



Africa Centre

2005

A Year in Brief

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1. Chairperson's Statement

There is no doubt that 2005 has been a very busy year for Africa Centre, given the number of important milestones met and recorded during the period.

The key achievement during the year was the successful completion of our first ever strategic plan and its subsequent high profile launch in July 2005.

As you may all know, the plan has identified four key priority work areas for the Centre for the period between 2005 and 2008. These four work areas are:

- To advocate for the active participation and representation of African immigrant community in society;
- To engage in the promotion of antiracism and intercultural society;
- To contribute an African voice to development education;
- To build organisational capacity.

Another key achievement that I want to single out is the sustained and focused effort during the year to promote networking and collaboration, first among the African community organisations, and second with the other key stakeholders working with immigrants. The merger between Africa Centre and African refugee network in particular was a key point marking our determination to create synergy aimed at using our limited resources as a means to increasing our capacity and effectiveness.

You will find these themes reflected in the pages of this Report. Taken together, they show an organisation which is repositioning itself to meet the demands and challenges of a new reality in Ireland – an organisation that believes in a more genuine participation and a strong immigrant and ethnic minority community voice as a necessity for real integration process.

Ms. Neltah Chadamoyo,
Chairperson



2. Co-ordinator's Statement

I am very please to introduce this Report on the work of the Africa Centre during the year 2005.

Following my appointment as Coordinator in November 2004, the key priority asked from me by the board was to support the process of Africa Centre's strategic plan development and to put in place organisational capacity - in terms of policies and procedures – necessary for the organisation to be able to carry out its functions on a sound basis.

Given this clear direction, I am glad to report here that the strategic plan was successfully completed and was launched in July 2005. Africa Centre was also able to take necessary steps during the year to put measures in place aimed at improving its capacity. This included the development of a number of key policies including development of volunteering policy and relocation to a new office.

Networking and collaboration with African immigrant groups was also given high priority. The merger with the African Refugee Network was one key outcome of this collaboration. Apart from these projects, the organisation also carried out a number of activities for which funding was already obtained. This includes the organisation of our 3rd Annual Public Lecture, which took place in June 2005.

I am convinced that the progress of the last twelve months, including strategic plan; increased capacity & profile as well as learning from our past experiences – has provided us with a solid foundation on which to build and meet the challenges of the future.

I just, finally, want to register a word of thanks to our members, board and staff, majority of who are volunteers, for their commitment and hard work. It would have been not possible for Africa Centre to be where it is now without their whole-hearted believe in the organisation. Thanks also goes to our funders - the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, the Irish Aid and many who made donations to the Centre, for their generous financial support.

Dier Tong,
Coordinator

3. Review of Activities

Highlights of the year at a glance:

- ☞ *Completion and launch of our first ever strategic plan*
- ☞ *Merger with the African Refugee Network*
- ☞ *Organisation of 3rd Annual Public Lecture*
- ☞ *Commissioning of a survey on 'civic participation of African immigrants*
- ☞ *Organisation development – policies/procedures and relocation to new office.*
- ☞ *Increased profile and networking activities with key stakeholders*

Over all, the key highlight of the year was the completion and launch of our first ever strategic plan in July 2005. Since then Africa Centre has focused on its mission and made practical efforts to contribute to the attainment of the objectives identified in the plan. These objectives are:

- To promote the participation of African immigrant community in society
- To influence Intercultural and Antiracism agenda
- To contribute an African voice to development education
- To develop organisational capacity

Practical actions taken during the year to achieve these targets are summarised below:

Collaboration/Networking

During the year, Africa Centre initiated contacts with various African community groups in order to facilitate collaboration and information sharing. In particular efforts were made to consult with community groups during the consultation process, leading to the development of our strategic plan. A number of key activists and African community leaders were also consulted. This was necessary to see how members of African immigrant community could work together. Key themes that emerged from this exercise provided the basis for the priorities identified in the strategic plan.

Merger with African Refugee Network: One of the key outcomes of our close collaboration with African community groups was the merger between Africa Centre and African Refugee Network (ARN). Even during the short period, since the merger in September 2005, the gains are obvious. Our capacity has been greatly enhanced by sharing the limited resources available to us. Also the merger has allowed us to use our combined experiences to create an effective organisation, which we believe will result into a stronger community voice.



Networking with stakeholders: During the year, Africa Centre received numerous requests to partner and network with various bodies working with immigrant community. Some of the key networking and collaborative activities during the year included the following:

- Africa Centre, in January 2005, was invited to chair the conference, which marked the launching of the NGOs Alliance Shadow Report to the Irish Government's First Report under the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
- The Coordinator of the Africa Centre was invited as member of the judges' panel for the World Refugee Day Awards, which took place in June 2005.
- Following the merger with African Refugee Network (ARN), the organisation of the Annual World Refugee Day Awards (WRDAs), which was originally an initiative of the ARN, became part of Africa Centre's responsibility. The WRDAs in 2005 was coordinated by Integrating Ireland, as ARN was lacking necessary resources at a time. Immediately after the merger Africa Centre consulted with partners that have been working with ARN in the organisation

of the WRDAs in previous years, mainly to continue to work together with them in the organisation of WRDAs 2006. These partners included: Integrating Ireland, National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Spiritan Asylum Initiative (SPIRASI) and Sport Against Racism (SARI). A series of meetings with these bodies were held in 2005, in preparation for the 2006 WRDAs.

- Africa Centre participated in a speaker panel at a workshop organised by Public Libraries in Ireland in promotion of a 'multi-cultural libraries' services, which took place in Blancherstown library.
- Africa Centre participated as part of delegation of minority groups, which travelled to the European Parliament in Brussels in March 2005. This was a good opportunity to introduce the Centre to some of the Brussels based networks, namely the European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the European Network against Racism and the European Women Lobby.

Civic participation research:

As a follow-up to two previous reports by Africa Centre, on the participation of immigrants in the political process, Africa Centre commissioned a survey targeting members of African community, to assess their level of civic involvement in society. The key aim of the Report is to identify the barriers that hinder active participation of members of the community in society, which will enable necessary interventions that will promote their participation in society.

A tender for the research was advertised and Mr. Theophilus Ejorh was recruited to carry out the survey. A research working group was set up to oversee the implementation. The group was composed of Alice Feldman, Bryan Fanning, Neltah Chadamoyo and Dier Tong.

The first draft of the survey Report has been completed and it is expected that the report will be launched within the coming months.

Development education

Building Networks: During 2005, Africa Centre initiated contact with key development education bodies in Ireland. Two key objectives here were to build networks with the sector and also to push for the recognition and the need to involve members of the immigrant community in development education. In this respect, Africa Centre met with Dachas (the Irish Association of Non-Governmental Organisations), Dachas Development Education Group and Comhlámh.

Also, contacts were initiated with leading African Diaspora organisations in Britain, including the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) and the Africa Centre in London.

It is envisaged that these contacts will be developed further in the future as a way of joining hands together, first for the Africa Centre to learn from and second, to build solidarity and synergy for a more effective advocacy and campaign work.

Promoting African Voice: One of key roles that Africa Centre has set to itself is to promote an African voice and to create a space for African immigrants in Ireland to articulate their perspectives in various development issues.

To this end, Africa Centre draw up a programme in 2005 to organise a series of think-ins sessions in which it can bring together members of African immigrant community as well as representatives of mainstream development education organisation to explore the perspective and the role that African immigrants and indeed immigrants from southern countries in general, can play in development education process in Ireland. As part of this process, a workshop was planned for February 2006 under the theme “Diversity and Development Education in Ireland: Exploring the Perspective and Role of African Immigrant Community in Development Education.

This will be followed up with a series of debates and focus group meeting, leading to a production of a document that will become the policy position of the Africa Centre in development education in Ireland.

Annual Public Lecture: Africa Centre held its third consecutive Annual Public Lecture in June 2005. The event which was held at the Royal Dublin Hotel was organised under the theme “*Human Rights in Africa: Experience and Prospects in the 21st Century*”.

Guests Speaker were Professor Abdullahi An-Na’im of the Emory Law School in Atlanta and Ms. Joan Burton, TD and former State Minister in the Department of Foreign Affairs.



Like the previous two lectures, the event was a great success, both in terms of attendance and the quality of Speakers and discussion that followed.

Advocacy and Campaigns: Africa Centre took part in the Make Poverty History demonstration and rally, which took place in Dublin in June 2005. The demonstration on the streets of Dublin was attended by an estimated 20,000 people calling for three key demands: To obtain trade justice for developing countries; to end the debt situation; and to increase the amount and improve the quality of development aid. The rally was the largest gathering of people in Ireland ever in support of the world's development issue.

However the number of African people who attended the demonstration and rally were relatively very low. This situation made Africa Centre to commission a survey to ascertain some of the reasons why few Africans in Ireland participated in the event. Report of the survey was subsequently produced and is available on our website.

Organisation Development and capacity building

Strategic Plan: The first ever strategic plan of the Africa Centre was completed and launch in July 2005. The plan identified four priority areas for the next three years:



- Promotion of the participation and representation of African immigrant community in society
- Influencing of Intercultural and Antiracism agenda
- Contributing an African voice to development education
- Organisational development and capacity building

The publication and launch of the plan provided Africa Centre with a focus and enhanced its public image and profile, as a leading immigrant-led organisation. The launch attracted key personalities, who participated and spoke at the launch of the document. Among those who participated in the launch were:



Dr. Maurice Manning, President of the Irish Human Rights Commission

Mr. Gerry Mangan, Director, Office for Social Inclusion

Mr. John Lawton, Counsellor, Development Cooperation Ireland (now Irish Aid)

To facilitate the implementation of the plan, a detailed Action Plan has been developed and will be continuously reviewed and updated.

Office Space: Africa Centre secured a new office space since May 2005, which is strategically located in the city centre (Lower Abbey Street). This location has made the organisation more accessible to our target group. It has also more space compared to the previous premises.

Staffing/Volunteer: One of the synergies resulting from the merger with the African Refugee Network is the fact that the merger has meant that Africa Centre have two full-time staff. This new situation meant that the office is now attended full-time, with the two staff coordinating among themselves i.e. holidays etc. to ensure that office is attended throughout. Beside the two paid staff, Africa Centre's work is also supported by a number of volunteers.

Funding: The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has remained our main funder during the year, mainly contributing the core funding for the organisation. Also, Irish Aid (Development Cooperation Ireland – as it was known in 2005) has been also key supporter, particularly to our development education activities. The DCI in 2005 increased their funding to Africa Centre by almost 65% (from €14,000 in 2004 to €23,000 in 2005). Further details on funding and expenditure in 2005 are provided in the Financial Statements section of this report.

4. Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure Account For the year ended 31st December 2005

	2005	2004
	€	€
Income – continuing operations	67,718	52,500
Expenditure – continuing operations	<u>(65,006)</u>	<u>(29,800)</u>
Surplus (deficit) for year	2,712	22,700
Accumulated surplus (deficit) brought forward	<u>22,075</u>	<u>(625)</u>
Accumulated surplus (deficit) carried forward	<u>24,787</u>	<u>22,075</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2005

	2005	2004
	€	€
Fixed Assets:		
Tangible Assets	1,325	1,481
Current Assets:		
Debtors	763	-
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>45,437</u>	<u>34,336</u>
	46,200	34,336
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(22,738)</u>	<u>(13,742)</u>
Net Current Asset	<u>23,462</u>	<u>20,594</u>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	24,787	22,075
Net assets	<u>24,787</u>	<u>22,075</u>
Capital and reserves		
Income and expenditure account	<u>24,787</u>	<u>22,075</u>
Equity Shareholders' Funds	<u>24,787</u>	<u>22,075</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Director

Director

NB: These accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of the Africa Centre. A copy will be filed with the Registrar of Companies following the Annual General Meeting.

5. Funders, Board members and Staff

Funders

- The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Irish Aid
- Private Donations

Auditors

Gargan and Associates

1 Church View

Lower Main Street

Lucan

Co. Dublin

Board of Directors

- Neltah Chadamoyo, *Chairperson*
- Philip McKinley, *Honorary Secretary*
- Wilberforce Owusu-Ansah, *Treasurer*
- Theophilus Ejorh
- Nyiel Kuol
- Benedicta Attoh
- Noreen Carolan

Staff

- Dier Tong, *Co-ordinator*
- Mubarak Habib, *Project Officer*
- Ezekiel Oshaye, Volunteer
- Emma Sebe, Volunteer
- Anne Gathenji, Volunteer



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Charity Number: CHY 14980

About the Africa Centre

The Africa Centre is a voluntary membership NGO that acts as a focal point for the growing community of African immigrants in Ireland, to promote their inclusion and active participation in wider society.

The Centre gives practical and moral support to this aim through advocacy, training & awareness raising activities, debates, seminars & workshops and networking. The Centre is also engaged in development education and the promotion of a more positive and balanced imaging and representation of Africa and African people.

Africa Centre was founded in the year 2000 and was officially launched by the then South African Ambassador to Ireland, Ms. Melanie Verweord and Mr. Niall Crowley, CEO of the Equality Authority in October 2001.

The organisation is a company, limited by guarantee and is also a registered charity, with the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, under registration number CHY 14980.

Aims of the Africa Centre

- ✚ To reach out to African community in Ireland and to promote their integration in society
- ✚ To engage in community development and poverty alleviation activities that improves living standards of African immigrants in Ireland.
- ✚ To advance public education and knowledge on intercultural and anti-racism issues.
- ✚ To promote links between Ireland and Africa and advance co-operation, dialogue and partnership on global development issues
- ✚ To build capacity and resources, where people may engage in social and cultural activities, training and where they may engage in research on issues that affect their life
- ✚ To network and collaborate with persons and bodies working among immigrants or active in global justice issues both at the local and international levels.



Irish Aid
Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

Joseph Rowntree
THE JOSEPH ROWNTREE CHARITABLE TRUST