

Advocacy and Lobbying Training

The Hague, 13-17 April 2015

Participant Profiles

In this booklet are the profiles of the dynamic individuals that took part in the Diaspora Academy Project's inaugural Lobbying and Advocacy training workshop in April 2015.



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Acknowledgements

This profile was written by Ciaran Hickey, ADPC's DAP Project Associate in 2015 under the leadership of Connie Formson-Lorist, DAP Project Coordinator. In putting together this profile, the objective is to showcase the work that our training participants are involved in, and how by attending the inaugural Lobbying and Advocacy training they will become even more effective. We hope in coming up with this edited version, we have done justice to Ciaran's vision.

Among others who have also contributed to this report is Kalina Simeonova ADPC's Communications intern in 2015. Naturally this booklet is only possible because of the ten dynamic individuals who took time off their busy schedule to take part in this inaugural training workshop. Your enthusiastic and dynamic contributions were invaluable in making the training workshop the success it was -Thank You! In alphabetical order these individuals are:

Abu Matovu
Abubakarr Bangura
Andrew W. Henry
Fadhili Maghiya
Karen Safo-Barnieh
Lukeki Kaindama
Mario Joseph
Mohamed Kunowah-Kiellow
Mulu Gashaw
Sorie Obai-Kamara

ADPC would like to acknowledge the financial contributions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, and the Gemeente Den Haag. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that it is through the vision and strategic direction of ADPC's Founder and Director Awil Mohamoud that the organisation exists to contribute its bit in terms of mobilising diaspora for development.



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Design: Ciaran Hickey

ADPC in Brief

ADPC is a leading Diaspora think tank dedicated to mobilizing African Diaspora in Europe for the development of Africa. We conduct evidence-based, policy-related research based on diaspora perspectives, mindsets, experiences and expertise. The knowledge and information we generate is primarily targeted at three groups: diaspora organizations in Europe, development practitioners and policymakers dealing with diaspora related issues, both in Africa and in Europe. We also promote research collaboration between diaspora and homeland researchers in Africa and their affiliated institutions in the production of knowledge in this emerging research and policy field. ADPC offers high-quality capacity building training to the emerging Diaspora ministries and other institutions in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries that are tasked with overseeing diaspora and development related matters.

The main purpose of the training workshop is to strengthen the policy making capacity of the diaspora-oriented policymakers, by providing them with the essential knowledge, skills and tools to develop feasible policies aimed at maximizing the contribution of the diaspora to the development of their respective home countries. We facilitate network building and linkages in and among Diaspora organizations and other stakeholders active in the field of migration and development both in the host and home countries. We do this by organizing expert meetings, conferences and workshops in which diaspora development practitioners make contact, establish viable networks, learn from each other's development- related activities, exchange valuable information, and share best practices and positive experiences in the field of diaspora and development. We also actively lobby for the access and incorporation of diaspora development practitioners in the networks of established development cooperation circles, both in host and home countries.

Diaspora Academy Programme

Advocacy and Lobbying Training, 13th-17th April 2015

The Diaspora Academy (DA) project was launched in May 2014 by the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC) in cooperation with The Hague Academy for Local Governance (THA) and The Network University (TNU). The overall objective of the DA is to upgrade and strengthen professional skills and competences of diaspora organizations in Europe engaged in improving the social and economic conditions and communal harmony in their countries of origin. Within the project capacity building for diaspora organizations focuses on three thematic area: Peacebuilding, Advocacy & Lobbying and Smart Partnerships/Networking. The project will run until April 2017.

In April 2015, ADPC held the inaugural Diaspora Academy training on Lobbying and Advocacy. During the life of the project, the DA will train 30 dynamic diaspora individuals/organisations to acquire sufficient knowledge about methods and techniques of advocacy and lobby instruments and their effective application in influencing policy and practical changes conducive to their particular cause.

The April 13-17 session consisted of the first group of enthusiastic, dynamic and knowledgeable participants. Throughout the participants positively engaged and motivated one another. Originating from a range of different African countries, and now spread out across Europe and North America, the group worked in a cohesive manner helping to add even further to the excellent training offered. The diverse nature of the group, their backgrounds and their aims gives us the hope that the training will have a far reaching positive impact on effecting positive change in their homelands.

Within this booklet we hope to showcase the full range of positive work the participants are engaged in, and how the lessons learned during the training will help to increase the effectiveness of their already excellent work.

Participant Profiles and Stories

Fadhili Maghiya joined the training in his capacity as a coordinator for a relatively new diaspora organisation in Wales, the Sub Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP). The organisation acts as an umbrella organisation for other Diaspora organisations in Wales and therefore Advocacy and Lobbying is naturally an important part of their mission. Fadhili recognised the need to enhance these skills in order to be able to engage new stakeholders and deal with a variety of situations. By using the lessons learned during the workshop he hoped to build strategic alliances he hopes to get the voice of the African Diaspora heard.



Fadhili brought a great deal to the training week, and his considered observations and opinions were taken on board by the participants and trainers alike. His experiences as part of an organisation that is already engaged in activities related to advocacy were an extremely useful addition to the training week, and allowed the other participants to gain a different perspective on diaspora issues.



Not only did Fadhili bring a lot to the training week, he has taken away a great deal of knowledge and new skills that will serve him well in his role at SSAP. He found the week to be highly educative and informative, and took away some key lessons. There were two main points that Fadhili highlighted as most useful to him. Firstly the need to recognise the different forms of power and how this impacts on ones

Advocacy policy has been identified as an important factor that Fadhili will consider. By recognising that different stakeholders have different forms of power, Fadhili will be able to tailor his approach to each partner in order to maximise the effect of his advocacy and lobbying. Second, having gone through the training he has realised that his goals were too many in number and therefore would be hard to achieve. By focusing on only a small number of important goals the aims of his work will become clearer and better understood by stakeholder. By engaging with stakeholders who a clearer understanding of his organisation hopes to achieve, Fadhili's advocacy regarding the work of the African Diaspora in Wales will stand a much higher chance of success.

Abu Matovu arrived in The Hague from Oslo, Norway, where he is a key part of the Uganda Nordics Diaspora Investment Initiative (UNDII). As the coordinator of communication and mobilisation, the benefits the Advocacy and Lobbying workshop would bring to Abu were clear. As his role as part of UNDII already required the need for a certain level of advocacy skills, it was hoped that Abu would bring a lot to the group, as well as learn some new skills for himself. He recognised this himself, and saw the training workshop as a way to upgrade his already existing professional skills, as well as networking with other members of the African Diaspora in order to combine forces where appropriate and learn from others experiences.



Indeed Abu stated during the week that the training helped to polish his already existing Advocacy and Lobbying skills. His enthusiasm for his work was evident from the outset, and his friendly warm nature served to energise his fellow participants. By being an active member of the group Abu managed to take a lot from the training. Like Fadhili, he recognised the importance of understanding the nature of power and how it manifests itself in different forms, be it social, positional, invisible or visible. By understanding this important concept, Abu stands a much greater chance of influencing important stakeholders in his pivotal role as Communication and Mobilisation Coordinator for UNDII. Through his work at UNDII, Abu hopes to improve the social and economic conditions of Ugandans both in Uganda and the Nordic countries, so understanding how to recognise different types of power in different situations is important.



On a slightly more practical level, Abu also appreciated gaining more knowledge on the specific tools that can be employed to create more effective advocacy strategies. By learning about the opportunities of Diaspora organisations to work with social media and public policy Abu was confident that his Advocacy action plan was in a much stronger state than before he attended the workshop.

Mario Joseph currently lives in the United Kingdom where he is engaged in important work for Windle Trust International, who provide access to education and training for those affected by conflict in Africa. Being of South Sudanese origin, Mario is well placed to carry out this work using his own personal insight and experience.



As an energetic, articulate and outgoing personality, Mario brought a lot to the group of participants. His drive to achieve positive change in his homeland of South Sudan is clear for all to see. The pragmatic way the training addressed the joint topics of Advocacy and Lobbying was something that Mario appreciated, as it will allow him to implement the ideas learnt during the week in a real and practical way.



As has been said, Mario is naturally energetic and outgoing, but the training has served to refresh his motivation to achieve his goals in helping to attain positive change in Africa, particularly in South Sudan. With the skills Mario has learnt during his time at the Diaspora Academy, there is no doubt his goals will be realised.

Mohamed Kunowah-Kiellow is a member of the Sierra Leonean



diaspora in The Netherlands, and brought a great deal of experience to the Advocacy and Lobbying workshop. A lawyer by trade, Mohamed has a long history of working with African development NGOs, most frequently in his native Sierra Leone. By using his legal background he has helped people on the ground in Africa, to both raise awareness and protect peoples' rights. Most recently he has been in Sierra Leone as a volunteer for Ebola Prevention and Control as well as a Human Rights Advisor. The skills and

experience Mohamed possesses are vast and invaluable. Therefore giving him the tools to advocate and lobby more effectively will allow him to hopefully propel his dedicated work to even higher heights. If one does not have adequate advocacy skills, then it is hard to progress ones goals and therefore invaluable contributions such as Mohameds could potentially come to nothing.

Coming into the training Mohamed had no previous formal experience of Advocacy and Lobbying, and as such is why the training so excited him. By participating in the training he hoped to gain a greater understanding of advocacy as a concept and advocacy in practice.



Due to his previous experience as well as his current work in Sierra Leone, Mohamed was able to quickly grasp the new concepts of Advocacy and Lobbying that were presented to him during the training. He was able to show how the application of these new concepts could be applied in his own work and therefore was able to give concrete examples of the invaluable nature of advocacy and lobbying skills. Most interesting for Mohamed was the particular workshop about using the media in ones advocacy plan. He understood the importance of this, and plans to use the knowledge he has gained on this matter to make his work even more effective. By using the media effectively he will be able to reach a much wider audience, and therefore be able to positively aid the development of Sierra Leone in a much greater way.

Lukeki Kaindama has successfully been able to transfer the knowledge she has gained through her studies and professional work to make a real difference to diaspora activities in the UK, as Health Programme Lead for Diaspora for African Development (DfAD). DfAD aim to contribute to Africa's sustainable social and economic development through harnessing the African Diaspora, a way of working that ADPC very much tries to promote. In her role as Health Project lead Lukeki is exposed to a range of challenges including leading the development of DfAD's strategy for the launch of a diaspora volunteer initiative as well as liaising with key external stakeholders and representing the organisation at external events. Carrying out such tasks means that advocacy and lobbying are key components of what Lukeki does at DfAD, and therefore the training was something she hoped to gain a lot from. In particular Lukeki hoped to learn how to influence decisions on a policy level, and how to engage and influence stakeholders more generally, especially as DfAD continues to grow.



During the training Lukeki took away a lot that she will be able to implement in her role at DfAD. As she conveyed during the training, “it was very impactful as it has been very practical, interesting and engaging. I feel like I have a good understanding about the steps to take forward”. The advocacy action plan that all the participants created individually was of particular interest to Lukeki, and the 9 step process within this plan made sure she will think about each aspect of her advocacy plan, such as the problem to be addressed, the objective and the tactics employed to realise the end goals. The manner in which Lukeki took all the input on board during the week leaves us with no doubt that the advocacy and lobbying training will have a positive impact on her work at DfAD.

Andrew W. Henry came to the workshop in a unique position to effect real



change through effective advocacy and lobbying. As an International Ministry pastor in Midwest USA he has a positive relationship with a wide network of African diaspora. Serving a community particularly from Liberia, South Sudan and Ethiopia Andrew felt the need to aid the peace and development process in Africa. Originating from South Sudan, his focus naturally lies there for the time being. In particular Andrew seeks to find a way to influence the South Sudanese government in order for them to better address the root causes of poverty and injustice. As a land of immense wealth and natural resources he finds it difficult to comprehend why such problems are left to persist. His goal of moving the government to make decisions to protect the most vulnerable in society is something that relies heavily on the implementation of effective advocacy techniques, and the motivation for Andrew to attend the training could not be more clear.

Due to his position in society, Andrew is clearly someone who commands respect, and this is something that was evident during the training week. His considered, thoughtful approach led to some interesting issues being raised. The training allowed Andrew to shape the way he thought about lobbying and advocacy, and change his perception away



from the general negative one which one automatically thinks about when thinking about lobbying in the USA. The tools Andrew gained during the week make him confident that they will help him in his current plan. He also realised that some of his current work could already be classed as advocacy, and as such creating his Advocacy action plan has helped to make this work even more effective. By travelling all the way from the USA to attend the Advocacy and Lobbying training workshop the determination of Andrew W. Henry to realise his ambitions is obvious. Using this determination along with the skills gained in the workshop, there is no doubt he will succeed in having a positive impact.

Karen Safo-Barnieh has a passion for her work that is

hard to ignore. As a London based law student she possesses an energy and drive that have allowed her to work in several different settings concurrently. Alongside her studies Karen works as a case worker for the UK Home Office, dealing with asylum applications, giving her insight into the inner workings of the part of the government that many of the African diaspora have had to deal with at some point. Further to this she has worked as an Amnesty International student representative, and has also founded her project 'Youth Development Ghana'. With the wide variety of positive work Karen is engaged in, the potential for her to utilise advocacy and lobbying techniques gained from ADPCs training is evident.



Youth Development Ghana is a project that analyses the laws associated with the unfair trade of cocoa and the affect this has on youth development in Ghana. By attending the training Karen hoped to be given the opportunity to engage with other members of the African diaspora as well as developing skills in advocacy and lobbying as a tool for bringing about change. Having been on numerous previous functions related to international development in Africa Karen felt there had been a lack of training on how to lobby against austerity and arbitrary power, and as such participating in ADPCs Lobbying and Advocacy workshop would help fill this knowledge gap.

Karen appreciated the training workshop as she felt it gave practical implementable advice as well as allowing for the discussion of more broad issues that are important in the context of African development. She took away several key lessons that will certainly aid her in her important work with Youth Development Africa. First and



foremost, the need to remain relevant was an important idea that Karen took on board, which means researching your stakeholders thoroughly in order to advocate in a way that is relevant to them.

Hopefully Karen will continue her excellent work in her pursuit of the liberation of Africa, and that the lessons learnt over the training week will enhance her efforts and make them even more effective.

Abubakarr Bangura is the chairman of the Sierra

Leone Central Union (SLCU), a platform of 14 Sierra Leonean organisations representing a 1000 of the Sierra Leonean diaspora that live in The Netherlands. On top of this,

Abubakarr is also a board member of ADPC, thus giving his participation in the workshop extra significance. His work with SLCU has three tracks, in The Netherlands, Europe and in Sierra Leone. Most recently the focus has centred around post Ebola development. Although already an experienced

operator, Abubakarr recognised the need to gain enhanced advocacy and lobbying skills in order to propel his important work even further. In particular he hoped to identify smart instruments and strategies to motivate and activate the government of Sierra Leone to engage the Sierra Leonean diaspora in a more effective and structured manner. Throughout the workshop the idea that different strategies should be employed in order to address different types of stakeholders was something that was



brought up time and time again. This was particularly relevant to Abubakarr, as he already knew how to operate successfully in relation to other stakeholders in business and governmental settings in The Netherlands, however he wanted to find the right strategy to engage the Sierra Leonean government, as he himself had already recognised the need for a new and separate approach.

With the possession of so much relevant experience Abubakarr was an active member of the training group, especially within the numerous discussions that took place. He found the training to be relevant and practical in the pursuit of his goal of a more inclusive role for the Sierra Leonean diaspora in the post Ebola recovery process. In particular, the need for a multi dimensional approach to advocacy, as well as the need for sensitivity to the needs of different stakeholders and not only your own, was something that Abubakarr hopes to apply immediately in his own work.

Sorie Obai-Kamara finds himself in an excellent position to use both advocacy and lobbying techniques to his advantage. As a musical artist his ability to capture the attention of a wide audience in his native Sierra Leone, as well as in Finland, where he now resides, and the rest of Europe gives him huge potential to be a key advocate for his cause. His work as the Sierra Leone Music Ambassador, Chairman of AWOL Finland, CEO of Ripsta Culture Foundation and as the founder of the African Council in Europe which allows him to address the emerging issues from Africa in a number of different contexts.



Coming into the training he hoped that by learning the necessary skills of lobbying and advocacy it would lead to better result oriented actions. Like his friend Abubakarr, Sorie Obai-Kamara also hoped to learn better ways of engaging the political stakeholders in Sierra Leone, which until now had proved difficult.



During the week, Obai engaged the group with a number of performances, which help to energise and motivate everyone. As well as bringing so much to the training with his thought provoking input to the different sessions and music, Obai also learnt a lot that will serve him well in his future work. By gaining knowledge about power and its different forms, levels and spaces he hopes to be able to better implement strategies to achieve his objectives. By better understanding which stakeholders to utilise in different situations due to the different forms of power they possess, Obai will be better able to focus his advocacy efforts more effectively. Perhaps most importantly for Obai was the recognition of the power that one's self possesses. As a musician his power to influence others and bring attention to his cause has massive potential, so by recognising the advantage he holds, Obai will be able to better utilise his position.

Mulu Gashaw was the 'local' of the training group, as she lives in the vicinity of

The Hague. With origins in Ethiopia Mulu is part of the DMA Foundation which focuses on eradicating poverty through sheltering street children, education,



empowering women and capacity building trainings in order to improving life standard of poor people in Ethiopia. By attending the training Mulu hoped to learn new skills that would benefit her organisation as well as herself. She also hoped the experience would allow her to meet others who work with similar issues, share experiences and exchange best practices. The better coordination of diaspora efforts is a core part of the work of ADPC, so the opportunity that Mulu hoped to take advantage of is very much something that

ADPC was hoping to promote.

During the training Mulu readily admitted that the course was a real eye opener as it gave her a sense of the great importance of the subject and how much she still needed to learn. She discovered how important it will be for her organisation to implement the lessons that were learnt and that having an advocacy strategy is imperative. Mulu has also vowed to continue learning more about advocacy and lobbying, so in this sense the Diaspora Academy Advocacy and Lobbying Training Workshop was only the beginning.



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