BRIEF TO THE PRESS AS THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO UGANDA HIS EXCELLENCE MR. KAZUAKI KAMEDA, VISITS AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (AICAD) AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, KAMPALA ON 17TH APRIL 2019

African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) is a Regional International Institute dealing with poverty reduction in Africa through human capacity development. The idea of establishing AICAD was borne from the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II) in 1998, held in Tokyo, Japan. AICAD was therefore established in August 2000 as a result of high level negotiations and commitments that led to the signing of records of discussion, memoranda and articles of association by the three governments of East Africa and Japan. The Institute was first financed by Japan through JICA and presently it is jointly financed by the three East African governments of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda with support from development partners of whom the Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA), World Bank, Wetlands International and European Union have been key in all the activities revolving around research and development, training and extension and information network and documentation as the main functional divisions.

Due to the offer from the government of Kenya to house the Institute, AICAD's Headquarters are located in Juja, Kenya within the main campus of the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology (JKUAT). Three AICAD Country Offices are located at Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania and Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. The construction of the Headquarters building began in Juja in January, 2002 and was completed in December 2002. The cost of construction amounted to KShs.1.2 billion mainly supported by the Government of Japan, with Kenya Government providing local budget support of KShs. 35million. The AICAD facilities were handed over to AICAD on 9th January 2003 and inaugurated on 11th February, 2003. They were handed over to the Vice President of Kenya Mr. Michael Kijana Wamalwa by the JICA Resident Representative in Kenya.

AICAD was registered as a company limited by guarantee on 11th June 2002. During the preparatory period between 1998 and 2002, also known as Pilot Phase, an interim secretariat was in place consisting of staff from JICA and from the JKUAT. This interim secretariat established both the Governance systems as well as the Secretariat structure. It also recruited the initial staff of the Secretariat.

The three East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda through the Sector Ministries in charge of Higher Education Science and Technology signed the Charter establishing AICAD between October and November 2003. Kenya ratified the AICAD Charter on 6th October 2003. The Headquarters Agreement establishing **AICAD** as an International Organization/Institute in Kenya was signed between the Government of Kenya and AICAD on 24th January 2007 and gazetted through the legal notice No. 18 of 22nd February 2008 which gave AICAD the mandate to operate under Cap 179 of the laws of Kenya.

The AICAD Governing Structure comprises the **Governing Board (GB)** as the supreme and policy making organ of the institute. The members of the GB are drawn from the member states, public universities from the member countries and development partners. It also consists of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is an advisory body of all Vice Chancellors of partnering universities but without administrative functions. The Secretariat is headed by the **Executive Director** and is composed of four divisions at headquarters each of which is headed by a director. AICAD activities within member countries are coordinated by the three country offices.

AICAD's Mission is to link knowledge to application in order to reduce poverty in Africa by utilizing newly created or existing knowledge and technology; utilizing the potential and capacity of local expertise; exchanging information, experiences and practices and sharing human resources and information in the region and beyond. This it achieves through three functional divisions, i.e. Research and Development (R &D), Training and Extension (T & E) and Information Networking and Documentation (IN &D) working with the communities in collaboration with both governmental and private organizations such as Universities, Research Institutions, Industries, NGOs, CBOs and Government departments and Agencies within and outside Africa. These activities were previously funded by the external budget component through JICA under the AICAD/JICA project which was implemented in three phases from 2000 to 2012, after which AICAD began to fund them directly through the regional Governments budget support and the funds generated internally from the Institute's facilities including 40 en suite rooms, cafeteria, leisure facilities, cyber café, assembly hall, adjoining atrium, dedicated seminar rooms and computer laboratories.

AICAD identified the focus themes for its activities based on the needs assessment study conducted in 2003 and reviewed in 2004 as; Agriculture, food security, water resources management, industrialization processes/enterprise development/value addition, environment conservation, health equity and community development. It also focuses on gender issues and policy implementation as cross cutting issues. These themes continue to be subjected to re-examination during implementation of programmes.

Since establishment, the capacity of AICAD Secretariat in planning and coordinating has been strengthened. The Institute's decision-making system is streamlined and is able to carry out a wide range of activities which link knowledge/technologies to the communities on the ground in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders. AICAD has expanded its activities to the area of universities outreach activities which has led to a better network function of AICAD. Resource persons from member universities are keeping close contact with the AICAD Headquarters as well as the Country Offices. AICAD's networking function has also improved greatly and has seen the Institute collaborate with World Bank Institute, Wetlands International, United Nations Centre for Regional Development, UN Habitat, UNDP among others in conducting Regional Training Courses while the Country Offices have enhanced their partnerships with various organizations including universities, national/local governments, NGOs, parastatal organizations and research institutions. AICAD's activities for poverty

reduction at the community level, that is Regional training, In-country training, community empowerment, knowledge and technology dissemination have been generally implemented as planned.

AICAD activities have been continuously evolving by applying lessons learned from past experiences to ongoing projects. In other words, AICAD is accumulating knowledge acquired through implementing various activities and is making best use of it by revising approaches and modalities of current projects. Overall, it can be concluded that by implementing a wide range of activities with support from and collaboration with the member universities regionally, AICAD has been able to exploit its comparative advantage of mobilizing a wide university network and resources for implementing poverty reduction initiatives.

AICAD has been successful in making positive economic impact and social impact on participants of the training and other activities. The impact of project activities has sometimes been observable even outside the target groups as the training or programme participants often share their newly acquired knowledge and skills with other members of their communities. The positive impacts include stronger social cohesion of the target groups and rural women's empowerment through increased cash income. AICAD appreciates the support that the Institute has continued to receive from member countries through the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of Higher Education, Science and Technology of each of the Participating Countries.

The visit of the Japanese Ambassador to Uganda rekindles the relationship and support to the endeavour in building capacity to link knowledge to application in a bid to reduce poverty at all levels in the region. AICAD participated at the recent first ever TICAD 6 to be held outside Japan that was hosted by Kenya Government in August 2016. During this big conference African Presidents and other delegations in partnership with Japan Government came up will declarations revolving around value addition to agricultural products. It is against this backdrop that a follow up of the original and inception donor is welcome to see how far the activities of their support are doing and also to compare notes on new areas of cooperation as the globe goes organic farming and also works hard to uplift communities and transform society in the light of the sustainable development goals enshrined in the 2030 and big fours of Kenya national agenda; 2040 Ugandan agenda; 2020 Tanzania agenda and in light of the greater vision of African Union (AU) agenda 2063. Therefore this courtesy visit is very welcome, important and a root to open up new collaboration avenues between universities in the region and other institutions with Japanese counterparts at this moment of Green Theory in International Relations. AICAD hopes to woo more cooperation and exchange of professionals through this meeting initiated by HE the Japanese Ambassador to Uganda.