commitment from the SADC secretariat as well as U.S. ambassadors in the region. Robert Kirk also pointed out that by keeping the trade hub relatively independent, it freed their hand to be more honest with the REC about its plans and projects.

Part 4: Discussion

The discussion that followed touched upon several different topics. The first topic focused on the communications issues that came up when working with the RECs, particularly in the West Africa region. Dr. Cook answered that much of it simply came down having good, motivated people within the REC. For WATH, the presence of a resident advisor went a long way towards forging an understanding of why communication was often so difficult.

The next topic of discussion, brought up by Jeff Cochrane, focused on what was USAID/W's feeling on the importance of the working relationships with the RECs. Jeff Malick answered that it was the feeling of USAID/W that the Paris Declaration set the tone, in that countries would set their priorities first leading the way towards donor coordination. A large part of this obviously would be working with the RECs and creating a unified system of cooperation. That being said, Jeff Malick did comment that while there was no specific directive from USAID/W to work with the RECs, it was encouraged.

The discussion then shifted to whether it was more or less beneficial to have advisors placed within the RECs themselves. Dr. Cook commented that while it may be a good solution in the short term, it did beg the question of sustainability in the long run. The SAGCH seemed to have more success using their MOU model rather than having an actual presence; however, Dr. Cook again pointed out that presence is less of an issue when one's offices is across the street from the REC's offices (as in the case with SAGCH).

All the participants then shifted to the question of what conditions needed to be met to have successful and capable RECs that could last beyond the existence of the trade hubs. Several participants pointed out that some of the biggest successes have come when initiatives are spearheaded by the private sector. Ms. Elago pointed out that in working with SADC, the SAGCH had taken the opportunity of their working relationship to transfer skills, mostly by acting as a technical resource and "backing off" to let SADC find its own way. Dr. Cook then added that he felt it was important to focus on what

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- *The ECA Hub has benefited from the placement of advisors at COMESA and TTCA*
- *WATH has had success working with UEMOA but ECOWAS' size makes it that much more difficult to work with. Communication, bureaucracy, and control issues make it difficult to achieve consensus and buy-in with RECs. A new WATH advisor to be placed in Abuja is anticipated to strengthen WATH's relationships with ECOWAS.*
- *SAGCH has had successful experiences using MOUs with RECs in lieu of having advisors in place, which also maintains the Hub's independence*
- *Relationships with RECs depends largely on the people involved*
- *Sustainability is questioned when advisors are placed into the RECs*
- *Private sector partnerships with RECs have produced some of the biggest successes*

work was already done, using the example of the work done on the trade corridors to demonstrate how this can be done effectively.

The discussion ended with a question from Jeff Malick regarding the role of the ambassadors in the trade hubs working with the RECs. Ron Black responded that the ECA hub had taken advantage of working at the highest levels of COMESA but that they had yet to work with ambassadors as is the case in the SAGCH, but would welcome the chance to do so.

DAY 1: SESSION 3: MANAGING REGIONAL-BILATERAL RELATIONS

PRESENTERS: CANDICE BUZZARD AND NZUKI MWANIA (USAID EAST AFRICA)

The session began with Ms. Buzzard giving a brief overview of the differences between the regional and bilateral missions. Ms. Buzzard pointed out that the regional missions were not merely a collection of bilateral interests, that they have a much broader scope in general. Some of the main differences included:

Regional

- Transborder or regional
- Key Partners are Regional organizations (RECs and regional trade associations)
- Policy work—harmonization, acceptance by Heads of State;
- Results regional agreements/treaties/etc.
- AGCI and IEHA dominate
- Scale economies, can tackle cross-border issues (trade, corridor development)
- Market access and x-border standards are key focus
- Focus on regional value chains, both agency and services
- International trading
- Commodity linkages among countries
- Strengthen regional trade associations or member organizations
- Work to make regional/ international linkages
- Regional association—or firm-level impact
- Often difficult to have real impact without engaging national players

Bilateral

- Country/national
- Key Partners are national governments, associations
- Policy work—national level policies, regulation legislation
- Results are national, local, people level
- AGCI not as highly visible, IEHA easier to address “hunger”
- National interests most important
- Productivity, marketing strategies, and quality control are key focus
- Focus is on national sector value chains mainly in agriculture
- National trading and sometimes international
- Commodity enclaves within country are linked
- Strengthen local or national organizations/associations
- Work with individual farmers/businesses

- On-the-ground people-level impact
- Can often get real impact without engaging regional player

Some of the issues highlighted by Ms. Buzzard, included a sense on the part of the bilateral missions that their “turf” was encroached upon and that the regional missions did not communicate their plans often enough to the bilateral missions. On the part of the regional missions, there seemed to be a sense that bilateral missions do not “get” what the regional missions are trying to do and that many of the bilateral missions seem to have a provincial view of their policies and work.

Ms. Buzzard then went on to give a few examples of cooperation between the ECA hub and the bilateral missions it works with. The largest area of cooperation is actually in the realm of AGOA, working together on:

- AGOA workshops
- AGOA Rules of Origin for regional Customs officials
- Support to country-specific “AGOA add-on” programs
- Identifying firms to attend trade shows
- AGOA Export Strategies

There is also considerable collaboration on the Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support (RATES) program working with coffee, maize, and other commodities. This program, according to Ms. Buzzard, demonstrates that some of the best collaborations come about when they are commodity- or value-chain-oriented. Ms. Buzzard made the assertion that regional programs do much better when there are “feet on the ground” in the form of cooperating bilateral missions.

From this, Ms. Buzzard, recommended that several things be done to improve bilateral-regional relations in terms of communicating, implementing programs, monitoring, and working with African institutions. Some of these recommendations included:

- Plan USAID regional-bilateral consultative forums on a regular basis to inform and improve synergy
- Engage during project conceptualization
- More closely align regional programs with what bilateral missions are doing in the region
- Establish mechanisms for bilateral and regional missions to work together in areas that increase impact for both
- For bilateral missions—ensure international standards are observed
- Creating a platform to share results
- Link bilateral and regional results frameworks; integrate results to have three level impacts
 - People-level impact
 - National impact
 - Regional/global impact
- Link or integrate performance monitoring plans
- Strengthen African partners—both national and regional
 - RECs and regional trade associations are the natural conduit between regional and bilateral.
 - National associations
 - Local organizations

The discussion afterwards began with how to better foster this kind of cooperation. Ms. Buzzard began by pointing out that often the results frameworks do not always mesh well for the bilateral and regional missions and therefore it is difficult to work together.

Tom Herlehy from WATH added that there was success with bilateral cooperation in Nigeria, and Jeff Cochrane of USAID/WA mentioned the same of Senegal. Both pointed out that in these cases, it helped to have regional staff located in the area as they fostered better communication and therefore cooperation among the missions.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- Both regional and bilateral missions need to improve in communicating with each other
- Communication and “turf issues” are cited as the main obstacles to closer cooperation
- Project linkages can effect greater collaboration
- Planning needs to take in regional considerations
- Periodic consultative forums can also have a positive effect
- Above recommendations can improve bilateral-regional relations

Ms. Buzzard finished the discussion by reiterating the need to persuade programs like RATES that more cooperation is in their best interest and that there is much to gain on both sides of the divide. To that end, the recommendation was made that linked projects, possibly in conjunction with the RECs, be looked into as a possible avenue of improved bilateral-regional relations.

DAY 1: SESSION 4: KNOWLEDGE SHARING GROUP EXERCISE

PRESENTER: SUTHERLAND MILLER (KSA)

In this session, Mr. Miller put forth the question of what exactly is a best practice to a series of groups. Each group was asked to identify what principles make up a “best practice” and to rank them accordingly. Afterwards, each group was asked to present its findings and explain them.

Group One Best Practice Principles

- A best practice must have an objective/standardized process with a measurable result
 - This is not necessarily best measured by third parties
 - Results, rather than the practice itself, are what must be measured
- The practice must be replicable but allow for modification based on environment
- There must be buy-in for the implementation of the project
 - The timing of such buy-in may vary

Group one also considered the idea that a best practice be process driven and goal driven, but ultimately rejected the idea in favor of having the practice be driven by developed country practice.

For an example, group one presented the “Magic” model for delivering results at a trade show. They pointed out that there is a quantitative measure (~\$10 million in new exports) as well as qualitative (buy-in from the



(l to r) David Fischer, Christine Nicolino, and Paula Elago deliberate in a group exercise on what defines a “best practice”

participating firms as demonstrated by their willingness to co-pay for their involvement). Some of the characteristics of the process include its being:

- Process-driven
- Delivering of measurable results
- Sustainable
- Replicable

Finally, the example given also provides several individual stories of having lives improved, including as a springboard for women factory workers to improve their income from an increase of skills and their healthcare.

Group Two Best Practice Principles

1. It works!
 - Addresses a clearly defined need and therefore is relevant to those persons targeted
2. It works!
 - The practice is adaptable to many different environments
3. It's measurable either quantitatively or qualitatively
4. Contributes to more efficient use of resources

Group two also considered the idea that a best practice should constitute a new or innovative idea but ultimately rejected that principal in that a best practice may very well represent older, established ideas or even standard practices that need only be entered into a new environment.

For an example, group two presented the reduction of the number of documents needed for transporting goods across borders to one overarching form. The best practice specifically in this example is collaborating with the private sector and transport operators to arrange meetings and facilitate between them and the RECs.

Group Three Best Practice Principles

1. The practice is replicable across environments
2. The practice is able to be adapted to local needs through consensus, not compromise
3. The practice can be quantitatively measured
4. Moves towards compliance with recognized (international and local) norms
5. Clearly identifies actors needed for implementation

For an example, group three looked at the development of the flower industry in Ethiopia, shortening the lead-time from orders to delivery. In this case, they followed existing best practices—doing a survey where there were issues that slowed down export. With that study, they were able to show the responsible government Minister the data, which in turn encouraged the government to take the necessary steps to ease the process and improve on the speed and cost of transport.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- *Best practices are not always easy to define*
- *They must be measurable and produce results*
- *They must be applicable to multiple environments*

DAY 2 SESSION 1: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND AGOA RESOURCE CENTERS

PRESENTERS: FINN HOLM-OLSEN (ECA HUB), AMANDA HILLIGAS (SAGCH), ADDIS ALEMAYEHOU (VEGA-ETHIOPIA), VANESSA ADAMS (WATH), ABOU FALL (WATH)

Part I: ECA Hub Best Practices

The session began with Finn Holm Olsen from ECA Hub and a description of their business development activities. The goal described for ECA Hub was increasing regional private sector capacity to benefit from AGOA. This is mainly achieved through the ECA Hub by means of firm-level technical assistance, the “bread and butter” of what they do. In addition, there is also work on trade shows, AGOA training sessions for public and private sectors in the region, and work on national AGOA export strategies. This last point was emphasized by the presenter who cited an example of winning buy-in from a local Ethiopian minister to become more involved in reducing trade barriers to demonstrate that strategies needed to be active and not merely “sit on a shelf.”

Some of the major challenges for the ECA Hub have included how to give the requisite support at the country level, particularly given budget realities. Also, each East and Central Africa country is unique and therefore AGOA business development efforts need to be tailored to each country’s specific needs.

In terms of trade shows, the ECA Hub has found that the selection of trade shows is critically important. As important is pairing the right company with the right show. A failure in either area can have a dampening effect on expectations. Regarding general technical assistance, these activities must be tailored to particular companies as not all are prepared to enter the U.S. market straight away. So although the mandate is to work only with “export ready” businesses, the reality is that some firms should be focusing on other markets and the AGCI program needs to take that into consideration.

There is great importance in having consistent support directed to individual companies. Most ECA Hub success stories have benefited from multiple interventions and several layers of support. It is also through these “model companies” that the ECA Hub has seen the importance of the demonstration effect. In such cases, not only may other companies be inspired to do better, but it can also, importantly, spur the respective country’s government into action to support private sector development.

ECA Hub AGOA activities have been successful in part due to collaboration with other partner programs such as the Africa Fast Track Trade program, creating important synergies. While “back end” trade linkages are important, the “front end” engagement (targeted training, technical assistance) is equally so and that, in fact, the two activities are critically interdependent.

Perhaps one of the more successful best practices utilized by the ECA Hub has been trying to “Brand Africa”. This requires a sustained effort to create awareness in American buyers, to “hit them over the head” regarding what Africa is all about and what it has to offer.

ECA Hub also worked with K-Net, a cut flowers consolidator out of Kenya. The ECA Hub offered technical assistance in country and sponsorships to the World Floral Expo. This support in turn led directly to \$900,000 in exports to the United States. This experience reaffirmed the lessons of keeping the program design, approach, and implementation flexible enough to respond to the local environment. Some of the other actions taken include:

- Effectively using volunteer organizations such as International Executive Service Corps (IESC) and MBAs Without Borders
- Sponsoring targeted buyer missions to Africa
- Country-specific programs that are adaptable to local conditions

One of the most important aspects of this program was the cooperation between the ECA Hub and USAID bilateral missions. Through their AGOA “Add-on” Programs, ECA Hub was able to make additional money available to these missions on an elective basis, including Congo/Brazzaville, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. They were able to develop a close collaboration with the missions in Dar es Salaam and Addis Ababa as well as the U.S. embassy in Brazzaville. The program was an extension of the ECA Hub AGOA programs but tailored to the individual needs of the participating countries in that they were:

- Sector-specific
- Considered private sector “AGOA/market readiness” (for example: Congo/B program, given its status as a “Tier 1” AGOA country, placed greater emphasis on training and technical assistance)
- Staffed by in-country AGOA Program Coordinators

Part 2: SAGCH Best Practices

Amanda Hilligas from SAGCH was the second presenter. After a brief reiteration of the overall goals of SAGCH, the presenter went over progress to date including having:

- Facilitated more than \$47 million in new trade deals between Southern African companies and U.S. buyers.
- Supported more than 40 companies to attend trade shows and events resulting in \$42 million in new exports.
- Cultivated more than 370 new business relationships with food companies in the United States including: Sun Rich International, Talier Trading Group, Whole Foods, Food Emporium and others.
- Assisted more than 100 companies with requests for assistance on export logistics.
- Facilitated and responded to more than 1,000 AGOA information requests.
- Assisted more than 50 U.S. Government stakeholders with trade and AGOA-related requests.
- Facilitated almost \$16 million in export deals



Amanda Hilligas and Addis Alemayehou share their best practices in promoting export business development

The majority of the successful work done by SAGCH involved the utilization of trade shows for promoting and facilitating sales to the U.S. market. The methodology in the case of trade shows is to work primarily with export-ready companies while also working with those domestically competitive companies that are perhaps two to three years from being export ready. SAGCH works with these businesses to teach them how to best engage in the trade show and share some of the financial burden with selected companies.

Most of the companies that SAGCH works with are in the apparel sector, although edible goods are a fast riser in the market. There is no specific mandate to work with any particular sector; however, SAGCH does do preliminary studies to seek out those industries may have the best chance of succeeding in U.S. markets. SAGCH has found that the best way to determine the viability of African products is to simply put them in front of U.S. buyers—through trade shows or other business-to-business events.

These business-to-business events have also been an effective tool in the hands of SAGCH. The program by SAGCH has proven very effective, bringing over 60 delegates from 50 firms in 2007 and producing reported deal pipelines of over \$6 million within 2 years. It is in this area especially that SAGCH has benefited from a regional presence as it allows the hub to offer options and work as a match-maker between the appropriate businesses.

American business interests seeking to work with Africa have even come to the hub itself, asking for advice regarding where they should do business. In response, SAGCH has taken steps to engage directly with buyers. This is a much more intimate means of engage buyers in which:

- SACGH plays important role in consulting for international buyers and investors contemplating entry into Southern Africa
- SAGCH fields requests for information on African suppliers, investment opportunities, logistical challenges, or regulatory constraints in Southern Africa
- SAGCH serves as an information resource, facilitating a pipeline of \$12.8 million in the apparel sector

In one of the early success stories from this program, the hub was approached by the Talier Group who wished to create an “Africa Set” of food items for sale in U.S. markets. Through SAGCH, this group is expected to generate \$6–\$8 million in revenues in 10,000 stores in the United States.

In addition to the quantitative success that SAGCH has been able to demonstrate through the use of sales figures and other numbers, the hub also likes to highlight the transformational impact of their work. These kinds of impacts are demonstrated in their client businesses through:

- Companies restructuring to control costs
- Investments in productivity-enhancing technologies
- New product development
- Improved supply-chain management
- Corporate strategy development

For the future, SAGCH would like to focus on new opportunities in both new markets as well as diversifying the sectors that the hub works in. Also, the hub would like to look more into the idea of “branding Africa” to better market goods that come from the continent as a whole.

Part 3: AGOA+ Best Practices

The next presenter was Addis Alemayehou from the USAID/VEGA–Ethiopia’s AGOA+ program. The presentation began with a brief overview of the history of Ethiopia and the relevance of the 1991 change in government. The new government made promotion of a market economy a priority and, although there have been missteps along the way, the country is currently enjoying an economy growing at over 10 percent. The emphasis so far in Ethiopia has been in textiles, cattle, and horticulture.

The AGOA+ program is intended to assist enterprises in raising their awareness of AGOA and to work with these same businesses to take advantage of the agreement. AGOA+ has a particular focus on women entrepreneurs and small and medium size enterprises (SME), with women especially being the backbone of the program. Much like other enterprise development programs, AGOA+ also seeks to work primarily with export-ready companies, although it would like to expand this capacity given the proper funding opportunities.

Some of the specific objectives of AGOA+ include:

- Providing AGOA information and raising awareness through various events
- Fostering business linkages between Ethiopian businesses and U.S. companies
- Facilitating trade missions
- Provide technical assistance to businesses with company profiles, marketing materials, Web sites
- Other technical assistance including expert advice and export readiness assessments
- Provide training on how to trade under AGOA
- Offer on-the-spot business counseling
- Work towards more diaspora engagement in the Ethiopian Economy

In general, some of the factors leading to the success of AGOA+ have included:

- Creating meaningful partnerships with government
- Focusing of sectors with comparative advantage
- Knowing available capacity
- Encouraging business clustering
- Working in partnership chambers, sector associations, and other private sector development donor programs
- Focusing on products that are simple (e.g., Uniform production)
- Repeat participation at tradeshow and buyer missions (with ECA Trade HUB)

For the future, AGOA+ looks to continue its work by focusing more on selected economic sectors and market segments, encouraging more U.S. investments in Ethiopia, establishing a National AGOA Steering Committee, and other selected interventions.

Part 4: WATH Best Practices

The fourth presenter of the 1st session, Vanessa Adams, represented the West Africa Trade Hub (WATH). The presentation began with some observations by the presenter regarding the general challenges AGCI faces vis-à-vis the trade hubs. There is a need for all the trade hubs (and by extension all AGCI programs) to be on the same page as to where and how they focus. WATH, for example, has benefited from a deep and narrow focus on a few key commodities such as manufactured apparel, cashews, fish and seafood, and a few other products.

This focus has produced some positive results over the past two years (2005–2007) including:

- 475 businesses assessed
- 200 export-ready companies assisted
- 1,600 jobs created
- 3,000 buyer-seller linkages
- 3,200 business people trained
- \$16.3 million in new exports
- \$1.3 million regional trade
- \$4.5 million investments

The processes WATH utilizes for enterprise development are similar to that of the other trade hubs and consist of:

- Selection of export-ready companies
- Industry-specific workshops: product development, quality, management, pricing, marketing
- Technical assistance:
 - Certification: preparation and implementation
 - Access to Finance: coaching and facilitating trade and investment financing, budgeting, cost analysis, pricing...
 - Production and efficiency: competitiveness, international standards, product development, quality
 - Marketing: brochures, Web sites, labels, online invitations (e-vites)
 - Research: target markets, sourcing raw materials, visits to labs, competitive manufacturers, and retailers
- Trade shows and business linkages: U.S.-based team; co-sponsored participation in U.S., Europe, Asia, and Africa events
- Buyers' trips: organizing international buyers to visit WA educational resource centers

One of the better success stories of WATH has included work with the Africa Cashew Alliance to increase revenues for farmers, expand capacity in Africa—particularly for the shelling of cashews—and to increase international demand. This program in particular goes a long way towards fighting the negative perceptions that linger regarding African products. Some of the other success stories include working with Hallmark on creating Malian mud-cloth bags, with MarMax with Burkina Faso leather boxes, and with many others. Overall, these stories represented the dividends that can be achieved through the use of both local and international business partners.

Part 5: AGOA Resource Centers

The final presentation was a brief overview of WATH's use of AGOA resource centers (ARCs), presented by Abou Fall. There are 18 AGOA Resource Centers (ARCs) in 17 countries in West Africa (Niger claims two). ARCs act as focal points within host country institutions with the objectives of increasing awareness and resources to the private sector on the benefits under AGOA and increasing export trade resources and skills of individual enterprises. To achieve these objectives, the ARCs conduct outreach activities including:

- Seminars/workshops with partner organizations / institutions (AGOA Days; sectoral workshops; export strategy workshops)
 - U.S. embassy (Niger's AGOA sensitization seminars in Zinder, Tahoua, Maradi, Tilliberi)
 - Chambers of Commerce, Export promotion organizations
 - Trade hub (AGOA Days in Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Sierra Leone in 2005; sectoral workshops in Benin, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Gambia, Senegal in 2006; export strategy workshops in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Nigeria 2007)
- Technical assistance and training of customs and government officials on textile visa administration, Category 9 certification
- Radios, newspapers, news bulletins

The ARCs, however, face challenges in:

- Weak host institutions. Some institutions do not hold regular elections or do not have a clear agenda and vision to support the ARC
- Some ARC administrators lack the technical capacity to adequately assist the private sector in their countries. Some administrators are very dynamic and proactive, while others are not
- Loose MOU between WATH and the host institutions. No leverage to get the host institutions to perform or submit timely reports

Regardless, there are plans to integrate a virtual network among ARCs to share information on potential lists of buyers, updated tariff schedules, and how-to guides.

Part 6: Discussion

The first question raised concerned just how host country policies fit into individual aid projects in those countries. The ECA Hub cited the example of Rwanda in which a coherent national AGOA policy had had a positive effect on their programs in that country. WATH added that often those larger policy issues were addressed in the process of working on those smaller, individual projects, and both SAGCH and AGOA+ agreed that often those individual successes feed into and promote positive policies.

When asked just how each of the hubs chooses to assist one business over another, it was pointed out by all of the hubs that they often get far more requests than they are able to fulfill. The criteria start with just which companies actually need the assistance with a focus on those businesses that are either just export-ready or close to it. There is also a need to keep a regional focus in the selection process, so as not to favor one country's businesses over that of another. The hubs also acknowledged that there is a subjective element to the process and that they often go on the idea of which businesses have been doing well for the past few years. It was pointed out during this particular discussion that the hubs had built up a reputation. Although they do get more requests for assistance than can be fulfilled, the application process, as well as the fact that each business must also pay much of their own fees, acts as a de facto screening process that eliminates all those businesses that are either not serious or unprepared.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- Trade shows have been a successful means of reaching out and promoting trade
- It is critical to pair the right company with the right trade show
- Export strategies need to be active and have achieved “buy-in” from the government
- Consistent support to individual companies through interventions and several layers of support has proven successful
- “Model companies” spur a demonstrative effect in the country
- Promoting “Brand Africa” is essential to mainstream Africa with international buyers
- Inwards buyer missions to Africa complement sending African enterprises to trade shows
- SAGCH has found that regional B2B events have been very successful in facilitating market linkages
- National AGOA Strategies/Plans have been successful in helping countries focus on their AGOA-targeted industries. AGOA BDS needs to be tailored to each country
- Mainstreaming the benefits of AGOA among local enterprises can also have a positive effect. WATH has seen success by facilitating the creation of national-level AGOA Resource Centers, in effect, decentralizing their AGOA technical assistance.
- It's best to focus on businesses that just need the extra “push” – those that are export-ready or nearly export-ready

DAY 2: SESSION 2: USAID BUSINESS GROWTH INITIATIVE

PRESENTER: MARIALYCE MUTCHLER, (BGI, WEIDEMANN ASSOCIATES)

Part I: Presentation

Millions of dollars have been spent by USAID to implement enterprise development projects over the years in programs spanning the globe. Evaluations of specific projects have been conducted but there has been no central source of information at USAID on best practices in enterprise development. The Business Growth Initiative (BGI) was established to provide technical leadership and serve as a center of excellence to assist USAID staff and practitioners on how to design and implement enterprise development projects utilizing best practices.



Marialyce Mutchler introduces the USAID Business Growth Initiative as a source of best practices in Enterprise Development

In this capacity the Business Growth Initiative is concerned with questions such as what should be done to improve enterprise development in a country, whether it is always country specific, and whether it should focus on a particular size of enterprise or should it look at what a country needs to develop and opportunities for increasing enterprise growth so that larger companies can employ more people.

Different interventions, be they firm-level assistance or group/sector/cluster focus, have different interest groups who promote those interventions. There must be an understanding about what can be done to utilize the resources available and what are the prospects for sustainability of a particular intervention. Value chains versus sub sector analysis, sector interventions versus clusters, business development services versus business services, and does competitiveness mean that exports or import substitutions provide examples of the various issues to be dealt with in deciding on a project design or implementation plan? Therefore it is critical that constraints be identified before focusing on any particular enterprise size.

For example, in the case of Bosnia, the lessons learned in two early cases indicate that in fact the components and best practices of enterprise development related directly to the post-conflict environment. It is the nature of the conflict, its resolution, and market situation before the conflict that will help determine the assignment of priority and cost. However, the point must be made that enterprise development in a post-conflict environment is not all that different from the case of a typical developing country (although the sequencing of interventions may be altered).

In another example, BGI did an assessment of the ICT sector in Kosovo to help the mission determine whether to select ICT as a target in future economic growth activities. These criteria can be applied for any sector, with their weight depending on specific country conditions, and internal and external influences (globalization, conflict). Some of the criteria for target selection include the following.

- The sector's potential impact on the economy—measured as increased revenue as well as increased employment.
- The absence of any “show stoppers” to the sector's growth that have a low probability of being eliminated (including no apparent political will). This includes anything in the business-enabling environment, such as laws, policies, and regulations (or the low capacity of regulators or policy makers

to play their roles) that seriously constrains competition in the sector and is unlikely to change due to lack of political will.

- Motivation of the stakeholders within the sector – ensuring they will work with the implementing partner to drive success and invest their time and resources. This also encompasses momentum to build upon, e.g., recent, concrete, success in a particular market, new private sector investments, or “sparks” of innovation in a few firms a competitiveness project can build upon.
- An apparent demand for the sector’s outputs, and the ability to compete successfully in target market(s).
- Evidence that the sector has the necessary inputs (skilled employees, sufficient number of motivated firms).

As found by the Business Growth Initiative, some of the ways it has contributed to knowledge sharing include:

- Conducting original research to improve the bank of knowledge about enterprise, including preparation of short technical briefs
- Providing hands-on, technical support to USAID missions and bureaus in the design and evaluation of business growth programs and design pilot demonstration projects
- Disseminating knowledge through the BGI Web site portal, local and international workshops/seminars, and technical briefs on topics of interest to the enterprise development community of practice.

All this leads into how BGI works: creating applicable lessons learned from specific projects. In the Kosovo example, BGI assisted the mission in assessing a project design issue and then drafted a paper that had wider applicability. All this information is then posted on the BGI Web site for use by any development professionals.

Part 2: Discussion

A discussion followed this presentation that focused on best practices and the details of BGI’s role. When asked what the presenter’s thoughts were regarding best practices, Ms. Mutchler stated that she believed the principles approach is the best given the realities of enterprise development. She went on to say that BGI is looking at a means of collecting best practices into a set format with examples; however, this is proving difficult given that not all best practices have obvious examples.

The presenter was then asked whether the audience for BGI’s work needed to be expanded to private businesses rather than focused on USAID itself. The presenter responded that there is already a bit of that on the Web site but that it may take some more time to fully address that need as the program itself is still fairly new. Ms. Mutchler also added that not all the case studies on the Web site are from USAID, as they are only the targeted audience.

The discussion turned to what are some of the best knowledge sharing strategies, including looking at the development of a blog. The presenter did mention that that was a possibility and they were actually looking into it at the time.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- BGI provides enterprise development best practices and tools for the implementation and design of projects
- BGI creates applicable lessons learned from specific projects
- Different interventions have different interest groups who promote those interventions

DAY 2: SESSION 3: AGCI and RATES

PRESENTER: BARRY FISHER (RATES COTTON/TEXTILE SPECIALIST)

Part I: Presentation

The Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support (RATES) program is a five-year program funded by USAID East Africa. The stated goal of RATES is to create sustainable public-private partnerships that work to increase the value of trade for selected commodity value chains. It is private-sector driven, working mainly through regional private sector-focused trade organizations to promote trade and advocate for an improved trade environment in the COMESA region.

The RATES program actually supports a wide variety of initiatives in East and Central Africa. One such program is the support for the Eastern African Fine Coffee Association (EAFCA). The regional body representing nine Eastern African coffee producing countries, it is the regional trade flow leader for the fine coffee program. RATES' long-term strategy is to have EAFCA positioned as a major actor in the marketing and promotion of Eastern African fine coffee in the region, leading to its sustainability. The three primary focus areas of RATES in this area are market promotion and expansion, product enhancement, and strengthening of institutions.

In the future, RATES will continue to support EAFCA's program for market expansion and promotion. RATES and EAFCA are currently working with the private sector, both in the region and in the primary consuming countries, to build on this theme and monitor trends relating to market needs. It will continue to support EAFCA to encourage its membership to participate in all the major international coffee exhibitions and trade shows.

RATES has also worked in areas such as dairy, maize, and other grains, in which the program has focused on policy reform and harmonization, market expansion with emphasis on regional trade, partnerships and alliances, creating the necessary building blocks leading to a more structured grain trading system, improving the trade enabling environment, and strengthening regional MIS networks.

The foundation of all these programs is built on a thorough value chain analysis, stakeholder consultations, and development of market linkages. When business leaders were asked what were the main constraints, some of the major issues that arose were:

- Lack of market data/intelligence
- Lack of information exchange
- Lack of interaction
- No common strategies
- No common and cohesive voice
- No regional vision
- Limited investment
- Policy constraints

Another major aspect of the RATES program has been the textile industry. The constraints above, while a concern for all agricultural markets, were particularly troublesome for the textile and cotton industries. Therefore, regional businesses (with assistance from RATES) acted to form the African Cotton and Textiles

Industry Federation (ACTIF) in June 2005 to create a united voice in both regional and global trade affairs. The members of ACTIF recognized that individual countries within the region could no longer act in isolation and remain fragmented in the face of current and future global challenges and a regional integration policy had to be adopted with some urgency. This group has been used as a voice for the private sector in trade negotiations and to promote a cohesive strategy vis-à-vis COMESA.

ACTIF not only works to provide a common voice in these trade issues, but also works to take advantage of its organization to better market African goods to the United States and European Union. ACTIF has also taken a role in working towards export development by assisting companies to:

- Adapt the company and products to the market requirements and standards
- Become familiar with targeted market and its business practice
- Develop an export marketing strategy and plan
- Assist in product development
- Training and trade fair participation

Finally, in addition to ACTIF, RATES works directly with COMESA in a policy advisory capacity. It is in this capacity that RATES is able to participate in COMESA decision-making structures, identify the role of industry associations in supporting the regional agenda, and promote regional trade and value addition.

Part 2: Discussion

The discussion period began with questions concerning just how RATES is working on branding. Jerry Fisher responded that there is a Design Africa program attempting to brand Africa at a general level, adapting products to meet that market need. A question regarding the role of the bilateral missions followed, with the presenter stating that while RATES supports the bilateral missions in their efforts to promote better production, RATES primarily concerns itself with trade issues.

In response to a question regarding the sustainability of RATES in general and the issue of members of ACTIF paying dues specifically, the presenter admitted that some subscription issues remain, but stressed it was only a small aspect of the program that members do so. The fact is that ACTIF is a diverse organization with so many smaller organizations. So while no one organization could necessarily take on the responsibilities currently shouldered by RATES at this point, there remains a great deal of buy-in and support for the organization. A follow-up question asked if not now, when will ACTIF be considered sustainable and able to exist without USAID. Jerry Fisher answered that ACTIF was still relatively new, only having started in 2006, and that it would take another 3-4 years before the program could be considered to stand on its own feet.

Another question from the floor questioned what RATES was doing in terms of commodity exchange. The presenter replied that there was some work going on to that end in Malawi and

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- RATES craves sustainable public private partnerships that work to increase the value of trade for selected commodity value chains
- RATES has shown that working with business associations (in this case, ACTIF) can be very useful, and leads to increased capacity and sustainability
- RATES also participates in COMESA decision-making structures, identifies role of industry associations in supporting the regional agenda, and promotes regional trade & value addition
- It is prudent to be cautious of political ramifications in engaging with business associations whose objectives and negotiation positions are at variance with USG policy.

that they were undergoing a discussion as to how commodity exchanges might be applied on a regional level as opposed to focusing on select countries.

When asked about smaller cotton enterprises and their linkages into the bigger value chain. The presenter reiterated the position that the RATES program and the trade hubs tend to focus on interacting at the regional level as they are better equipped to do so there.

The session ended on a cautionary note as it was noted that while working with trade associations such as ACTIF might yield beneficial results, USAID-funded activities must be aware of the political climate. This is particularly thorny when discussing trade issues with commodities other than those covered under the AGOA plan. Accordingly, programs must be wary when dealing with these associations and be careful about

DAY 2: SESSION 4: OVERCOMING INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS

PRESENTERS: SILAS KANAMUGIRE (ECA), GLORIA MAGOMBO (SAGCH), ANDY COOK (WATH)

funding private groups when they are at variance with USG policy.

Part I: ECA Hub

The session began with Silas Kanamugire from the ECA Hub, speaking about the work they have done to address constraints from transporting goods across borders. The primary focus of the ECA Hub's activities in this area has been the Northern Corridor, a network of roads that connects the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania to the Kenyan port of Mombasa. According to studies by the ECA Hub, it can currently take up to 30 days to go from Eastern DRC to Mombasa and possibly cost as much as \$1000 per container of goods per trip.

The ECA Hub accordingly focused its efforts on the Malaba border crossing on the Kenyan/Ugandan border. The trial border crossing has reduced the time for trucks to cross from 2–3 days to 30 min–3 hrs. To help implement the border post, the ECA Hub assisted in:

- Kenya/Uganda bilateral discussions
- Establishment of national committees and joint bilateral steering committee
- Feasibility study and technical designs
- Proof-of-concept: concept paper, architectural model, virtual-reality model, demonstration campaign
- Renovation of Malaba Railway Office

In addition to the actual technical assistance, the ECA Hub also promoted the regulatory reforms that were to feed into the customs management of the one-stop border crossing.

In addition to the one-stop border crossing, the ECA Hub, in conjunction with COMESA, has also worked to implement the COMESA Regional Transit Guarantee Scheme. This process is intended to replace the several national bonds a transporter must cover with a single regional bond, reducing the amount of paperwork and time as well as opportunities for rent-seeking behavior from customs agents. Also as part of this initiative is an improvement in the interface between the computer systems used to track customs information. As a part of this, the ECA Hub is doing an assessment to determine if using VSAT as a means of tracking transactions at the borders is a viable option.

Part 2: SAGCH

The next speaker, Gloria Magombo from SAGCH, began by outlining the current energy situation in the Southern Africa region. The region as a whole is experiencing diminished surplus energy generation, yet at the same time, the demand for power is growing. This situation is exacerbated by the poor state of the regional grid. It is estimated that over \$4.7 billion is needed to make the necessary updates to the power grid alone.

SAGCH has taken steps to address some of these issues with successes in FY 2008 including:

- Leveraging \$2.7 billion in Moatize energy infrastructure project
- Assisting SADC with SADC Power Sector Report on Madagascar
- Producing national energy brochures
- Facilitating an MOU between the USG and the Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA), a SADC subsidiary body
- Assisting RERA with legal and regulatory issues
- Training SADC, RERA and other stakeholders on energy issues

In terms of transport issues, SAGCH reported facing many of the same issues as the ECA Hub. High transit and transport costs affect the competitiveness of Southern Africa's goods and services. Additionally, the lack of customs expertise and obsolete customs procedures represent key constraints to competitive regional trade and many customs administrations in the region do not have a proper risk management unit and do not have a consistent risk management methodology.

To address these issues, SAGCH is leveraging money for transport projects in Southern Africa, training customs officials, and conducting diagnostics to identify problem areas. Projected successes in the coming year are to consist of:

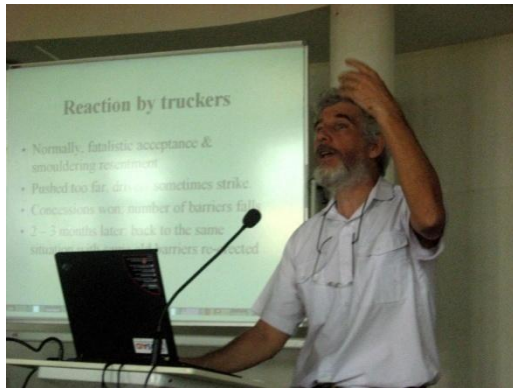
- Leveraged US\$500,00 in FY 2007 and expect to leverage US\$1 million in FY 2008 in transport infrastructure
- As a result of SA Trade Hub support, South Africa and Botswana agreed to extend opening hours on the Trans-Kalahari Corridor Border Post
- Facilitated an MOU between the USG and SADC Infrastructure Directorate
- Assisted SADC and corridor committees with legal, regulatory, and technical transport issues
- Trained over 500 SADC staff and other stakeholders on transport issues

Additionally, it is hoped that:

- As a result of SA Trade Hub support, Zambia agreed to Customs improvement implementation plan
- Assisted with drafting new Customs Act for Swaziland
- Assisted the World Customs Organization with a Time Release Study in Swaziland
- Assisted SADC and SADC Member States with legal, regulatory, and technical Customs issues
- Trained over 400 SADC staff and other stakeholders on Customs issues
- Produced four Customs diagnostics for the region

Part 3: WATH

Andy Cook, representing the West Africa Trade Hub, rounded out the discussion by describing some of the challenges and response of the Hub with regard to their own transportation barriers. The presenter began by stressing that WATH's programs in this area were still relatively new and therefore the majority of their



Andy Cook describes truckers' reaction to the current West African road governance environment of bribes, delays, and corruption

work had yet to produce tangible results (although early returns do look promising). The issues in West Africa are very similar to those in the other regions, with corruption playing a large part of the issues. The proposed solution by both ECOWAS and UEMOA is to use Improved Road Transport Governance (IRTG).

To that end, WATH is currently focusing on collecting and disseminating information to the drivers themselves to disseminate quarterly. This involves recruiting drivers that

keep their trucks in good order and have clean records; drivers that should not be paying fines or extraneous fees when traveling across borders. They then record what they

pay, where, and to whom. The Hub collects the data from these drivers anonymously and then publishes a quarterly report to emphasize the issues that drivers face.

The dissemination strategy is to promote feedback loops to key government officials via outreach and advocacy activities to galvanize sustained debate, tailored to target groups. In the case of government officials, this information is relayed through official reports both in hard copy and electronically, and also even through newspapers. The drivers are further educated through continued meetings and advocacy training as well as radio and television spots where applicable.

While there are some limitations to this study, especially concerning the manner in which the data are collected, the program has seen success in the early returns from the quarterly reports as well as in selected news outlets that have “outed” corrupt customs officials. There is also hope that the IRTG will lead to the Reduced Road Transport Costs (RRTC) program. This program, supported by UEMOA, would conduct a sequential series of studies on all costs and bottlenecks along trucking corridors, using IRTG as an input. The program would work with the private sectors to prioritize constraints and eventually allow the program to be compared to international norms.

Part 4: Discussion

The discussion was started with a question regarding WATH's program in that it seemed geared more towards collecting and disseminating information rather than focus on ways to punish those border officials that end up asking for bribes. The response given was that it was an issue out of WATH's jurisdiction. Also, as the drivers themselves are collecting the data, it would be imprudent at this stage to have them take on added risk by actively punishing the transgressors and that it would be better to rather embarrass the offenders into reform while collecting more good data to enable governments to enforce regulations when they are ready.

SAGCH was then asked to clarify what was being done in Southern Africa to augment the supply side of things, especially given the current state of affairs. Ms. Magombo admitted that at this point many of the projects are refurbishments and long-overdue updates to the current system. There are also large components that emphasize power conservation and reduce export consumption of energy resources. There are even teams going throughout neighbourhoods to change light bulbs as needed.

Ms. Magombo responded to further inquiries by saying that at this time the focus is on developing better hydropower and other solutions given the realities of South Africa right now. Also preliminary studies have shown that there are currently unacceptable losses in transmissions and that there is much room for improvement in the area. Finally, the presenter admitted that the real costs have to be reflected in the tariffs and other prices for utilities if any energy programs are going to succeed in the long run.

The West Africa Hub staff were then asked to give their impression regarding electronic tracking systems to better promote efficiency along the trade corridors. The response seemed to be that at least at the moment, it was too early to consider the utilization of such devices as much had to be done in terms of harmonization and streamlining processes.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- *Innovative techniques are necessary to determine the source/motives/effects of infrastructure constraints*
- *With trade issues, buy-in from government is preferred but often difficult – can utilize local actors if necessary*
- *Technical assistance and legal/regulatory reforms must go hand-in-hand*

DAY 3: SESSION 1: SUPPORTING PPPs IN AFRICA-INTEL CASE STUDY

PRESENTERS: DAVID IBHAWOH (INTEL-NIGERIA), ALBERT BIGA (INTEL-GHANA), GERRY GREEVE (DIRECTOR, INTEL WORLD AHEAD), DARREL OWEN (USAID)



Gerry Greeve outlines Intel's success stories with public-private partnerships in Africa

After a brief introduction by Darrel Owen, David Ibhawoh began the presentation with a brief overview of Intel's actions in West Africa and Nigeria in particular. The focus in Nigeria is on education and finding ways to give students there the tools they need to succeed. This overview was meant to give an idea that Intel was interested in investing in education in Africa, that there needn't be wholesale changes, as often all that was required was a little "push" of technology or even better access to power.

Gerry Greeve followed with the main presentation. Intel is a large multinational corporation with holdings all around the world. Yet despite its worldwide reach, Africa is too often

viewed as a "blank spot on the map." This is perhaps shortsighted in that it ignores the great potential that lies within the continent.

The World Ahead program is designed to address these needs, both in Africa as well as the rest of the developing world. It is estimated that the number of persons with access to the Internet and all the resources that lie therein is roughly 1 billion. The World Ahead program is intended to utilize existing computers at homes, offices, and schools and get them connected and integrated into the World Wide Web. There is a variety of programs within World Ahead (e.g., the Government Assistance PC Programs (GAPP)). World Ahead also works to close the digital divide in education, SMEs, community centers, and healthcare institutions. There is a focus on three major areas:

- **Accessibility:** Creating opportunities for widespread ownership and use of technology through affordability, access, and content
- **Connectivity:** Expanding wireless broadband Internet access by leading ecosystem development and WiMAX technology
- **Education:** Promoting 21st century education for participation in the global economy

Connectivity is especially important, as it is the primary tool through which populations can participate in the global marketplace of ideas. To that end, the World Ahead program boasts over 170 active programs in more than 60 countries.

The GAPP programs are especially diverse, working with students, government employees, and SMEs. Education is a particular focus, and the program boasts almost 5 million teachers worldwide having been trained in how to use computers as teaching tools. This success, combined with Negroponte's \$100 PC initiative and others, is getting more and more people, particularly younger persons familiar with technology and the resources available online.

World Ahead has also been able to work successfully with SMEs, such as in the case in Turkey, where affordability, relevance of the technology, and cultural concerns regarding youth accessing the Internet were all barriers to greater connectivity. To answer this problem, World Ahead worked with the highest levels of

the Turkish government, including the Prime Minister himself to promote the 1st Nationwide Government endorsed inclusion campaign. The general message of the campaign was “PCs are important tools for your kids’ education and career development.” This was accompanied by Intel providing technical support to Turkish companies developing affordable computers and a \$2.5M marketing campaign on TV and other avenues of the press.

Intel’s success has taken shape in the form of support to Africa where it hopes to demonstrate the value of ICT with programs in the areas of SMEs, education, government, microfinance, and health. The hope is to eventually develop a Pan-African policy on networking the continent. The presenter finished by expressing his personal desire to continue to work with USAID in identifying scalable projects in specific countries.

Darrel Owen then resumed speaking, focusing on an example of the rural wireless project World Ahead is engaging in Vietnam. The idea is to get connectivity into several areas even in villages, using common buildings, such as government buildings or guesthouses that freely allow persons to utilize the Internet. The program had the support of the Vietnamese government and using money from its own universal development fund, encouraged the project to focus on two pilot provinces with promising early returns.

The discussion that followed began with a request that perhaps sub-Saharan countries be considered for projects similar to the one in Vietnam and how they might work around more autocratic authority that is often present. Mr. Greeve responded that the process has to be worked out individually for each country and that there has to be a strong level of support from the government to get to the more rural areas and ensure more comprehensive connectivity. In cases where governments may be reluctant to engage in providing their populace with increased access to information, the use of third parties may be an option. It was further commented that African governments may be more effectively persuaded if such proposals come from other Africans themselves, especially given that most governments may be unaware of the potential benefits that may come with increased access to the Web.

Mr. Owens commented that in the case of Vietnam, there was much of this reluctance, but once Intel was able to get on the ground and demonstrate the utility of such a program and the benefits it brings, the government not only wished to allow the program to go forward but expand upon it. Therefore it may be best to focus on what these technologies can accomplish and utilize that stance as the major selling point. ICT is becoming less and less about technology and more about social and economic development.

Mr. Owens concluded that at international meetings and conferences he had attended regarding these programs, it was most often the Africans who were most vocal in asking, “why aren’t these things in Africa?” This points not only to a nascent (and ignored) demand on the part of a continent, but also that perhaps nations may be more supportive of these programs than is generally thought.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- *Partnerships with the private sector are key to leveraging investments in connectivity*
- *Connectivity is key in talking about empowering populations*
- *The internet needs to be seen more as a resource akin to energy or communication in order for Africa to be integrated into the new knowledge economy*

DAY 3: SESSION 2: THE FUTURE OF THE TRADE HUBS – A DISCUSSION ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

PRESENTER: JEFFERY COCHRANE (USAID WEST AFRICA)



Jeff Cochrane poses a series of thought-provoking questions to the participants

This session was focused along the lines of several questions the presenter posed to the participants. The presenter urged the participants to start thinking about where Africa in general will be in 5 or 10 years.

The question of what exactly is the strategy of USAID vis-à-vis the trade hubs. Were they to be seen as one-time institutions that would accomplish a set of goals and then ride off into the night? Or rather, should the trade hubs be focusing on working with local institutions so that their functions would be maintained if not the trade hubs themselves?

The discussion began with the sentiment that perhaps the programs the hubs support should not be sustained themselves, but rather it is the relationships, minds, and attitudes affected that are important. For example, the successes with trade shows could continue through those companies that were already being assisted.

It was then pointed out that each USAID mission had its own vision and that this may be a source of confusion considering the new F-framework being put in place. It was pointed out in response that the goals of AGCI (and of TRADE before it) do not necessarily fit well into the “boxes” supplied by the F-framework.

The discussion moved on and a participant commented that the trade hubs themselves need not be sustained, but if that is so, the programs themselves need to be “adopted” by other responsible parties. Jeff Cochrane pointed out that this sentiment was in direct contrast to the idea, brought up earlier, that the hubs’ programs need not be kept. It was suggested again that the hubs might be seen as a catalyst, that once some kind of critical mass was achieved, it was likely to improve the business environment as a whole.

The discussion then refocused itself on what needs to be done for the program to be sustainable. It was pointed out that regardless of what was decided, to this point there was no real plan for the future. There needs to be a much more deliberate effort to maintain the gains made through AGCI and the trade hubs. One participant made the comment that AGCI was getting slashed despite several key contracts getting bigger, and that an exit strategy had to be developed.

It was again proposed that the main effort of the hubs needs to be a fundamental change in how business is thought about and looked upon in Africa. When the successes they have accumulated reach a “tipping point,” the thought is that entrepreneurs and policy makers will realize that these kinds of interventions are needed and begin to fund them on their own. Part of this perhaps lies in working more with the regional institutions and working to open their eyes. Regardless, the key to success lies in working on a more personal level with those programs they wish to assist.

A question was then raised as to whether the hubs were trying to do too much given their current resources. Perhaps it might be better to refocus onto a few select programs and work with those countries

that seem to be the most eager. By focusing on those programs that are most likely to succeed, would we not also be getting the greatest benefit from our development dollar? One of the participants disagreed and commented that there needs to be a regional presence and that we should not be leaving countries behind when the rest of the world is becoming more and more competitive.

One of the participants remarked that we must trust the people of Africa to be able to do this work. She likened the role of the hubs to that of a coach of a sports team, teaching and promoting methodologies and new technologies, but allowing the players to go out and perform on their own. The goal then is to focus not on one country or another, but rather champions, people who will perform, regardless of where they are.

It was also noted that the RECs were beginning to recognize their importance in promoting trade and business development. But while they may be willing to change and accept new roles as promoters of enterprise, it would take time and they would still need to be “coached.”

Another participant stated that what needed to be sustained was the momentum that was currently sweeping across the continent regarding more investment and ownership in business development. Local ownership of these institutions needs to be promoted more, and individuals and organizations need to be identified who will take on the torch of leadership.

When asked, “when do the hubs know when they’re done? When do we close the hubs?” The participants responded that there is a need to identify that “tipping point” of where the hubs’ work has achieved some level of self-replication in the business community. This point may not be easy to find however and therein lies the rub of any attempt to understand where the hubs’ services are no longer crucial. The example was cited of the Dutch investments in the Ethiopian flower industry, which within three years of promotion and work enabled Ethiopian businesses to start exporting directly and competing in the world market. Regardless, the creation of a timeline was necessary for any real change to become permanent. Without one, things were likely to go on without answering the basic question of when do things end?

The discussion wrapped up with the acknowledgement of the participants that while some of the goals of the trade hubs may be attainable, the fact remains that some are softer and need to be institutionalized, trade capacity building and support for local businesses is an example. The session ended with Jeff Cochrane concluding that the lack of a coherent strategy was obvious in differing viewpoints during the discussion. He suggested that this should be the focus in the short-term, allowing for some of the larger issues touched upon to be addressed in a more ordered fashion.

SESSION CONCLUSIONS

- Lack of a coherent AGCI strategy has resulted in differing points of view
- The goals of AGCI do not necessarily fit well into the “boxes” supplied by the F-framework
- It is important to consider the long-term strategies of the trade hubs. There is no real plan for the future. A long-term exit strategy needs to be developed
- Hubs should maintain their regional presence and focus on building capacity and champions within RECs
- Since the hubs are a catalyst to regional economic development, USAID will need to determine where the “tipping point” of sustainability will be

DAY 3: SESSION 3: DIALOGUE ON THE 2008 AGOA FORUM

PRESENTER: TONY CARROLL (KSA)



Tony Carroll provides some strategic insight into the upcoming 2009 AGOA Forum

The session began with a brief description of overall U.S. policy towards Africa, focusing primarily on the issues of war, famine, and disease. Notably absent is the idea of economic development, with the majority of the focus of the administration in this area being on the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

With regard to AGOA 2008, there is still some indecision regarding the dates and what form the forum will actually take. The process is currently being driven by the State Department and is likely to be on the small side (although nothing has been set in stone).

Of primary interest to the hubs is the civil society component of the AGOA forum. This will include roughly 35 or so participants from around the continent who can address the actual effects of AGOA on the ground. Tony Carroll asked the hubs to think of persons to nominate for about ten of these civil society slots as the process to identify these participants is likely to begin soon.

In the past, this civil society component has had varying levels of interaction with the policy-making component of the AGOA forum. In some cases they have been completely integrated, but this in turn led to having too many people at the table with very different agendas and many of the civil society representatives had little to add regarding some of the more mundane details of policy and legislative issues. The hope is that AGOA 2008 will allow both parties to meet separately before coming together, so that they may maximize the utility of the time they spend working together on these projects.

The presenter emphasized that the AGOA forum is a crucial platform to promote AGCI and the successes it has accomplished. Accordingly, the hubs need to be thinking of stories and examples that “jump off the page” and demonstrate the benefits and success of the program. Some of these issues include:

- Transformational stories
- Successes involving PPPs
- Regional collaboration successes
- Stories of locals taking ownership of programs
- A specific focus on textile success stories

The discussion that followed focused on what role the hubs could most effectively play. Suggestions included perhaps adding successes regarding finance to the list of potential success stories, using AGOA as a platform to reach out to U.S. businesses that are unaware of the potential for investment in Africa, and possibly presenting successes through various forms of multimedia. The discussion then shifted to the AGOA forum in 2009. Kenya had already offered Nairobi as the potential meeting place. Despite recent unrest, the general feeling is that the forum is

Session conclusions

- 2008 AGOA Forum development process is being driven by State
- Forum will be on the smaller side
- Tony requested the hubs to nominate participants for the civil society component
- The AGOA Forum is a crucial platform to promote AGCI and the hubs need to be thinking of stories and examples that “jump off the page” and demonstrate the benefits and success of the program

Nairobi's to lose. It was suggested that perhaps Nairobi could also simultaneously host a major trade show as part of the AGOA forum. While it is unlikely that the State Department's process would allow for that to happen, a trade show could be organized to run concurrently (or just before or after) with the AGOA forum. However, doing so would require the Kenyan government to pressure the State Department for set dates.

APPENDIX I: Meeting Agenda

DAY 1: March 3, 2008	
9:00-9:30	Welcoming remarks, Introduction, agenda overview and review of knowledge sharing needs, and Forum Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Fischer, KSA-AGCI • Henderson Patrick, USAID West African Regional Mission Director • Tom Herlehy, West Africa Trade Hub • Sutherland Miller, KSA-AGCI
9:30-10:30	AGCI strategic priorities for 2008 and beyond. Aid effectiveness and leveraging/supporting complementary activities (IEHA, AGOA). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Malick, USAID Africa Bureau
10:30-11:00	Tea break
11:00-12:30	Best practices in supporting regional trade bodies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ron Black, East and Central Africa Trade Hub • Andy Cook, West Africa Trade Hub • Nathan van Dusen, West Africa Trade Hub • Paulina Elago, Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub
12:30-2:00	Lunch at Noble House Chinese Restaurant
2:00-3:30	Managing regional-bilateral project relationships and coordination in economic growth activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candace Buzzard, USAID East Africa Regional Mission
3:30-4:00	Tea break
4:00-5:30	Knowledge Sharing Group Exercise: "Telling the AGCI Story: Developing the 2008 AGCI Annual Report" Facilitator: Sutherland Miller
DAY 2: March 4, 2008	
9:00-10:45	Strengthening the knowledge and skills of SSA private sector enterprises to take advantage of market opportunities; Examples of successful AGOA trade capacity building and supporting AGOA Resource Centers, challenges and lessons learned. Speaker: KSA facilitates presentation by each of the three Hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finn Holm-Olsen, East and Central Africa Trade Hub • Addis Alemayehou, VEGA Ethiopia • Amanda Hilligas, Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub • Vanessa Adams, West Africa Trade Hub • Abou Fall, West Africa Trade Hub • Christine Nicolino, West Africa Trade Hub
10:45-11:15	Tea break
11:15-12:00	USAID Business Growth Initiative -- A Center of Excellence in Enterprise Development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marialyce Mutchler, USAID Business Growth Initiative
12:00-1:30	Lunch in-house Barry Fisher, USAID Regional Agriculture Trade Expansion Support (RATES) project
1:30-3:15	Overcoming infrastructure constraints: transportation and customs. Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Cook, West Africa Trade Hub • Silas Kanamugire, East and Central Africa Trade Hub • Gloria Magombo, Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub
3:15-3:45	Tea break
3:45-4:30	Best practices in enterprise development by KSA research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Fischer, KSA-AGCI
4:30-5:30	Knowledge Sharing Group Exercise: "Quantifying AGCI's Successes: Performance Monitoring for AGCI". Facilitator: David Fischer
6:30-8:00	Reception and informal networking at Novotel (poolside). Welcome by top USAID personnel

DAY 3: March 5, 2008	
9:00-10:00	Supporting public-private partnerships in Africa: Intel Case Study. Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerry Greeve, Intel Vice President and Director of World Ahead Program • Darryl Owen, USAID Office of Development Partners • Robert Otto, CARANA Corporation
10:00-11:00	The future of trade hubs and sustainability of programs and activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeffrey Cochrane, USAID West African Regional Mission
11:00-11:30	Tea Break
11:30-12:30	Dialogue on the 2008 AGOA Forum/Summit, agenda, civil society component, planning for 2009 Forum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tony Carroll, Manchester Trade
12:30-1:00	Review, conclusion and next steps. Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Fischer, KSA-AGCI • Tom Herlehy, West Africa Trade Hub • Sutherland Miller, KSA-AGCI
1:00-5:00	Lunch, self-directed informal networking / USAID CTO-only meeting facilitated by KSA / Other participant meetings arranged by KSA

APPENDIX 2: List of Attendees

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