



Partners agreed that:
Economic development should start with community priorities and should be based on meeting social needs, environmental protection and human rights

HIGHLIGHTS

AGENDA 2063: the Africa WE want.

The “WE” means Africans must be the priority in every private investment!

Granted! The G20 Compact with Africa and the German Marshall Plan for Africa among other international initiatives focusing on Africa sound good. But one doesn't have to scratch too far from the surface of well written plans to realize that some of these projects lack the involvement of communities and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Evidence also confirms that some of these initiatives frequently transgress human rights, thus undermining human development. What's the real and unspoken motive behind some of these private investments? Are they beneficial in any way? Can some of them be undertaken differently in order to truly and sustainably develop Africa and its people?



Dr Fanwell Bokosi (far left on the panel) pictured during one of the discussions on the topic; 'Are the current German Africa Initiatives fit for sustainable development? Impulses for the 'Compact with Africa'.

Partners in attendance noted the importance of Private investment for Africa as it brings about economic and social development, but they raised reservations on the nature of some investment initiatives such as the Compact with Africa and individual large-scale investments which tend to be profit oriented in favor of foreign corporations. The general agreement by participating partners was that economic development should prioritize communities through meeting social needs and protecting human and environmental rights. Moreover, investments should be responsive to and stimulate local markets, local production and local economic development. They should build on people's existing economic activities and create beneficial work for people thus contributing to narrowing the inequality gap.

Partners, therefore, advanced the following recommendations:

1. National governments should review, strengthen and enforce legal and regulatory frameworks for

investments to foster human rights, environmental and social protection in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. There should be room for continuous, comprehensive impact assessments.

2. All investment initiatives and processes should be led by host countries/regions and developed in a democratic, transparent and inclusive manner that involves concerned communities, CSOs, members of parliament, business and labor unions.

3. Investments in natural resources must respect community rights and be based upon free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) through public consultative processes that include communities, CSOs, local governments and investors to allow consensual decision making. Moreover enforceable compensation, fair benefit sharing, local economic linkages and integration with other sectors should be compulsory.

4. There should be no large scale investments on land for agricultural production.

6. Investment initiatives must not be used for the imposition of trade and fiscal conditionalities that have been previously rejected by African governments such as opening up public procurement, service negotiations or liberalization of the agricultural sector.

7. All investment initiatives must promote fair taxation for all enterprises and allow host governments to use capital controls to mobilize resources for domestic investment.

8. National governments should enforce transparency and compliance monitoring mechanisms for all investments. They should also reform dispute settlement mechanisms towards fairness, transparency and respect of national sovereignty.

AFRODAD, represented by its Executive Director Dr. Bokosi, was among 15 representatives of non-governmental organizations and churches from Africa that attended the Bread for the World dialogue on 12-14 November in Berlin Germany to share experiences and perspectives on the impact of the aforementioned initiatives on African citizens, including the poor, the aged, women and the marginalized in various ways.

Feedback can be forwarded to: communications@afrodad.co.zw

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