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EU and GIZ join forces to strengthen Good Financial Governance in Africa

April 2015, by Helga Wenhold

The African continent is home to some of the poorest countries in the world. In many countries citizens have little trust in their governments' efforts to improve this situation. Repeated corruption scandals, mismanagement of public resources and a lack in capacity and skills are some of the causes for severe shortcomings in the responsible use of public funds.

Effective public financial management is the key to development and reduction of poverty in Africa. This is where the concept of Good Financial Governance kicks in. To enhance transparency and accountability in the use of public finances, the European Union has committed to contributing five million Euros to GIZ's Good Financial Governance in Africa programme. The programme is jointly funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The event attracted representatives of partner networks and donor organisations, further foreign representation in the form of ambassadors and high ranking scholars and practitioners within the good financial governance field.

On 21 April 2015 the joint action was officially launched by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to South Africa, Ambassador Roeland van de Geer and the Development Councillor at the German Embassy, Dr Eduard Westreicher at the EU Residence in Pretoria.

Dr Westreicher stressed the importance of the programme's objective: *"Good Financial Governance is at the core of state capacity, enabling citizens' access to public services such as education, healthcare and sanitation."*

A direct link to public health is the provision of clean drinking water. About 1,500 km east of Niamey, a unique ecosystem is drying up at an alarming pace: Lake Chad. The tragedy of Lake Chad is increasingly receiving attention by policy makers. Against this background, the Supreme Audit Institutions of the riparian countries of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria decided to join forces launching a major environmental audit, which aims at proposing solutions for improved water management. The project was initiated under the auspices of AFROSAI, the African Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions and has been supported by GIZ's Good Financial Governance in Africa programme.

During Mr Alfred Enoh's, Director General of the AFROSAI General Secretariat, address as well as by showing a short film, the importance and results of this specific initiative were highlighted.

Another flagship example of the outcome of the GIZ programme's activities is the "Executive Master's in Taxation. To address the issue of leadership in the area of tax, a postgraduate degree was developed jointly by GIZ, the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) and the Berlin School of Economics and Law.



The speakers during the launch were f.l.t.r. Mr Alfred Enoh, Mr Neil Cole, Amb Roeland van de Geer, Mr Eduard Westreicher, Mr Martin Weiss from GIZ and Dr Arno Schäfer from the EU

In addition, Mr Neil Cole, Executive Secretary of CABRI (The Collaborative African Budget Reform Initiative) as one of the partner networks of the programme, spoke of GIZ's support during a recent case study in Mali that involved the analysis of the country's public financial management systems and processes.

The support of the European Union to the Good Financial Governance in Africa programme is a major milestone as it allows the programme to up-scale successful activities and to further develop innovative approaches for increasing public finance capacities of government officials and practitioners across Africa.

For further information please visit <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/15725.html> or contact: Dr Matthias Witt matthias.witt@giz.de



The programme is headed by GIZ's Dr Matthias Witt (second from the left) and Mr Jean-Bernard de Milito from the EU (far right). Mrs Christiane Kalle, GIZ Country Director, South Africa and Lesotho joined the event.