

# Africa Now

Strategy

2006- 2009

# Africa Now Global Vision, Values, Mission, and Aims

Values:

Ethics and integrity. Making a difference. Creating opportunities and chances. Commitment to equality and empowerment. Commitment to grass roots led approaches. Transparency. Valuing people.  
Our work is characterised by: Working in partnership. Responsiveness. Flexibility. Practical approaches. Innovation. Facilitation. Entrepreneurial approaches. Sustainable practices. Focus on Africa.

Global Vision:

A thriving Africa where people enjoy equal opportunities to benefit from enterprise, ethical trade and fair wages for their labour

Mission:

To reduce poverty in Africa by promoting entrepreneurship and linking people to sustainable markets and ethical supply chains.

Strategies:

- We will do this by:
- Inspiring and supporting poverty affected African women and men to achieve a decent standard of living through enterprise development with access to sustainable markets and / or credit.
  - Supporting African producers to understand and gain access to local, regional and international markets through training and advice.
  - Working with companies in their efforts to bring ethics and integrity to supply chains through the provision of ethical business services.

Programme Aims:

1. Improve labour conditions and small holders' access to markets  
*- By establishing Ethical Business Services in Africa; facilitating market links / access*

2. Improve quality & impact of programmes by mainstreaming of cross cutting issues  
*- Gender, HIV / AIDS, disability, environment, generation*

3. Enhance programme quality through learning and evaluation  
*- To develop high quality projects and programmes including those that can be scaled up, replicated and sustained.*

4. Deliver a wider, better more influential service by consolidating experience and expanding our presence  
*- Representation in 7 countries, consolidation and increased impact and scale in current countries over 3 years:*

Organisational Aims:

1. Improve staff development and retention of high quality staff and volunteers  
*Personnel policies; consultation on key issues; personal and team building strategies: thematic leadership*

2. Increase organisational stability and sustainability through managed growth aiming for £4 million turnover.  
*Consolidation and diversification of income base, increase fundraising capacity. EBS.*

3. Increase stability and influence by enhancing reputation, and profile.  
*Country programmes; EBS; UK positioning*

4. Strengthen key capacities across the organisation: *strategic financial and administration management capacity, resource mobilisation, analytical capacity, impact assessment*

# Mandate

The following are statements that frame what Africa Now must / can / must not do:

The objects for which the Association is established are the relief of poverty, the relief of sickness and the advancement of education in any part of Africa.'

(Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated 4th April 1981 as amended 25th September 1996 and 23rd July 1999)

There should be no more development of WATSAN projects..... unless we have expertise and competence and water is part of an enterprise solution to poverty in an area of question'

(From minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2006 Board meeting)

# Context analysis

## External:

### Opportunities

#### ***Increased interest in fair trade and ethical trade***

Western and northern markets increasingly influenced by public opinion and demand for fairer terms of trade and ethics in supply chains

#### ***Growing economies***

Rising copper prices, Chinese investment in Africa, oil, IT, mobile phone networks

#### ***Trends in funding***

Increased demand for charities to be accountable and to demonstrate impact and effectiveness > need to develop understanding of impact assessment / be more accountable

Increased demand for funding partnerships – whether it be Northern/Southern NGO partnerships or NGO/Private partnerships

Increasing unrestricted incomes through development of relationships with corporate sector

#### ***Rapid increase of HIV / AIDS in countries where we work***

'Opportunity' to improve programme impact by mainstreaming HIV / AIDS analysis in programmes, be aware of demographic trends and gender issues, also consider HIV / AIDS in human resources policies.

#### ***Technological development***

Major high tech developments in GM technology and information technology have taken place in the past decades and are predicted to continue. Gm growth is mirrored by partly reactive growth in demand for organic and fairly traded products. At the same time, low tech innovation has taken place, driven increasingly from village level > opportunities for poor people.

#### ***Dominance of neo-liberal economics / economic liberalisation and globalisation***

Donor policies - economic liberalisation, the roll back of the State, reduced public spending, coupled with globalisation of economies and industrial agriculture > powers of national governments reduced. Multilateral bodies (e.g. the UN, World Bank and World Trade Organisation) and trans-national corporations have increasing influence.

Poor people, especially women, hit hardest by reduced public services and fluctuations in markets. Polarisation re: income

People forced to migrate, leading to demographic distortions and traditional communities and livelihoods destroyed > relevance of Africa Now programmes and interventions and need for gender analysis.

***Tighter health and quality standards***

Africa Now can work with poor producers to reach and surpass tighter health and quality standards meaning they can function more effectively in a more regulatory environment.

***Market regulations endangering natural products***

Quality and other standards for the export of natural products from Africa enable producers to aspire to reach and surpass such requirements with support from Africa Now and then be better placed to function sustainably in an increasingly regulatory environment,

## **Threats**

***Political country risks (security e.g. Zimbabwe)***

Security issues in specific countries where we work e.g. Zimbabwe and management of risks in countries where we do not have long term presence and security analysis (EBS)

***Market regulations endangering natural products***

Quality and other standards restricting opportunities for poor producers to export natural products from Africa

***Trade agreements – end of audit contracts***

Possible end of AGOA and other trade agreements to support African trade could > reduced market for ethical auditing services in Africa; G8 trade commitments > potential opportunity

***Brain drain from Africa to the west***

Key staff and skills moving out of Africa > limiting potential for trade and innovation

***Climate change***

– Water, trade, economic and environmental impacts

### ***Changing perceptions in the West***

Public opinion subject to swings against developing countries; some groups e.g. 'Muslims' seen as homogeneous and marginal; rise of right wing politicians in Europe and America > tendency for minority groups to be victimised

### ***Trends in funding***

Competition for funding, UK and in country

Charity commission and donors increasingly expect NGOs to be accountable and to demonstrate impact and effectiveness

Pressure of high number of 'causes' > lower unrestricted incomes

### ***Trends in the Allocation of Aid***

Increased focus on strategic, oil rich, countries - counterbalanced to some extent by G8 focus on Africa opening up opportunities for poor people

EU funding policies and other donors e.g.:

- bilateral arrangements
- consortium bids
- matched funding requirements

### ***Independence issues***

NGOs increasingly being used or perceived as instruments of foreign policy > confusion between civil and military mandates > security issues > need to upgrade security planning and context analysis, ensure perceived as independent and also diversify funding base to ensure independent action.

### ***Rapid increase of HIV / AIDS in countries where we work***

HIV / AIDS affects millions, crisis already established in countries where we work. Poverty contributes to the conditions for it to spread, life expectancies plummet. New technology means HIV / AIDS treatments are being developed, but these are too expensive for most poor people

### ***Tighter health and quality standards***

For poor producers tighter health and quality standards add pressures (although this is also an 'opportunity' – see above)

# Internal Strengths

- Staff experience especially in working with local partners, prioritising, working to tight budgets, identification of opportunities, innovative approaches, professional qualification
  - Knowledge including market-led trade in ethically-sourced natural products
  - Programme staff skills / understanding of EBS
  - Good gender balance in the field of both men and women at all levels
  - Kenya staff skills in field extension work
  - Clear reporting lines with well-defined titles
  - Shared skills and ideas, diversity of skills
  - Shared values
  - Strong volunteer support
  - Board – engaged, broad range of skills
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- Both working in partnership and working directly with communities – flexibility in approach according to context
  - Reputation and experience in the ethical trade sector
  - EBS – leading the field
  - Increasing recognition among UK and other European donors of AN's commitment to particular areas of work – EU DFID BLF Comic Relief
  - Sharpened institutional focus on trade and enterprise
  - Expertise in diversifying rural income opportunities
  - Experience in partnership with corporate sector
  - Provide commercial markets with ethically-sourced and sustainably produced/harvested products which are able consistently to meet and guarantee the highest demands of the market.
  - Willingness of the staff to take risks in favour of pro-poor planning and delivery > Africa Now has built legitimacy with the grassroots.
  - Commitment to grass roots approaches
  - Willingness to work with poor and marginalized communities
  - Commitment to Africa, partner, community and constituency led work
  - An approach to work that fosters devolvement and seeks sustainability
  - Strong networks with range of partners and key contacts
  - Finance systems

# Weaknesses

- Understaffing at various levels of the organisation – financial management in UK, support staff in some countries.
- Low remuneration at all levels in comparison to other NGOs
- Lack of systematic staff development opportunities
- Poor orientation / induction procedures
- Kenya - staff skills in resource mobilization, policy and research
- Donor dependence > short termism in programme development and staffing
- Limited resources to invest in fundraising and non-project based activities
- Field level capacity for fundraising
- Recruitment systems / procedures – consistency in approach
  
- Lack of key policies – security, HR, ethical
- Institutional memory
  
- Capacity for analysis and policy / advocacy work
- Field led assessment and proposal development
- Monitoring and evaluation / impact reporting
  
- Values not necessarily clearly expressed at organisational level
  
- Finance capacity / capacity building
- Fundraising capacity for unrestricted funds

# Core values

- Ethics and integrity
- Making a difference/effective
- Creating opportunities and chances
- Equality and empowerment
- Grass roots approaches
- Transparency

## Our work is characterised by:

- Working in partnership
- Responsiveness
- Flexibility
- Practical approaches
- Innovation
- Facilitation
- Entrepreneurial approaches
- Sustainable practices
- Focus on Africa

# Vision statement

Africa Now envisions:

“A thriving Africa where people enjoy equal opportunities to benefit from enterprise, ethical trade and fair waged labour.”

# Mission Statement

The mission of Africa now is

“To reduce poverty in Africa by promoting entrepreneurship and linking people to sustainable markets and ethical supply chains.”

# Broad aims

We will do this by

- Inspiring and supporting poverty affected African women and men to achieve a decent standard of living through enterprise development with access to sustainable markets and credit.
- Supporting African producers to gain access to international markets through advice and training.
- Working with companies in their efforts to bring ethics and integrity to supply chains through the provision of ethical business services.

## Key activities

- Small scale producers will be helped to identify and produce appropriate products for which there is a market. They will be supported to gain access business skills and credit where appropriate.
- Small scale producers will be supported in forming organised groups. These groups will be supported to gain improved access to appropriate markets.
- Improved, fairer trading relations between producers and buyers will be promoted.
- Local capacity in Africa to develop and audit codes of conduct on social and environmental conditions will be built. Small holders will be supported to access wider markets through improved understanding of, and attaining compliance with established codes of conduct.

# Strategic programme aims:

1. Improve labour conditions and small holders' access to markets by establishing Ethical Business Services in Africa – to become the market leader for EBS in Africa; help stabilise and develop Africa Now through generation of surplus
2. Improve quality and impact of our programmes by mainstreaming of cross cutting issues – gender, HIV / AIDS, disability, environment, generation
3. Enhance learning and evaluation - to develop high impact and high quality sustainable, replicable programmes
4. Increase impact and influence by expanding our presence - representation in 7 countries, increased scale in current countries

# Organisational development aims:

1. **Improve retention of high quality staff:** Human resources retention and development strategy / plan; fundraising strategy
2. **Organisational growth towards £4 million turnover - consolidation and diversification of income base – increase fundraising capacity:** Manage acceleration of scale without compromising mission or programme quality > fundraising strategy
3. **Increase reputation, profile and influence:** Concentrate core PR capacity on potential corporate clients and actions to attract grant-making funders; connect to key institutions organisations and opinion formers who support the long term Africa Now mission; build analytical capacity and disseminate learning;
4. **Strengthen key capacities across the organisation:** strategic financial and administration management capacity, resource mobilisation capacity, analytical capacity

# Country programmes

- The development arm of AN
- Managed in-country according to agreed strategy, with support and guidance from Oxford
- Avoid opportunism and remain “on strategy”

## Rationale

- Fulfils AN mission
- Complements EBS
- Builds on AN experience

## Objectives

- Develop coherent, internally complementary country programmes
- Develop impact measurement and reporting
- Develop analysis and response to cross cutting issues
- Create pipeline of future projects as basis for stable growth
- Scalable, replicable and ultimately self-sustaining projects
- Increase project funding success rate to 75%
- Raise value of annual project applications to £2 million by end 2007
- Projects to recover minimum 7% towards overheads
- Annual reduction in ratio of staff to turnover

# Ethical Business Services

- Stand alone “for profit” business to promote and execute ethical business services including ethical audits across Africa.
- Rationale
  - Contributes to AN core activity of improving working conditions
  - Aligned with AN mission
  - AN currently has comparative advantage
  - Profitable, scaleable and manageable
  - Platform for advocacy on ethical business issues
  - Profits yield unrestricted funds
  - Opportunity for profile raising
- Managed from Kenya using staff, associates and consultants
- Commitment to build local capacity and non duplication
- Issue: Potential loss of AN projects personnel to EBS

## **Organisational model**

- Flat structure team of highly delegated key managers
- Augment with volunteers
- Close performance management with agreed targets
- Entrepreneurial culture with room for ideas and innovation within agreed strategy and parameters
- Manage for low staff turnover
- Interconnected and timely shared management information systems
- Specialist skills bought in as required

## **Management structure culture and style**

- Director guides / strategically manages overall enterprise; main link to Board
- Country Managers propose, negotiate strategies, manage / execute programmes
- Trustees recruited for key skills and contacts - support and guidance to management advice / influence, endorsement of policy, adherence to legal requirements, bringing additional donor networks and introductions outside scope of management team
- Trustees have overview of strategies, plans and budgets.
- Trustees provide 'ex-com' to support Director and advise on important issues
- Commitment to inclusive management with recognition of skill range across the organisation

## Success criteria

- Full alignment of strategy and portfolio by 2007
- 2-3 scaleable replicable programmes identified and new funding brought in
- Highly motivated staff teams with shared values
- 75-100% increase in project outlays by end 2007
- Representation in five countries by end 2007
- Consolidation in current countries of operation and increased scale and reach by end of 2006
- Annually balanced budget with minimum 20% forward commitments
- Progressive advance towards £4.0m annual revenue (threshold at which AN seen as financially stable by donors)
- EBS profit at or near £100,000 per year by 2007
- Clear evidence of increasing name recognition for AN
- Smooth, sufficient cash flow