



ACE IMPACT

Africa Higher Education Centers
of Excellence for Development
Impact (ACE Impact) Project

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

10TH ACE Impact Regional Workshop

Sustaining Progress and
Celebrating a Decade of Change



Ministère de l'Enseignement
Supérieur et de la
Recherche Scientifique



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AFD
AGENCE FRANÇAISE
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

Accra, Ghana (23 October 2023) – The Africa Higher Education Centre of Excellence for Development Impact (ACE Impact) project is set to hold its 10th bi-annual regional workshop in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, from Tuesday, 31 October to Friday, 3 November 2023.

The workshop is being organized with sustainability as its primary theme. This theme holds particular significance due to the recent grant of a no-cost extension, extending the project's timeline until 2025. This extension period offers an opportunity to operationalize the project's sustainability plans. Additionally, a crucial highlight of this event will be a dedicated session during which the findings of an impact assessment report for the project will be presented.

In addition, the four-day event will provide a platform to: discuss best practices and implementation plans for the financial and operational sustainability of the project; and provide implementation support to enhance project efficiency and address technical challenges hindering successful project execution.

The Opening ceremony and launch of the ACE @ 10 celebrations will be held on October 31, 2023 (8:00 GMT) at the Latrille Events Center. Hybrid workshop activities (virtual and onsite), including plenary and parallel sessions and steering committee and experts' meetings, will be held from November 1-2, 2023 at the Noom and Movenpick Hotels concurrently. The closing ceremony is scheduled for November 3, 2023 at the Latrille Events Center.

The 10th regional ACE workshop is co-organised by the French Development Agency (AFD), the World Bank, and the Association of African Universities, in collaboration with the Ivorian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

The workshop cultivates a space for exchanging knowledge and building networks amongst the centers and relevant agencies by bringing together over 400 higher education stakeholders, including vice-chancellors, project team members, subject matter experts, government representatives, and policy think tanks. The workshop offers in-person collaborative opportunities, fostering the exchange of regional insights and learnings. Participants receive essential tools and guidelines for efficient project implementation, promoting long-term sustainability.

As part of the regional workshop, the 10th anniversary of the Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence series of projects (ACE@10) will be launched- celebrating a decade of empowering higher education and fostering innovation across the African continent. "The ACE projects have been a transformative force over the past decade in the tertiary education sector, specifically, training the next generation of Africa's STEM workforce and fostering cutting-edge research. The projects have made significant strides in addressing Africa's critical development challenges while tackling brain drain.

Since its inception in 2014, the projects have supported over 80 centres, in more than 50 universities, across 20 African nations. As we celebrate ACE@10, it's evident that its contributions enrich Africa's academic landscape, enhancing the global competitiveness of African higher education and research to build a more prosperous Africa." **Scherezad Latif, World Bank Practice Manager for Education, Western and Central Africa.**

The launch will highlight activities to be rolled out towards the celebrations in 2024. "ACE@10 activities will mark a decade of excellence, collaboration, and transformative impact in African higher education. The ACE @ 10 activities would amplify the project's impact in African higher education and its crucial role in shaping a prosperous future for Africa." **AAU Secretary-General, Prof. Olusola Oyewole.**

"The ACE @ 10 will provide concrete solutions tailored to African development contexts and generated by African research, that can be promoted and disseminated widely " **AFD Head of Education, Virginie Delisée-Pizzo.**

Prior to the workshop virtual national-level roundtable implementation support meetings will take place from October 16- 23, 2023.

The media are invited to cover the opening ceremony and launch of the ACE @ 10 celebrations. Media personnel can register [here](#)

For further clarification, contact:

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ABOUT THE ACE PROJECT

Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACE) is a World Bank/AFD-funded programme, in collaboration with the governments of participating countries to support African higher education institutions to specialise in strategic thematic areas with the aim of promoting sustainable growth and development in Africa.

Initiated by World Bank, the first phase of the ACE programme (ACE I) was launched in 2014 with 22 centers in nine West and Central African countries, and the second phase (ACE II) in 2016 with 24 centers in East and Southern Africa. These two initial phases of the ACE programme succeeded in building and strengthening the capacities of African higher education institutions to deliver high-quality training and applied research and enhance skills demand for Africa's development.

Based on these successes, World Bank, together with AFD, launched the Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence for Development Impact (ACE Impact) project in 2019 with 53 centres in 35 universities in 10 West African countries and Djibouti to further strengthen post-graduate training and applied research in existing fields and support new fields that are essential for Africa's economic growth.

Under the ACE Impact project, these 53 centers are specializing in the broad thematic areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); agriculture, health, environment, social science/applied science, and education, which have been identified as essential ingredients to Africa development.

Learn more about the ACE Impact project at <https://ace.aau.org>



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ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Cote d'Ivoire:

Founded in 2011, the Ivorian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is a government ministry for overseeing, accrediting, and regulating higher education and promoting scientific research and innovation in Cote d'Ivoire. The ministry exists to formulate policies and develop strategies that promote access to and improve the quality of higher education and research in Cote d'Ivoire, aimed to address the country's higher education challenges. It also provides technical training and professional development opportunities to both teaching and non-teaching staff. To help achieve its mandate, the ministry also collaborates with international organisations and institutions to facilitate research partnerships and exchange programmes.



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The World Bank Group: The *World Bank Group* is a multilateral development institution that works to reduce poverty and boost shared prosperity. The Bank, through its subsidiary International Development Association (IDA) co-finances the ACE Impact project. IDA, established in 1960, helps the world's least-privileged countries by providing grants and low to zero-interest loans for projects and programmes that boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve quality of lives. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 74 least-privileged countries, 39 of which are in Africa. Resources from IDA bring positive change to the 1.3 billion people who live in IDA countries. Since 1960, World Bank through IDA has provided some 500 billion dollars to over 114.



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Association of African Universities (AAU): The *Association of African Universities* is an international non-profit, non-governmental network of almost 450 African universities, which have come together to promote cooperation among them, on the one hand, and between them and the international academic community, on the other. Established in 1967 and operating as the voice of higher education in Africa, the AAU aims to improve the quality of African higher education and strengthen its contribution to Africa's development by supporting the core functions of higher education institutions and facilitating critical reflections and consensus-building on issues affecting these institutions. The AAU is the regional facilitation unit for the ACE Impact project.



French Development Agency (AFD): For more than 75 years, the *French Development Agency* has been fighting global poverty supporting policies and investments that benefit the least-privileged populations in the world. Strengthening the social link among individuals, groups, and territories is at the heart of its actions in education, health, employment, urban planning, climate, and biodiversity. L'Agence Française de Développement is the ACE Impact project co-financier.

