

Support to the East African Community Integration Process

Institutional development and integration management support to the secretariat of the EAC

The challenge

The Secretariat of the East African Community, based in Arusha/Tanzania, is the executive organ of the East African Community. It is responsible for initiating, coordinating and monitoring the harmonisation of policies and strategies within the community. It is also specifically charged with implementing the decisions taken by EAC councils.

With the support of GIZ, the EAC Secretariat has developed several initiatives and projects that contribute significantly to the effective management of the regional integration process. These include improved monitoring of decisions, increased proactivity in public communications and the launch of an incubator for innovation and development for East Africa (IIDEA).

In order to respond to the increasing volume and scope of work generated by these recommendations and decisions, the Secretariat has identified key areas of institutional development to continue addressing. These include communication, monitoring, collaboration with non-state actors and improving links with citizens of the EAC.

The path ahead involves building on the already achieved progress to better deliver on council decisions and improve citizen ownership and interest in EAC affairs.

In cooperation with the EAC Secretariat, two major long-term interventions were agreed upon:

- Improvement of steering processes, management systems, internal communications and other measures to improve the functional capacity of the Secretariat.
- The development and improvement of interactive and robust communication systems towards effective, targeted and results-oriented communication.

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Our Approach

The proximity of the programme to the secretariat of the EAC allows an approach on two levels. Immediate issues and challenges can be addressed on a direct basis, while a built up trust and mutual understanding allows longer term, more sustainable interventions, such as **organisational development** to be planned and implemented.

Technical advice on **monitoring and evaluation** has concentrated on making clearer the links between a decision and its impact. The focus is now on developing more systematic ways of evaluating these impacts. Work is also advancing on the monitoring of the first 10 years of implementation of Agenda 2063 set by the African Union.

Technical work on external **communication** including training and support on the use of social media and other platforms has been planned to complement existing social media activities within the Secretariat.

When a call for IIDEA projects was published, over 76 proposals were received. Enthusiastic citizens, keen to share energy for regional development, responded from all over the region. Projects ranged from arts and drama, human rights and gender, to e-commerce and trade.



The EAC app, a mobile platform for viewing a range of information relating to the EAC, was developed on the sole voluntary, initiative of a young person keen to engage with processes of integration. GIZ has since engaged with this project to further develop the app into a dynamic tool for bi-directional communication with EAC citizens, including polls and feedback tools.



The work on **Quality Management Systems** was largely led by an experienced consulting organisation who accompanied the secretariat through the process. The programme provided back stopping support and financed the project.

Digital tools for internal communication, including the digitisation and archiving of selected institutional documents, are an example of how the program has back stopped to secretariat to meet the requirements identified through the process of putting a QMS system in place.

A more unusual approach is 'IIDEA'. This EAC initiative, supported by GIZ, seeks to engage with citizens of East Africa who have recognized the opportunities that the EAC can offer. IIDEA innovators can apply for small grants and technical assistance to incubate their citizen-led, ambitious and innovative regional projects. IIDEA will also promote and showcase achievements, challenges and successes experienced by citizens engaged in activities across borders.

Benefits

East African Monitoring System (EAMS): Supported by GIZ, the EAC has continued to develop and improve an online monitoring system to monitor council decisions. The system is now well embedded and decision makers feel better informed regarding implementation. Equally, technical support has enabled decisions to be presented in a more measurable and specific way.

Communication: The EAC secretariat significantly improved its communication using new media, which resulted in several achievements in the area of digital communication, including the launch of a new EAC web portal, the adoption of the new EAC social media policy, and the creation of an online repository that provides information on regional issues managed by the EAC Resource Centre.

Branding of the EAC: With the support of GIZ, the Corporate Communications Department developed the EAC Brand Architecture Strategy, which was adopted by the Sectoral Council of EAC Affairs and Planning. This will enable the development of a new visual corporate identity.

Quality Management System (QMS): Two directorates of the EAC are now fully ISO certified and the secretariat has completed the first surveillance audit and been accordingly awarded the ISO 9001:2008 accreditation for its QMS. The scope of extension has been completed in order to roll out certification to organs and institutions of the EAC including the MEACA in the Partner States.

Success factors

At various levels within the EAC Secretariat, GIZ has developed close working relationships which enable more direct support to respond to requests on a strategic and technical level. This, coupled with a highly diverse 'platter' of different technical input and expertise on offer, has resulted in a dynamic 'demand the response' nature to the way the support is planned and implemented.

An Example from the field

As part of the IIDEA initiative, and in order to highlight the benefits of integration for young professionals, the program will be supporting DOADOA. This is a project that unites East African performance artists, namely musicians to market their products to the European market. This innovative approach to promoting the international opportunities for East Africans is made possible by the integration process. IIDEA will assist with technical advice on organisation and seed financial support for activities including marketing and promotion. This is only one of over 15 projects that will be supported by IIDEA.

Where to learn more

The IIDEA website showcases projects, offers process documents and guidance on how to access the project and how it works with the EAC: www.eaciidea.net

The EAC website and web portal are both available online: www.eac.int

More information regarding the support to the EAC of the German cooperation is available on: www.eacgermany.org

More information of the African Union and Agenda 2063 is available on: www.au.int

Finally, the integration management team for GIZ/EAC can be contacted at:

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