

## ACCA Annual activity report: 2016 – 2017



# ACCA

**AFRICAN** COALITION FOR  
CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

*ACCA: supporting African communities and individuals whose human rights are adversely impacted daily by the activities of corporations, both multi-national and domestic*



African Coalition for Corporate Accountability  
La Coalition Africaine pour la Redevabilité des Entreprises

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## **Preamble**

The past reporting year has been a very eventful period for ACCA as a coalition and indeed for Business and Human Rights on the continent, and globally. Following an eventful general assembly in July 2016, our focus has been on strengthening the framework of our association and expanding our impact across the continent and our sphere of influence globally.

Our big question was how do we strengthen platforms for the deliberation of the challenges peculiar to business and human rights on the continent? And how do we amplify the voices of African CSOs activists who work and walk alongside the most vulnerable communities across our great continent? You will recall that these queries resulted on one of the outcomes of the 2016 GA, which was the endorsement of two work streams:

1. Access to Remedy; and
2. Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.

We have since that event made every effort to catalyse broad-based dialogues in this regard, and galvanize the coalition's activities towards the promotion of these goals.

## **Highlights of Activities**

Below are highlights of our activities in the course of the reporting year:

### **ACCA Work Streams:**

The working groups having set out the terms of reference for the two work streams during the last ACCA GA, we shortlisted and engaged 2 consultants (Dr Attiya Waris on Access to Remedy, and, Ms. Aderomola Adeola on FPIC), to implement the research phase of the work streams (phase 1).

Part of the goals for this year's GA is to present their reports to the GA, and to hold consultative sessions to validate them.

### **Securing a Session at the UN Forum on BHR**

Following the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights announcement of "Access to Remedies" as its thematic focus at this year's forum, we thought it expedient to apply for a session to ensure that the continent and the interests of our members are represented at the table.



We, therefore, applied to host a joint session on: ‘An African perspective to Access to Remedy – Regional Challenges and Needs’. We are delighted to announce that the UN has indeed approved our application and we will therefore be active participants at the Forum this year. Our goal at this meeting will be to present the work completed by ACCA in relation to its access to remedy work stream and provide community perspectives to the debates around access to remedies.

## **ACCA GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **MoU between ACCA and the Centre for Human Rights**

We are delighted to announce that following approval by members during the last General Assembly, ACCA entered into a formal MoU with the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria.

You will recall that the purpose of signing the MoU between ACCA and the Centre was to set the parameters for the hosting of the ACCA secretariat at the Centre for Human Rights for the next 5 years.

### **ACCA Website**

The new ACCA website in the past year received an upgrade and has also been a great tool in posting the resources/publications/toolkits from both the ACCA and its member organisations. You can now access ACCA working documents and photo on this platform; and we also invite you to submit your publications/reports/toolkits/articles for publication on this platform.

### **ACCA media relations**

We have sought to develop stronger media relationships to amplify our coalition’s voice both on the continent and abroad. We have also engaged stakeholders through social media platforms.

#### **Press releases and ACCA quarterly newsletters**

Within this reporting period, ACCA released 2 press statements, namely:

- ACCA press statement on the 3rd ACCA GA; and
- What is the role that African civil society should play at the UN Forum?

The ACCA quarterly newsletters are on-going and continue to attract readership within the business and human rights community. We released newsletters in:

- September 2016;
- December 2016;
- March 2017;
- August 2017.



## ACCA Membership

Our membership base has grown to 117 organizations in 31 countries in the past year and we have strengthened modalities for membership based on the Rules and Norms of Procedure. Initially, an organisation could become a member by signing onto the ACCA declaration or through application for membership on the ACCA's website.

Following the decisions made by the General Assembly during the 3rd ACCA GA, the membership unanimously agreed that organisations wishing to become a member of the ACCA need to adhere to the requirements for new members as set out in the ACCA norms and procedures. Member organisations are not required to pay a membership fee.

ACCA membership currently stands at 117 organisations from 31 African countries comprising of:

Central Africa	East Africa	North Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cameroon</li> <li>• Chad</li> <li>• Congo Republic</li> <li>• DRC</li> <li>• Equatorial Guinea.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burundi</li> <li>• Ethiopia</li> <li>• Kenya</li> <li>• Rwanda</li> <li>• Tanzania</li> <li>• Uganda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mauritania</li> <li>• Egypt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madagascar</li> <li>• Malawi</li> <li>• Mozambique</li> <li>• South Africa</li> <li>• Zimbabwe</li> <li>• Zambia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benin;</li> <li>• Burkina Faso</li> <li>• Cote d'Ivoire</li> <li>• Ghana</li> <li>• Guinea</li> <li>• Liberia;</li> <li>• Mali</li> <li>• Niger</li> <li>• Nigeria</li> <li>• Senegal</li> <li>• Sierra Leone</li> <li>• Togo.</li> </ul>

## EVENTS:

### 3<sup>rd</sup> ACCA General Assembly – 6-7 July 2016

The high point of events from the last reporting period to this point was the 3rd General Assembly of our coalition in July 2016. The event was attended by more than 100 persons comprising of ACCA members, as well as external participants, which included: sister coalitions across the globe, partner



organizations, and attendees of the University of Pretoria's Law Center for Human Rights' short course on Business and Human Rights.

That General Assembly afforded participants an opportunity to deliberate on substantive issues which included: FPIC, access to remedy, the proposed treaty on business and human rights, development finance, and a capacity building session on video advocacy.

ACCA members at this event also voted on, and adopted the two work streams: FPIC and access to remedy. In addition to the adoption of these work streams, the other achievements from the General Assembly included the:

- Adoption of the ACCA Norms and Procedures;
- Adoption of the ACCA Strategic Plan;
- Adoption of the Terms of Reference and formation of two (2) ACCA Thematic Working Groups on Access to Remedy and Free, Prior and Informed Consent; and
- Increased understanding and fostering of relationships among African civil society organisations working to further corporate accountability.

In the course of this reporting period, ACCA participated and represented its membership at the following events:

### **1 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Conference on Economic Social and Cultural Rights**

The 2016 event focused on Business and Human Rights and was held in Kampala, Uganda from 14-15 October 2016. We were represented by Ms. Flaviana Charles who spoke on a panel focused on National Action Plans for Business and Human Rights as instruments of accountability.

### **2 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland: 14-16 November 2016**

From 14- 16 November 2016, the 2 co-Chairpersons of the ACCA Steering Committee together with the Coordinator attended the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights which took place at the *Palais des Nations Unies* in Geneva, Switzerland. We at this event secured a stand to publicise our coalition, which attracted a lot of interest from stakeholders in attendance at the Forum.

On the morning of 17 November, ACCA members present at the Forum gathered at the Serpentine Bar for the ACCA Breakfast Meeting during which ACCA members present at the Forum convened to share their thoughts and reflections on the Forum in the form of an ACCA statement which was released on 24 November 2016.

### **3 Shaping Development Futures: An African Roundtable on Extractives, Mega Infrastructure and Women's Right of Consent. 30 November – 2 December 2016, Nairobi, Kenya**



This event which was organised by WoMin had a strong focus on FPIC and was attended a number of ACCA members. The report for this event can be found on the ACCA website.

#### **4 In-person ACCA SC meeting: 11-13 January 2017, Abuja, Nigeria**

The Steering Committee apart from its monthly skype meeting has sustained the momentum through 2 in person meetings in the course of this reporting period. The first, was the meeting held on the fringes of the ACCA general assembly last year; and the second, in Abuja, Nigeria from 11-13 January. In addition to our strategy sessions in the course of the three-day visit, the SC took advantage of their presence in Abuja to make a courtesy visit to potential donor organizations, and the ECOWAS court. We also hosted a cocktail reception for ACCA members present in Abuja. The event attracted the attention of local media and was featured in local newspapers

#### **5 The 11th Hour Connect Event**

ACCA was also invited to and represented the coalition at the 11th Hour Connect gathering in both 2016 and 2017. The Connect event which was also attended by some other members in their organizational capacity, was an experience sharing and strategy event, which provided opportunities for its grantees to regroup and rub minds around the biggest human rights and development challenges confronting our world.

### **What Next?**

Undoubtedly, we have made great strides in the past year, but we have a long way to go. Certain things which we must urgently prioritise are clear to us:

1. We must foster better platforms for learning and sharing of ideas by our member organizations. In this regard, we propose a webinar series and other learning platforms on issues and learning that are of interest to our membership;
2. We will encourage and foster country/regional level in person convenings especially around our thematic work streams;
3. Our success in securing a session at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights is only a start. We must up the quo ante and amplify the voices of our members on a global scale. We must be at the global table speaking for our own causes;
4. Our members do great work on the continent but rarely get the recognition that they deserve or the partnerships that they need. More importantly, is the often missed opportunity for collaboration between organizations working on similar project. We will invest more time and effort into showcasing our members' work and catalysing networking and synergies; and
5. We must better engage other stakeholders. In particular governments and businesses, otherwise we will not be heard.





## Conclusion

Our continued success as a coalition lies not only with a proactive Secretariat and an engaged steering committee, it lies with an active and forward looking membership who own and build their own coalition. We look forward to expanding and strengthening this great movement with you.



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