

Africa Centre

Annual Report

2007

CHAIRPERSON'S INTRODUCTION

I have great pleasure in introducing to you the annual report of the Africa Centre for the year 2007 and hope that you find it useful and informative. The year was no doubt very challenging as the centre focused its attention on implementing the rest of the strategic plan (2005 -2008) by consolidating its outreach and networking activities with members of the African community and the wider Irish society.

Throughout the year, we organised various events aimed at fundraising and highlight the contributions of the African Community to Irish life for example the continued distribution of the 'Africa Also Smiles' posters, Africa Day event, the 2nd successful World Refugee Day Awards by the Centre and other stakeholders. We had the voter education project, the African Community Forum, the annual lecture which was superbly delivered via webcam by Professor Ali Mazuri who was unable to travel from the United States on the advice of his doctors. The final event for the year was our annual fund raising dinner.

The Africa Centre welcomed the establishment of the Department of Integration by the Irish Government during the year and looks forward to the continued engagement of Africans in the socio – economic and political discourse in Ireland.

The year 2007 saw the expansion of our Development Education unit with the appointment of Mbemba Jabbi as Development Education Officer. I am delighted to welcome several volunteers who have become a part of the Africa Centre family; Carolin Gall, John Mayo, Siomha Cunniffe, Soraya Picado and Sebit Iwa.

Soraya Picado left us during the year. I wish her every success in her future endeavors and look forward to welcoming her successor.

These accomplishments, as always, were made possible by men and women who support the Centre in various capacities: consultants, facilitators, mentors and donors. They are the winds beneath the wings of our mission.

On behalf of the board I want to thank all the staff (Eric, Mbemba, Mubarak, Nchedo, Iwa, and Peace for their tireless and hard work during the year. I thank Africa Centre's board for giving me their unparalleled support from the moment I took up the mantle of leadership at the Centre.

I have no doubt that standing shoulder to shoulder we will accomplish Africa Centre's mission.

Finally, I would like to thank members of the Africa Centre, Funders, contributors and supporters for ensuring that the organisation grows from year to year.

Benedicta Attoh
Chairperson

Work Areas

1 WORK AREA (I) PARTICIPATION

1.1 African Community Forum

The African Community forum was held under the theme: *Engaging Integration; working together to strengthen our voice* on the 24th October 2007 at the Wynn's Hotel in Dublin. The Minister for Integration Conor Lenihan, TD was the guest of honour at the forum. The Forum was attended by 77 representatives of various sections of African community in Ireland, including students, refugees and asylum seekers and migrant workers. There was also considerable presence of officials from African diplomatic missions in Ireland, including the South African Ambassador, Her Excellency Priscilla Jana and representatives of the embassies of Ethiopia, Lesotho, Kenya and Nigeria.

The objectives of the African Community Forum this year was to provide a platform on which we can share perspectives on integration, to bring together key stakeholders to consider strategies and enable effective engagement of Africans' participation with integration. Also to challenge Africans in Ireland to work together and strengthen their voice providing opportunity for dialogue with NGOs working with migrants and investigate the role the wider Irish community can take in active participation in the integration discourse.

Two Africa Centre members Son Gyoh and Tendai Madondo presented papers at the forum. Son Gyoh's paper "Integration – what does this really mean" questioned our understanding of integration and gave examples of ways integration can happen effectively and what should be the role for the government and ethnic minorities communities. Importantly he mentioned that the pace and extent of new community integration into Irish society would inadvertently depend on the existence of an enabling environment framed on political support and institutional reforms.

Tendai Madondo's paper "Realising integration: participation is the key" highlighted that, for integration to happen ethnic minorities have to participate in all aspect of the process. She identified key areas that need to be addressed by the government and all stakeholders for effective integration to happen. She outlines key strategies that need to be in place to tackle issues that are affecting ethnic minorities in Ireland. These are issues of language, racism and discrimination, gender challenges, fear and isolation and the lack of knowledge and understanding of operational systems in

Ireland need to be addressed by the government and ethnic minority groups themselves to pave way for a meaningful integration.

The forum highlighted, among other things, the following key issues:

- ❖ It was recommended that for effective integration to happen, the government should be willing to give funding to minority groups to carryout skills and language training for the migrants.
- ❖ The forum recommended that, there should be African representative in the Ministers speculated task force. Africans in Ireland have the experience and the knowledge as migrants to represent themselves and we do not need experts to represent us from their studies or book knowledge about us.
- ❖ It was pointed out that African organisations and groups should come together to form a strong community to have the needs of people at heart and work with sincerity and concern. This can only happen by coming together forming a strong African community and their members will be willing to give them full support
- ❖ It will be equally important for groups to have network among themselves that would develop a clear vision and process for deciding on representing the African community. The Africa Centre should be holding series of meetings in due course, calling on African groups and individuals to come together and discuss the way forward for Africans in Ireland and a possible one voice with a spoke person within a working group.
- ❖ It has been requested of Africa Centre to organize, as soon as possible, a meeting of the leaders of the various African community/Associations in Ireland with the aim of establishing the framework which would lead to the formation of a united front, including a project within the Africa Centre for the community Forum.
- ❖ The meeting should be willing to influence and encourage various African groups in Ireland, especially businesspeople, women groups and youths, and African professionals to mobilize their human and other resources towards the development of Africans in Ireland. This move will allow a united front to champion Africa's cause to the Government of Ireland and other interested organizations in Ireland.

- ❖ Africa Centre and the African foreign missions in Ireland should proceed shortly to organize a formal meeting or a series of meetings if necessary to facilitate the creation of an effective African forum in Ireland. Preparations are now being made to set up a preliminary planning meeting on January 6, 2008, to determine how this can be arranged.

1.2 Local Government Election

The Africa Centre carried out a poster campaign for the 2007 Dail election. It produced 1000 copies of voter campaign leaflets targeting immigrants to register and participate in the election process. These leaflets were distributed to immigrants and the general public encouraging them to participate in the election.

1.3 Collaboration among Minority Ethnic Organisations

During 2007, Africa Centre facilitated a series of meetings with African and other minority ethnic representatives. The aim of these meetings was to encourage collaboration and networking among the groups. These meetings are on-going and the final product we are aiming for is the formation of a network of African and minority community organisations in Ireland, which we strongly believe will bring about a more stronger and united voice for the community.

1.4 African Studies Institute

Africa Centre has been involved for the last two years with an initiative aimed at establishing an Africa Studies Institute in Ireland. The initiative will bring together a number of government departments and the Dublin City University, which has been approached to host the proposed institute. It is envisaged that the Institute will engage in research, teaching and policy development around the African communities in Ireland and Ireland's links with Africa. The Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform and the Integration Department are willing to fund this project. Africa Centre is committed to supporting the project and will work in partnership with the Institute when it is finally starts operations.

1.5 Advice and referrals

Africa Centre provides advice and referral services to both individual as well as group clients. During 2007, we continued to receive various types of queries by phone, email and in person, with people dropping into our office to seek information and advice. Queries received mainly come from African community regarding advice and information about status, employment, social welfare

entitlement and housing. We also receive queries coming from members of the host community, mainly students, researchers, media people and others who have interest in Africa.

A number of community groups in the process of formation have also approached us during the year for advice regarding the process of company registration and drafting of constitution or Article and Memorandum of Association.

1.6 Collaboration and Networking

Africa Centre has built strong networks during the year. We work collaboratively with a number of key partners, including:

- ❖ IDEA: The Africa Centre joined IDEA and was nominated on the National Council.
- ❖ Africa Centre is on the board of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI).
- ❖ Africa Centre is also a member of a new joint venture initiative which includes Comhlámh, and Debt & Development Coalition.
- ❖ We work with Dublin City Council, NCCRI, UNHCR, SPIRASI, Integrating Ireland and Sport against Racism who are members of the World Refugee Day committee.

2 WORK AREA (II)

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

2.1 World Refugee Day 2007

Africa Centre organise the 5th World Refugee Day Awards at the Dublin City Council Civic offices on 20th June 2007. World Refugee Day falls on June 20th each year and was designated by a special UN General Assembly Resolution in 2000. On this day, countries around the world organise activities to call the attention to the situation of refugees and to highlight initiatives to support them.

The awards provide opportunity to highlight the positive contribution that asylum seekers, refugees and members of the local communities have made in the Irish integration process. World Refugee Day Awards also provide opportunity for positive interaction between immigrant and members of the host community.

The 2007 Awards were organised by the Africa Centre in association with the Dublin City Council, Integrating Ireland, the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), SPIRASI, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Sports against Racism in Ireland (SARI).

There were five categories under which Awards were presented:

- ❖ Community & Environment
- ❖ Health & Welfare
- ❖ Education & Youth
- ❖ Arts & Culture
- ❖ Sport & Leisure

Over all, there were 65 nominees for the Awards and one Award under each of the five categories was given to either a member of refugee and asylum seeker's community or to a member of local community.

The Award ceremony was held at the Civic Offices at Dublin City Council. Ms Mary Davis, Chairperson of the government's Taskforce on Active Citizenship and Chief Executive Officer of the Special Olympic Ireland was the guest of honor after Professor Ali Mazrui could not attend due to illness at the last minute. Other special invited guests who presented awards were Anastasia Crickley (chairperson NCCRI), Alice O'Flynn (HSE), Jimmy McGee RTE (sports correspondent), and Robin Hannan (CEO, IRC).

The event was attended by over 250 people and involved social activities and dance performances by the Children's voices of Ireland, Eamon Walsh and the Punjabi Women Dancers. Catering was provided by the Blue Orchids Restaurant. The awards were created by Killian Schumann Glass Studio.

3 WORK AREA (III)

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION (EDUCATION & AWARENESS)

3.1 Africa also Smiles poster:

Africa Centre produced 1000 copies of the '*Africa also Smiles*' posters for its development education project. The posters aimed to confront the often negative image of Africa and African people, often portrayed in the media and relief organisations. The poster was also responding to

concerns of Africa Centre members and the African community regarding the way negative images impact the day-to-day lives of Africans and the continent of Africa. This concern has been a major topic of debate during the last four years and also set the scene for the first consultation process in December his year to inform the development of our strategic for 2008-2011. The Poster therefore was a way to kick-start awareness and advocacy campaign for a more balanced representation of Africa and African people. Thousand copies of the poster were distributed to schools and community groups and there has been considerable positive feedback on it.

3.2 Annual lecture 2006

The 5th Annual lecture was organised at the Morrison Hotel on the 19th June 2007. The theme for this year's lecture was '*Cultural Forces in World Politics Today: Implications for Africa*'. The guest lecturer was Professor Ali Mazrui is the Director of Institute of Global Cultural Studies Binghamton University, New York. He is considered as one of the world's most prolific and controversial writers on Africa. The author of more than 30 books and hundreds of essays, Mazrui's powerful writing style has made it impossible for even his harshest critics to ignore the unique perspective he brings to a huge variety of African issues.

3.3 Africa Day

Africa Day was driven by a common aspiration towards de-colonization and unity, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), an inter-African organisation of independent states was founded in May 1963. Africa Day marks the establishment of the OAU (now African Union). The 2007 Africa Day celebrations was organised by the Africa Centre at the Morrison Hotel on the 25th May. The event took in a fashionable style featuring African drumming, by Tura Arutura, from Belfast, the Dea Beasd Rappers, from Waterford and African Traditional Dance, from Uganda. During the celebration a question and answer session was also organised testing the knowledge of the participants of Africa and prizes were awarded to those answered the questions correctly. Music at the event was provided by DJ Spaqz.

3.4 3.4 Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)

The Africa Centre became a member of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA). IDEA is form by groups and organisation working in development education to encourage and co-ordinate good communications and cooperation at all levels of the development education membership in the Island of Ireland. The organisation promote a critical awareness of development education and encourage capacity building among the membership by; identifying, developing and

promoting best practice in development education and promoting and encouraging an ethos of accountability and transparency. Africa Centre is represented on the National Council of IDEA by the Development Education Officer.

Joint Venture & E-Campaigner Group

To strengthen its contribution and capacity in development education, Africa Centre teamed up with Comhlámh and Debt & Development Coalition Ireland form a Joint Venture group, through which these group can work more collaboratively. After a series of meetings, the Joint Venture has agreed three initiatives that form the key pillars of their collaboration, namely: to make inputs into the Comhlámh 'Focus' magazine; to develop a joint campaigning website; and potentially to hold some joint events. Each of these areas was discussed, regarding how this collaboration might work in practice.

- ❖ Focus Magazine: key area of collaboration will be the production of 'Action Page' at the front part of Focus Magazine. The page will be developed by the four organisations in collaboration with the editorial group of the Focus Magazine. The page will propose campaigning actions, which will be agreed by the four organisations. The bottom of the Action page will show the logos of the four organisations as promoters of the 'Action'.
- ❖ Website: A website will be developed to enable members of the Joint Venture group to take action online; to electronically 'vote' on an issue; to send out an e-bulletin to a shared database of contacts. The website will be low in content and will direct users to each of the individual sites of the four organisations.
- ❖ The final pillar of the group is to organise joint events from time to time.

4 WORK AREA (IV)

ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Funding

The year 2007 was a good year for Africa Centre, in terms of improvement in income. The source of funding during the year included grants and fundraising activities. Total income during 2007 was €188,607 compared to €155,778 in 2006. Key funders during the year were the Joseph Rowntree

Charitable Trust, National Action Plan against Racism and Irish Aid. Beside, we have also received small grants, for specific projects, from a number of other donors. Detailed information of funding received during the year can be found in the book of audited accounts.

4.2 Fund Raising Dinner

Africa Centre also organised a very successful fundraising dinner on the 23rd November 2007. Over 150 people attended the dinner, which raised over €19,000.

4.3 Office Space

Africa Centre secured an office at the Dublin Central Mission two years ago, located at a central location in the heart of Dublin city. The office attracted large number of people of all works of life dropping in to seek advice and information. On Thursday 29 March 2007 a technician, specialized on computers, put this objective into practice by establishing a wireless network connection thereby connecting all four of Africa Centre's computers with the two existing printers. These can now be accessed by any of them. Although the office is at the central location which is ideal for contact with the African community, it is very small for the number of staff working in it.

Appendix (1) Financial Statement

APPENDIX (2): FUNDERS AND AUDITORS

Key Funders for 2006

- ❖ The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- ❖ European Refugee Fund
- ❖ Irish Aid
- ❖ Ireland Embracing Cultural Diversity
- ❖ National Action Plan Against Racism
- ❖ Combat Poverty Agency
- ❖ Dublin Bus
- ❖ National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

Auditors

Gargan and Associates

1 Church View
Lower Main Street
Lucan
Co. Dublin

APPENDIX (3): BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

Board of Directors

- ❖ Philip McKinley, *Chairperson*
- ❖ Mohlakoana Mote, *Treasurer*
- ❖ Egide Dhala, *Member*
- ❖ Neltah Chadamoyo, *Member*
- ❖ Patricia Wall, *Member*
- ❖ Nyiel Kuol, *Member*
- ❖ Benedicta Attoh, *Member*
- ❖ Marie Corcoran Tindill, *Member*
- ❖ Philip Amponsah, *Member*

Staff

- ❖ Dier Tong, *Coordinator and Company Secretary*
- ❖ Mubarak Habib, *Project Officer*
- ❖ Mbemba Jabbi *Project Officer*
- ❖ Carolin Gall
- ❖ John Moyo
- ❖ Sebit Iwa
- ❖ Tiffy Allen
- ❖ Soraya Picado
- ❖ Siomha Cunniffe

APPENDIX (3): ABOUT THE AFRICA CENTRE

Africa Centre is a membership voluntary organisation that acts as focal point for the growing community of African immigrants in Ireland and to promote their inclusion and participation in Ireland in all aspects of Irish life.

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 Verweerd 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.

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2007

		Continuing operations	
		2007	2006
		€	€
	Notes		
Income	3	188,607	155,778
Expenditure		(190,267)	(134,757)
Deficit/(surplus) on ordinary activities before taxation		<u>(1,660)</u>	<u>21,021</u>
Tax on (deficit)/surplus on ordinary activities		-	-
Deficit/(surplus) on ordinary activities after taxation		<u>(1,660)</u>	<u>21,021</u>
Surplus (Retained surplus) for the year		(1,660)	21,021
Balance brought forward		45,808	24,787
Balance carried forward		<u>44,148</u>	<u>45,808</u>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than the surplus or deficit for the above two financial years.

On behalf of the board

Director

Director

Balance sheet as at 31st December 2007

	Notes	2007		2006	
		€	€	€	€
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		5,674		3,418
Current assets					
Debtors	9	1,359		1,308	
Cash at bank and in hand		100,649		81,763	
		<u>102,008</u>		<u>83,071</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>(63,534)</u>		<u>(40,681)</u>	
Net current assets			38,474		42,390
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>44,148</u>		<u>45,808</u>
Net assets			<u>44,148</u>		<u>45,808</u>
Capital and reserves					
Income and expenditure account			44,148		45,808
Members' funds	11		<u>44,148</u>		<u>45,808</u>

On behalf of the board

Director

Director

4. Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (including the directors) during the year were:

	2007 Number	2006 Number
Directors	9	7
Administration	3	2
	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>

Employment costs

	2007 €	2006 €
Wages and salaries	83,136	53,652
Other pension costs	-	2,422
	<u>83,136</u>	<u>56,074</u>

	2007 €	2006 €
Remuneration and other benefits	242	-
Compensation for loss of office	2,473	-
	<u>2,715</u>	<u>-</u>

Detailed Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31st December 2007

	2007		2006	
	€	€	€	€
Income				
Donations		257		200
Membership donations		660		85
European refugee fund		54,481		47,022
Irish Aid		33,000		24,400
Rowntree charitable trust		45,000		35,012
Combat Poverty		-		4,000
National Action Plan against Racism		10,000		22,215
Community Foundation Ireland		-		1,000
Concern		-		4,500
Dublin city council		-		1,500
Reception & Integration Agency		23,000		2,000
St Stephens Green Trust		-		5,000
NCCRI		2,500		2,009
Dublin Bus		-		1,000
Fund Raising Dinner		19,267		5,580
Interest Received		442		255
		<u>188,607</u>		<u>155,778</u>
Direct activities				
Africa day	2,592		-	
Networking	484		2,446	
Participants Expenses	3,706		3,575	
Annual lecture	4,601		3,658	
Civic participation project	1,173		8,909	
Organisational development	816		3,252	
African Community Forum	6,492		12,742	
World Refugee Day	16,183		13,398	
Annual Report	2,900		2,500	
Employability	16,018		-	
Project Africa Smiles	1,500		1,924	
Fund Raising Dinner	13,501		5,239	
		<u>(69,966)</u>		<u>(57,643)</u>
Gross surplus	63%	<u>118,641</u>	63%	<u>98,135</u>

Administrative expenses	<u>120,301</u>		<u>77,114</u>	
		(120,301)		(77,114)
Operating surplus	9%	<u>(1,660)</u>	5%	<u>21,021</u>
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

**Administrative expenses
for the year ended 31st December 2007**

	2007	2006
	€	€
Administrative expenses		
Wages and salaries	80,421	53,652
Staff pension costs	-	2,422
Compensation for loss of office	2,473	-
Staff training	825	120
Recruitment	242	-
Voluntary expenses	5,846	3,833
Rent payable	5,400	4,800
Insurance	868	110
Website and IT maintenance	710	989
Printing, postage and stationery	3,084	2,672
Advertising	503	-
Telephone	2,579	2,193
Legal and professional	1,939	-
Audit	1,113	2,624
External	8,000	-
Bank charges	159	83
General expenses	4,438	2,079
Depreciation on FF & Equipment	1,701	1,537
	<u>120,301</u>	<u>77,114</u>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>