



**'Enhancing Citizens Voice and Accountability in Africa,'**  
**By**  
**The Africa Governance Institute**

**1. Summary of Proposal**

The project "enhancing citizens voice and accountability in Africa" proposed by the Africa Governance Institute (AGI) seeks to strengthen the engagement of non-state actors (civil society and grassroots organisations) to promote voice, transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services.

Located in Dakar, Senegal, the AGI was established as a pan African think tank in 2003 to generate innovative thinking on the governance challenges facing Africa and to assist African regional and sub-regional organisations, states, civil society and the private sector to

- Engage in advocacy for democratic and Developmental Governance in Africa;
- Develop cutting edge research and innovative training methods designed to find solutions to the most pressing Governance issues identified in political dialogue session and
- Disseminate and diffuse relevant information on Governance in Africa.

The approach of the Africa Governance Institute (AGI) for this project will essentially be focussed on developing knowledge and research in areas related to demand-side driven governance and delivering targeted training to CSOs to develop their skills and knowledge in areas related to enhancing their ability to engage and participate effectively in advocacy for democratic governance and accountability mechanisms.

The knowledge developed will be translated into practical and user friendly guidance tools for use by CSOs and in addition, the AGI will strengthen its IT platform to provide materials and knowledge in areas of demand-side driven governance.

The project is supported by the AfDB and its duration will be approximately 18 months-July 2011 to December 2012.

**2. Background and Justification of the Request**

**A. Rationale for the proposed request and for the Bank's involvement**

Citizen's voice and accountability are critical elements of good governance and ensuring transparency and effectiveness in public service delivery. It is widely acknowledged that citizens as well as state institutions have a role to play in delivering governance that works for the poor and enhances democracy. In particular, citizens' capacity to express and exercise their views has the potential to influence government priorities and governance processes, including a stronger demand for transparency and accountability. Across Africa,

there are examples of Civil Society taking a more active and important role in holding governments accountable for the delivery of core public services, and contributing to reducing the incidence of corruption. However, there remains a lot of scope for further enhancing citizen's voice and accountability in Africa. According to various indicators such as the Worldwide Governance indicator for voice and accountability, the African continent has achieved barely any progress over the past few years<sup>1</sup>. Corruption remains rampant and as shown by the Transparency International Corruptions perceptions index, African countries feature among the most corrupt in the world<sup>2</sup>. This amplifies the need for increased action and support to demand-side driven governance.

As part of its work programme for 2011-2012, the AGI plans to work on economic and social transformations, which includes promoting and contributing to the achievement of transparent and accountable management of public resources. One of the aspects on which the AGI will specifically focus, is on promoting the engagement of non-state actors (Civil society, grassroots organisations, private sector etc.) in ensuring that governments are held accountable for the delivery of public services. This is part of the AGI's objective of supporting enhanced demand-side driven governance.

## B. Institutional background

The AGI is a non-governmental and non-profit pan-African Think tank on governance working under the authority of the African Union and within the framework of the AU governance agenda. AGI was established following consultations initiated in 2003 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Union Commission. Senegal, the host country, has provided AGI with its headquarters and granted it the status of African Nongovernmental International Organization. AGI is supported by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UNDP (RBA), Trust Africa, the Open Society Institute and the French Cooperation (till November 2011). The AGI also gets funding from the European Commission (DGDEVCE) in response to invitations to tender. The AGI became fully operational in 2009.

The Africa Governance Institute (AGI) was established to

- Engage in advocacy for democratic and Developmental Governance in Africa;
- Develop cutting edge research and innovative training methods designed to find solutions to the most pressing Governance issues identified in political dialogue session and
- Disseminate and diffuse relevant information on Governance in Africa.

The AGI is focussed on addressing issues led by endogenous demand of African States, the African Union, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations, African Civil Societies, Private Sector, Diaspora, Partners concerned by Developmental Governance in Africa.

Over the past couple of years AGI has organised high level discussions, workshops and seminars and developed knowledge and guidance on key issues related to governance in Africa, opening up a new forum for dialogue between various stakeholders, including governments, private sector, civil society, academics, African and international institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Worldwide Governance indicator on Voice and Accountability average for the African continent was -0.69 in 2005 and -0.69 in 2009, indicating no improvement.

<sup>2</sup> The average CPI index for 52 African countries surveyed in 2010 was 2.9, with over half categorized as either very or highly corrupt.

## C. Alignment to the Trust Fund Objectives and Rationale for Governance Trust Fund Funding

The proposal is very much aligned with GTF's objective of supporting demand-side governance and opening up spaces for alternative voices and views on specific governance topics. In 2012, the AGI is giving particular attention to developmental governance and accountability in Africa, and will examine the opportunities for bridging the gaps between civil society and governments, and strengthening CSOs capacity to meaningfully participate in accountability mechanisms.

### **3. Project Goal and Objectives**

The overall objective of the proposal is to strengthen the engagement of non-state actors (civil society and grassroots organisations) to promote voice, transparency and accountability. The expected outcome of the programme is the empowerment<sup>3</sup> of civil society in Africa, so that they can contribute to ensuring greater transparency and accountability of the government in its delivery of public services. Overtime, this will ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services, contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction.

### **4. Target Beneficiaries**

The main targeted beneficiaries of this proposal will be

- African Civil Society Organisations (Selected from across the region, as well as Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone countries)

Other beneficiaries may include:

- Government officials
- Government institutions;
- African international organisations;
- Private sector;
- Media

### **5. Proposed Activity and Expected Outputs and Outcomes**

AGI will achieve the above stated objectives through providing CSOs with the required knowledge, skills and tools to better engage in promoting greater transparency and accountability of public service delivery.

The first targeted output is to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to engage in priority areas related to ensuring greater transparency and accountability in public service delivery. This will be achieved through providing specially tailored trainings as well as offering targeted study tours to countries in Africa where CSOs have been able to successfully engage in accountability mechanisms, these may include countries such as Uganda, South Africa, Cape Verde.

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<sup>3</sup> Empowerment is understood as a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important

The second targeted output is to develop and share guidance and knowledge work on demand-side driven governance topics for strengthening CSO engagement. This will include developing practical toolkits for use by CSOs, as well as producing studies that present best practices and lessons, as well as propose innovative approaches to promoting voice and accountability. In order to share and engage a dialogue on the issues raised through this work, a conference bringing together the various stakeholders, CSOs as well as state actors, will be organised. In addition, the IT-based information sharing platform of AGI will be improved to ensure broad dissemination.

The specific themes and issues that will be targeted through the programme will be determined through a needs assessment survey, research and discussions held with the targeted beneficiaries in order to ensure that the support provided is demand-driven and that it addresses the priority areas for capacity strengthening and knowledge development. The AGI will also consider support being provided by other regional institutions and development partners to ensure that its work complements and is coordinated with that of others.

The AGI recently conducted, on the request of DGDEV/CE, a support study on the European Union Governance facility and related incentive tranche. CSOs were one of the targets of this study and were observed through a Desk Study, a sample questionnaire and field missions (in Mali, Kenya, Mozambique and Burundi). The central question was whether the Governance Profile and the implementation of the Governance Action Plan in their countries allowed them to identify their own needs in terms of capacity strengthening and knowledge development to ensure greater transparency and accountability. The first findings of the study revealed three key areas where CSOs request additional capacity strengthening and training including: social accountability, procurement, mobilization of local resources (mobilization strategy and monitoring). This has been further confirmed through the country reports established by the APRM missions in the countries considered by the Desk Study (Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Benin, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique). Other areas quoted include understanding policy processes; budget preparation processes; and cross-cutting issues like gender and environment. The needs assessment survey conducted as part of this project will seek to further confirm these first findings and to provide further justification for why these are important areas for intervention.

## **6. Project Implementation**

The project will be executed by the Africa Governance Institute, which is headed by Professor Adebayo Olukoshi. The staff of AGI - including Program Coordinator, Maurice Enguéléguélé (Ph.D. Specialist of political institutions and public action in Africa, having worked in government and international organizations, and as an academic in France and Cameroon for the past 20 years,); the Program Assistant (Ms. Bukola Oyinloye); Thierry Sanzhie Bokally (Information Systems Coordinator) and Maty Ndiaye Cisse (the Project associate) - will be responsible for the daily implementation of the programme.

The Project will be implemented through July 2011 to December 2012, with the following deliverables:

- Needs assessment (survey, research and consultations) completed by the end of September 2011
- A series of guidance notes and practical toolkits (three) developed, one in 2011 and two in 2012
- Three training sessions delivered, December 2011, April 2012 and November 2012

- Three Study tours to share best practices and approaches organised between April and November 2012.
- Conference to share best practices and new approaches in December 2012
- Assessment survey conducted by end December 2012

The process of selection of consultants will follow the rules and procedures of the Bank.

## **7. Sustainability**

The effects of the project will not be limited to the 18 months of its implementation. The knowledge developed through the project will be made available beyond the programme timeframe through AGI's website. The various capacity building activities targeting CSO will enable CSOs to engage more actively in ensuring good governance and accountability beyond the project duration. In addition, the activities of the project will contribute to networking between the beneficiaries, so that they can continue to build and share their knowledge and experience in strengthening voice, transparency and accountability.