

Progress Report on Activities related to the Africa Coffee Facility (ACF)

1. Following the meeting with the President on 16th Jan 2020, Dr. Kawuma met with the Chairman of IACO (Dr. Afriyie-AKOTO, the Ghana Minister of Agriculture) and briefed him on the meeting and the commitment made by the Bank to allocate USD 500 million and other PPF resources towards the Africa Coffee Facility (ACF). He told him about the planned launch of the ACF, possibly at the AU extra-ordinary summit in July, subject to confirmation of arrangements with the AUC Secretariat. The Chairman was also briefed on the urgency for IACO to engage in roadshows to popularise the ACF and get the buy-in from the intended clients. The Chairman immediately offered to host a meeting in Accra, Ghana, on 28-29 of July 2020 for all IACO Members to have them bring details of their funding requirements and priorities so that these could be immediately shared with the Bank. Other development partners were also to be invited.
2. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became impossible to host a physical meeting in Accra, but IACO immediately engaged the Member States and introduced them to the Bank's contact persons in the different regions. Out of these, the Bank's office in Uganda was able to engage the Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA) where bilateral discussions took place on funding some coffee project in Uganda. Other leads were overtaken by the burden of COVID-19 pre-occupations. Bilateral discussions also continued between the Bank and Amir Hamza of Tanzania. However, IACO has not been privy to the outcomes of the discussions between the Bank and both UCDA and Amir Hamza.
3. IACO made a presentation at a virtual Council session of the International Coffee Organisation (ICO) in June 2020, where a progress report on the ACF was made, calling upon support from different partners to consider joining the effort. The European Union specifically asked IACO to submit a proposal related to post-COVID support to the coffee industry in Africa, which was subsequently prepared and submitted through the African Union Secretariat. The EU also indicated that they would be interested in working with Afreximbank in making interventions in the coffee industry through the ACF so as to achieve the development objectives that have been agreed upon under the EU support to Africa. Thus, IACO also submitted a concept note, through the AUC, to the EU requesting them to consider joining the effort to which Afreximbank had already committed itself. As we await feedback from the EU, so far, the Secretariat has received two funding projects from Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo.
4. In lieu of the physical meeting, IACO hosted a webinar on 28th July 2020 to which, in addition to Afreximbank, various partners were invited including the EU, AUC, ICO, AfDB and the World Bank. It was a watershed moment where commitments and interest in the ACF were expressed. It was noted that IACO's idea was plausible, as an effective way of bringing different players in the coffee industry together and working on interventions that have a regional nature that avoids the current fragmented approach.
5. In September 2020, the ICO hosted a forum at which Afreximbank made a presentation and IACO was also asked to provide an update which called upon support to the various partners to consider joining the effort of IACO and Afreximbank in addressing the continent's challenges of financing for the coffee industry.