



Economic Commission for Africa

A service of the UN system-wide support to the African Union and its NEPAD Programme

NEPAD TODAY

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ECOWAS, NEPAD agree to empower Africa's rural women entrepreneurs

ECOWAS and NEPAD have signed an agreement worth one million Euro for the empowerment of Africa's rural women entrepreneurs.

The accord for the grant provided by the Kingdom of Spain through the NEPAD-Spain Fund was initialled on Thursday, 12th July 2012 at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, by the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Ambassador Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo, and the Executive Secretary of the NEPAD Agency, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki.

The grant will provide funds for the Business Incubator for African Women Entrepreneurs (BIAWE) project, which nurtures the busi-

ness ventures of rural African women operating primarily in the area of agriculture. The project seeks to support initiatives in economic capacity building for women, promote rural entrepreneurship and develop agricultural resources.

It will also provide a guarantee fund for rural women entrepreneurs in Africa to receive support from banks and financial institutions in the form of loans, processing of agricultural produce and market access for the sale of the produce.

ECOWAS and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) are the two regional economic communities
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Africa needs AWA more than ever, UNAIDS' Sidibe

Addressing more than 20 African high-level officials at a meeting in Addis Ababa, UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé praised AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) as a leader in HIV responses across the African continent. The meeting, hosted by AWA's action committee, was held on the eve of the 19th AU Summit.

"Africa needs AWA now more than ever," said Mr Sidibé. "We need AWA to cultivate

a common voice in Africa—one that embraces AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), malaria and other health challenges. We need AWA to provide oversight of health investments and to leverage those investments for broader development."

Established by eight Heads of State and Government in 2001, AWA was originally designed as a platform for advocacy and accountability in Africa's AIDS response. To

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leading the implementation of this project. At the ECOWAS level, the project will be piloted in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone, with the hope of extension to other Member States of the Community.

The aim of the two-year project is to increase the economic options and promote the economic leadership of African rural women, as well as eradicate poverty within the ECOWAS region.

In 2009, West Africa and the Kingdom of Spain leaders signed a joint declaration under which the ECOWAS Commission and the Spanish Government undertook to provide support for the economic capacity building of West African women through the BIAWE project.

The Spanish Government designated the

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date, its committee has played an important role in keeping AIDS high on the development agenda and in mobilizing domestic and international resources for HIV and health. In January 2012, AWA's mandate was expanded to include TB and malaria, and its representation was broadened continent-wide.

Speaking alongside Mr Sidibé, Dr Boni Yayi, Chair of AWA and President of the Republic of Bénin, said that reversing the spread of HIV, TB and malaria in Africa would demand political will, leadership and shared responsibility. "We must redouble our efforts to prevent new infections and deaths linked to these diseases. The time has come to transform policy into action,"

ECOWAS Commission to steer the project through the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency.

Technical meetings in 2011 by the ECOWAS Commission and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, and the meeting of the NEPAD Fund-Spain Committee resulted in the finalization of the project documents.

The signing of the agreement represents the final stage preceding the project implementation.

Source: African Press Organization, July 16, 2012

said Dr Yayi, who also serves as Chair of the African Union.

A new Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity provides clear parameters for such action. Developed by the AUC and NEPAD, with support from UNAIDS, the Roadmap offers practical solutions to enhance sustainable responses to AIDS, TB and malaria in Africa.

Structured around three strategic pillars—diversified financing, health governance and access to medicines—the Roadmap was reviewed and endorsed at today's meeting by AWA committee members. It will be presented for adoption at the upcoming AU Summit.

Source: <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2012/july/20120714awa/>

Upcoming Event

- Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) in support of the AU and its NEPAD Programme inter cluster meeting , 26-27 July 2012, Naivasha, Kenya

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