



Strategic Recommendations:

ADA International Advisory Board

INTRODUCTION

The first meeting of Advanced Development for Africa Foundation's International Advisory Board took place on September 26th, 2013 in New York City, USA, with the valuable participation of the Board Members who were present. ADA's International Advisory Board Members include:

- ❖ Ms. Carol Bellamy, former President, *Global Partnership for Education*
- ❖ Ms. Kathryn C. Brown, former Senior Vice President, Public Policy Development and Corporate Responsibility, *Verizon Communications*
- ❖ Mr. Amir A. Dossal, Chairman, *Global Partnerships Forum*
- ❖ Ms. Adesuwa Garrick, Vice Chairman, *U Turn Tax Refund LLC*
- ❖ Mr. Denis Gilhooly, Executive Director, *Global Digital He@lth Initiative*
- ❖ Mr. Chris Locke, Managing Director, *GSMA Development Fund*
- ❖ Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, *New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*
- ❖ Dr. Patricia Mechael, Executive Director, *mHealth Alliance*
- ❖ Mr. Jay Naidoo, Chair, *Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)*
- ❖ Dr. Carole Presern, Executive Director, *The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)*
- ❖ Dr. Joanna Rubinstein, Assistant Director, *Earth Institute for International Programs*, & Special Advisor to Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs
- ❖ Ms. Elaine Weidman-Grunewald, Vice President, Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility, *Ericsson*

The following report outlines the strategic recommendations put forth by the Board during the meeting to guide ADA's path in tackling the post-2015 agenda. The key message from the meeting was to address issues in health, education, and digital development, with focus on specifically women and children.



KEY FOCUS AREAS

Women and Children

Board Members were in consensus that a key demographic group for ADA should be *women and children* (ages 0 to 18), particularly girls, boys and young women before and after they have children. The Board recommends that ADA should mobilize thinking on, raise awareness for and address key issues in the thematic areas of health and education that affect women and children, with the specific approach of using technology to achieve these goals.

Information and communication technology present a variety of platforms, including social media and mobile-based services, that are optimized for reaching youth as well as addressing their issues thanks to the ubiquity of this technology even in underdeveloped settings, as well as the growing uptake of the technology among the target demographic groups. Specific implementation activities were recommended by the Board to address health and education issues facing youth and women, including:

- i. Designing a social movement or sustainable community around youth and women on how technology can be harnessed to address their needs;
- ii. Creating a youth network on health using social media and digital tools to increase their access to important healthcare information relevant to them;
- iii. Adapting existing content and dissemination methods to make content more accessible and usable by youth and women through the use of technology platforms.

The Board agrees that the current demographic setting (more than 70% of population in Africa is under 25) and the lack of representation of youth in the government presents a major disconnect between government policies / discussions and realities on the ground. Therefore, the Board further recommends that, given ADA's neutrality and extensive network, the organization should also focus on providing and facilitating an intergenerational link in policy-setting and high-level meetings to ensure issues identified by youth and women themselves are being adequately addressed at the policy level. This bottom-up approach can be achieved by providing a specific platform for them in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) debate, as well as identifying and addressing the barriers preventing their participation. ADA should identify the tools and support they need to productively participate in these conversations and ensure their voices are heard.



The final recommendation from the Board under this focus area is to invite a strong youth representative to join the Board, preferably a young African woman, to represent youth and women self-identified issues and needs.

Linking Education with Health by Integrating Technology and Innovation

The Board agrees that health and education are strongly interlinked, and therefore need to be addressed as an integrated issue rather than two separate issues. ADA should mobilize thinking and action on linking education with health, particularly as the SDG debate evolves, by applying the technology perspective and advocating for the integration of technology and innovation into health and education. A specific approach put forth by the Board is to support the scale up of successful combination health-education projects that effectively utilize technology to achieve their goals.

Engaging Africa's Private Sector in Digital Development

The Board identified Africa's private sector as an untapped resource for contributing to and driving the digital development agenda in Africa, for the African people. Therefore, the Board recommended that ADA perform a mapping of potentially interesting African private sector companies, particularly mobile industry companies, and actively engage them as catalysts and contributors to Africa's digital development. ADA can in turn provide them with a platform and a voice at the international community level.

The Board's recommended approach is to engage the private sector by not simply seeking funding for the scale up of projects, but rather to focus on how their core strengths can support projects in achieving scale.

Platform for Effective Partnership Development

The Board agrees that there is a strong need for more multistakeholder partnerships to drive sustainable project scale, and that ADA can play a key role in this by providing a platform for effective public-private partnership development and acting as a match-maker. ADA should enable partnership development by specifically linking private sector partners to concrete implementation projects on the ground.



KEY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Francophone West Africa presents a concrete geographic area that is not being adequately addressed and involved in the digital development and post-2015 agenda. The Board advises conducting a mapping exercise to identify who the key players are in Francophone West Africa, what they bring to the table, and how ADA can support these players and francophone communities. The Board recommends raising awareness for the work being done in Francophone West Africa on women, youth and children in the thematic areas of education, health, and digital development, and facilitating the participation of key actors from the region in international conversations.

KEY STRATEGIES

The Board put forth several cross-cutting strategies that ADA should adopt in order to continue the efficacy and impact of its work. These strategies can be applied to any of the key focus areas outlined above, and therefore represent key strategies for ADA to adopt through its activities. The strategies put forth include the following:

- Mobilize social media and other technology platforms and services to bring about transformational change.
- Create far-reaching advocacy campaigns to drive programmatic action by tapping into existing large networks to disseminate key messages.
- Identify models that work.
- Focus on a set of countries and identify champions from various sectors (the Board identified Senegal, Ghana, Rwanda and Zambia as key countries). Replicate their work and achievements.
- Avoid recreating content or programs, instead build on existing programs and replicate or scale them.
- Demonstrate the value of technology for the public good to governments by implementing at a large scale, even for a shorter period of time, and generate ownership by local players.



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CONCLUSION

This document outlines the recommendations and strategies identified by ADA's International Advisory Board as impactful and effective in leveraging ADA's comparative advantage in the areas of women's and children's issues, interlinking health and education, integrating technology and innovation, engaging Africa's private sector and effective public-private partnership development.

As a final step, the majority of the Board feels there should be an ADA secretariat to support operational activities, translate Board recommendations into action and take on new strategic advocacy role. This will be addressed as ADA moves forward in setting its mission, goals and action plans for the post-2015 digital development agenda.