PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOLIDARITY

PLAN OF ACTION

FOR AFRIKA KONTAKT AND PARTNERS
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FOR AFRIKA KONTAKT AND PARTNERS - APRIL 2013

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ALL PHOTOS IS FROM AFRIKA KONTAKT
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INTRODUCTION

This Plan of Action is a roadmap for joint action by the ‘Afrika Kontakt Family’ to achieve our joint vision for a socially just world with equal access to political influence and economic opportunity between nations and within nations. In today’s globalised world where economic and political power dynamics between North, South, East and West are changing, it is our desire to develop a new vision and fight for a new global world order based on principles of solidarity and social justice. It is our belief that we can achieve this by building strong partnerships between progressive forces for change around the world and developing strategies for joint action.

The Afrika Kontakt Family is a group of organisations that have different focus areas within the overall struggle for democracy, respect for human rights and equal access to and benefit from natural resources. All partners work with grassroots mobilisation, civic education and advocacy, and the thematic focus ranges from fishery, land, youth, women and health.

In April 2013, the Afrika Kontakt Family met at the Partner Seminar “Towards New Ways of Cooperation and Capacity Building between AK and Partners in Africa”. The seminar marked an important milestone in development of a shared understanding of the major objectives and strategies to achieve the vision of a socially just world. During four days of brainstorming on themes, issues, challenges and opportunities, a variety of priorities and suggestions for action were identified. Some of the most important and pressing issues were the need to improve cross-border communication, the need for joint action of solidarity and the need for more knowledge sharing between organisations.

In addition to supporting each other’s struggles it is also vital that we develop a shared and specific alternative to the existing world order. In order to do this we need to nurture our social imagination and continue sharing our dreams and visions for social justice. One of the biggest challenges will be to link our visionary imagination with the practical realities on the ground and to transform the talking into action.

This Plan of Action seeks to transform all the discussions from the Partner Seminar into a framework for action within eight key priority areas. The following pages provide a summary of the points of action for the next three years. The Plan of Action is a dynamic tool which will coordinate the implementation of the plan, including quarterly monitoring of progress. The plan will be reviewed and adjusted on a yearly basis at the Partnership Seminars.

1. Communication and information sharing

Building strong partnerships require updated knowledge and information to learn about and understand the context in which each partner operates as well as the priorities and activities of the partners. Of particular importance is real-time information about events and developments that impact the partner organisations and their membership in order to react quickly to support each other’s struggles with solidarity actions.

Objective

Short term (July 2013)

- Establishment of Facebook site where all partners can share events and calls for action: https://www.facebook.com/groups/144049182441694/
- Circulate ‘list of participants’ with contact information to make regular communication easier e.g. via Skype and email

Medium term (during 2013)

- Develop common information sharing platform, where partners can share experiences, campaigns and communicate regularly.
- Establish Skype room at Afrika Kontakt’s office to enable activists to communicate with partners in Africa.

Long term (2016)

- Partner Seminars will be used as platform for sharing experiences across countries and organisations
- Partners in the South will be more involved in the planning of Partner Seminars to ensure ownership and relevance for the participating organisations
- Partner Seminars will include field visits in order to ensure practical learning and experience sharing

2. Joint Action and Advocacy Work

All partners work with advocacy in various forms and at various levels, and joint solidarity support amongst the partners will add strength to each organisation’s individual advocacy efforts. Solidarity support is necessary in the immediate responses to specific events, such as the arrest of activists, as well as the longer term advocacy objectives of the partners, e.g. to rectify the banning of the trade unions in Swaziland.
At the Partner Seminar it was decided that the partners will develop a joint on-going campaign under the umbrella ACT NOW! All joint campaigns in the future will be part of the ACT NOW campaign framework, but each campaign will develop its own objectives and strategies. A visual identity and a set of campaign tools will be developed to maximise visibility of the individual campaigns, ensure synergies between campaigns and to save time and resources on development of campaign material.

The ACT NOW campaign will focus on important issues, such as imprisonment of political activists, access to natural resources, political violence against women in Zimbabwe, the breach of human rights in Western Sahara etc. Any partner or group of partners may initiate a campaign within the overall ACT NOW framework and Afrika Kontakt will be coordinating the different campaigns.

Objective
Short term (July 2013)
- All partners will communicate/upload their “ACT NOW’s” on the facebook site “ACT NOW Information Platform” as calls for action and solidarity. This will make it easier for AK and partners to act on concrete issues quickly.
- Establishment of an Afrika Kontakt ACT NOW campaign group to work with the calls for action on the Facebook site and develop other campaigns and information work in Denmark. The groups will develop a set of objectives for their work i.e. in order to ensure the active involvement of partners.

Medium term (during 2013)
- Develop a shared visual identity (graphic design) which can be used in all ACT NOW campaigns

Long term (2016)
- Improve the linkages between projects, campaign and advocacy work. i.e. all projects/program elements must have at least one campaign objective in south and one in North.

3. Future cooperation and networks

The Term “The Afrika Kontakt Family” was introduced at the Partner Seminar as an indication of our joint vision, shared values and common goals. In order to transform our individual partnerships into a joint strategy for change, there is a need to create strong and meaningful networks and coalitions across borders. This entails to develop our cooperation from partnerships between Afrika Kontakt and individual partners towards stronger networks between the partners in Africa. This will deepen the cooperation between Afrika Kontakt and our partners and create synergies between individual projects and partnerships.

Objective
Short term (July 2013)
- Develop a plan for how to strengthen the partnerships between AK and South Africa/Swaziland in spite of phasing out of funding from the Danish government
- Continue building the Swaziland-Zimbabwe youth network

Medium term (during 2013)
- Actively identify possible topics for collaboration and linkages (e.g. IYWD, ZPLRM, RAU and Yf in Zimbabwe; youth in Western Sahara; Zimbabwe and Swaziland; organisations working with women’s and health rights in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Swaziland)
- ‘The Women’s Rights and Health Rights Network’ has been developed with a group mail and a shared dropbox folder.
- Cooperation around civic education between Western Sahara, Zimbabwe and Swaziland in information sharing and method sharing.
- Strengthen cooperation on research based advocacy

Long term (2016)
- Building capacity of networks regionally as well as getting involved in influential networks/ strategic
networks
- Establish a network of accountants in order to upgrade their financial reporting skills.
- Develop the idea of an AK office and training centre in Africa

4. Internships/exchange visits across borders

Internships and exchange visits are efficient means of improving communication and sharing of experiences across borders. All partners acknowledge that there is a need to develop a better understanding of each other’s struggles, activities, challenges and opportunities in order to be able to provide the needed solidarity and assistance. Furthermore, all partners face a constant inadequacy of human and financial resources in order to carry out their work effectively. Besides from the many volunteers in Afrika Kontakt, the organization also has links to many students who are interested in developing their skills and getting practical experiences, which an internship with one of the organisations in Africa would give them.

Objective
Short term (July 2013)
- Development of Afrika Kontakt Internship Policy
- Preparation of internship adds

Medium term (during 2013)
- Recruit interns from universities in Denmark from AK’s volunteer base and general network.
- Hold joint partner meetings for all partners in a country during project visits in order to improve networking among partners.
- Include exchange visits and invite partners from other countries in AK project visits
- Youth exchange programme with youths from Zimbabwe and Swaziland including a visit of the camps in Western Sahara (September 2013)

Long term (2016)
- Exchange visits, such as internships in partner organisations amongst partners in south
- Internships by partners in Afrika Kontakt in Denmark
- Partners in Africa will identify and communicate specific needs than can be handled by an intern and AK will help recruit candidates (on-going).

5. Legal Assistance / Safety network for Activists

A common challenge for political activists in Africa is the risk of imprisonment, torture and even social exclusion. Especially the partners in South Africa, Swaziland and Western Sahara are in need of more legal, medical and psychological assistance. Many activists are afraid of seeking help at a public hospital after being victimized by the police and other authorities, and many organisations do not have the necessary resources to pay for lawyer fees. Furthermore, lawyers defending the activists also face risk of exclusion and victimisation, and therefore lawyers also have to be “radical and active” in order to be able to provide the right services, at least in South Africa and Swaziland. Afrika Kontakt already has the Mandela Foundation, which has been used to bail out political activists and pay for legal assistance throughout the years.

However, there is a need for more efforts in this regard. It was also emphasised that there is a need for psychological and medical assistance when activists have been subjected to political violence, torture and other forms of victimisation.

Objective
Short term (July 2013)
- Establish a “safety net” working group and recruit new members with relevant capacities, e.g. from law school.
- Approach potential funding sources for the Mandela foundation and other kinds of safety net projects (e.g. CSR projects with the large law firms in Denmark)

Medium term (during 2013)
- Approach other organisations in Denmark working with these issues, such as legal assistance and medical/psychological treatment to facilitate a contact between them and the partners in need of assistance
- Utilise existing networks in the South to assess the opportunities for cross border support (e.g. Zimbabwean organisations, such as Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Counselling and Services Unit and Doctors for Human Rights)

Long term (2016)
- Internship at partner organizations researching and writing a rights-guide / tool-kit for the organization’s activists (i.e. legal rights, customs practice, case-law etc. made applicable in practice)

6. Fundraising

One of the main challenges partners face is donor diversification and generation of funds through membership fees and other non-donor sources. Another pressing issue is the fact that Afrika Kontakt can no longer apply for funds from Danida for projects in South Africa and Swaziland. There is an urgent need to identify alternative
funding sources for the partners in these countries, such as the EU. In addition, Afrika Kontakt’s main donor, CISU, has changed its funding structure, so Africa Kontakt will no longer be able to apply for the relatively small partnership projects. In the future Afrika Kontakt will apply for 2x2-year programmes, which must include all partners eligible for Danida funding.

Many suggestions for donor diversification and alternative funding sources were presented at the seminar. Some of them have been summarised in the document “Day 4, summing up on funding, the ideas discussed and developed.doc” shared with all partners and some have been included in this plan of action.

**Objective**

**Short term (July 2013)**

- Frequent Flyer deal to be able to collect bonus points for free flights
- Establish EU fundraising network all organizations is to fill out the EU organizational template for Pador registration with technical assistance from resource persons (i.e. Bo, the AK EU group and Gavin, TCOE)

**Medium term (during 2013)**

- AK to diversify their membership base and upgrade membership recruitment.
- Partners are to increase their use of volunteers in their work.
- Cultural Day for fundraising in Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Planning during the exchange visits in the two countries.
- Encourage partner to partner membership in organisations
- Afrika Kontakt to arrange solidarity parties for specific campaigns in the partner organisations, e.g. bail of political prisoners. The ACT NOW group to encourage events and solidarity parties as an integrated part of fundraising efforts.

**Long term (2016)**

Future partner seminar to have a focus on local means of funding, e.g. information sharing regarding membership fees (innovative ways to ensure that members are proud to be a part of the organisations; strong internal control systems for
members to trust in the organisation; ensure legitimacy, transparency and accountability (LTA)

7. Define an alternative world order

All partners are fighting for their rights, but sometimes we get caught up in only criticising the existing situation and forget to define what kind of world and society we are fighting for. There is a need for the Afrika Kontakt family to define an alternative to the existing world order in order to gain legitimacy, mobilise and recruit new members. The group discussing this theme at the Plan of Action workshop did not come up with a set of ideas for a new world order, which wasn’t expected of them either.

Objective
Short term (July 2013)

- AK working groups and partners will start discussing and working out a policy paper that defines expectations, visions and goals for their work.

Long term (2016)

- Next Partner Seminar should have a specific focus on defining a common vision and of what reality / society we want to work towards.
## Annex A. Participant list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
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**Notes:**
- The list includes participants from various organizations and research and advocacy units, representing multiple countries.