



The Circle

A Semi-Annual Publication from the Center for Sustainable Development in Africa

... Building Sustainable Links to the Future

The Center for the Sustainable Development in Africa (CSDA) is crystallizing its vision of a sustainable Africa through local and global partnerships. To ensure Africa is on the path towards sustainability by 2030, CSDA is investing in programs that strengthen human capacity with the goal of exponentially increasing the number of creative, critical and strategic thinkers, innovators and entrepreneurs on the continent.

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CSDA Inc. is a United States - based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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2014 IN REVIEW

Modern Africa: Opportunities for Women and Energy and Water Access Symposium

In working to make the goals of expanding access to energy and water for all, CSDA, in partnership with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Brookings Institution, and the UN Foundation, organized a symposium on Women, Water and Energy on February 26, 2014. Hosted at CSIS, the gathering of thought leaders and practitioners highlighted the critical importance of issues at the nexus of gender, energy, water and sustainable development. Discussion topics included: removing barriers to women's access to energy and water; harnessing opportunities at the water-energy access connection through innovative social impact, and for-profit investment models; and diaspora networks and platforms to establish business ventures and relationships that catalyze more investments. View the entire event at <https://csis.org/multimedia/video-panel-3-modern-africa-symposium-opportunities-women-energy-and-water-access>.

CSDA will continue to work with its partners on critical issues concerning increasing access to water, energy, and healthcare, in Africa. A follow-up symposium is being organized for April 2015.



CSIS's Jennifer Cooke (at podium), Venkata Ramana Putti of the World Bank; Richenda Van Leeuwen with the U.N. Foundation; Paula Jackson of the American Association of Blacks in Energy and Robert T. Healey, Jr., of Healey International Relief Foundation. *Photo: Courtesy of CSIS*



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Premiere of “Darkness” at the Modern Africa Symposium

EnACT, a CSDA strategic partner, premiered its first web documentary *Darkness* at the symposium. The film exposes the harsh reality for Liberian students and young professionals – doctors, nurses, administrators and teachers – who are forced to secure energy for lighting, cooking etc. Over 90% of Liberians lack access to affordable and reliable electricity. Watch the video at <http://en-act.org/the-project/overview/>.

Ebola Crisis

The Ebola crisis, which began in March of this year, grounded, if not incapacitated, social and economic institutions in the West African nations of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. To date, over 6,800 people have died and tens of thousands were either infected or displaced from their homes and communities. The outbreak continues to have disastrous consequences for youth in the region where indefinite school closures left millions of students in academic limbo. Given the sub-region’s weak educational infrastructure before Ebola, the crisis exacerbated an already grim situation where students and teachers may not recover from the extended gap in academic retention and instruction without immediate assistance.

In light of the outbreak, CSDA had to postpone the launch of the Scholastic Olympics project scheduled for March 2014 in Liberia, <http://www.csdadr.org/scholastic.html>. More than 15 public and private schools had signed up to participate in the event that was to be hosted at Ricks Institute, a school outside of Monrovia, located in Virginia, Montserrado County, Liberia.

Inspiring Female Students at Bromley Episcopal Mission School in Liberia

On May 18, Dr. Lawrence Jones, President of CSDA Board of Directors, gave a motivational seminar for about 75 students at the all-female Bromley Episcopal Mission School about the importance of English and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education in securing successful careers and leading their nation and continent’s socio-economic transformation. Dr. Jones also delivered CSDA-donated chess games and provided a tutorial for the students in the hopes of sparking interest in the game as a means to develop critical thinking and other cognitive skills.

CSDA Donates to Joy Givers International

Joy Givers International (JGI) is a nonprofit organization that runs an after-school program in Monrovia, Liberia. In July, CSDA volunteers donated nutritional snacks to JGI students and discussed the prospect of providing chess instructions after the Ebola epidemic. For more information about JGI and its activities, please visit www.joYGiversinternational.org.



JGI's Founder Margaret Brumskine receiving CSDA donated snacks. *Photo: Courtesy of JGI*



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CSDA Co-Founder Amongst Experts Featured in EnAct's Web Documentary on Energy Poverty

In September EnAct premiered a web documentary on Energy Poverty in Washington, DC, at the celebration of the 3rd Anniversary of the UN Foundation's Energy Practitioner Network. Several prominent energy experts were featured in the documentary, including CSDA's Dr. Lawrence Jones. Watch the video at www.en-act.org.

CSDA Co-founder Honored

Dr. Lawrence Jones was appointed to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee (REEEAC). He will represent Alstom and smart grid technology companies to provide recommendations and advice on the development and implementation of programs and policies to improve the competitiveness of the U.S. renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors.

Keynote on Capacity Building in Africa at Columbia University's 8th African Diplomatic Forum

On October 31, Dr. Lawrence Jones delivered the opening keynote address entitled *Post Ebola: Building Capacity for Sustainable Development in Africa* at the 8th African Diplomatic Forum (ADF). The theme of this year's ADF was "Build Africa: The Diplomacy of Capacity Building and Our Common Future". Other keynote speakers included Her Excellency Liberata Mulamula, Ambassador of Tanzania to the U.S., and the Former U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania, Charles Stith.



In group photo from left to right: Wala Budri, Bukekile Dube the President of SIPA Pan-African Network, Dr. Lawrence Jones, Yeniva Massaquoi, and Jessica Ansah. *Photos: Courtesy of SIPA*

The forum was co-organized by the Pan-African Network based in the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), and the Institute of African Studies (IAS), both at Columbia University in New York. More at www.cuadf.com.

SIPA Pan-African Network (SPAN) is a student group that seeks to create an informal community of support and provide a platform for students interested in the economic, political, and social development of Africa and its diaspora.

The Institute of African Studies (IAS) is Columbia University's central forum and resource for African-centered academic research, program development, curriculum administration, student advisement, local, national, and international dialogue and action on Africa.



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30by30 Chess in Africa Campaign

CSDA's goal of expanding chess awareness and institutionalizing chess instruction in schools is gaining attention across the continent. The goal of the campaign, which will be officially launched in the spring of 2015, is to have 30 million students in Africa learning and playing chess by the year 2030. Young people are the foundation for sustainable development in Africa and CSDA is committed to expanding access to chess in an effort to cultivate the intellect and creativity of African youth.

The organization is building a network of schools, colleges, chess organizations, as well as public and private sector companies in and outside of Africa that have expressed interest in partnering on this groundbreaking campaign. CSDA has received the endorsement of Amon Simutowe, International Chess Grand Master from Zambia, and also a member of CSDA Board of Advisors. The three writers of the musical *Chess* - Benny Andersson & Björn Ulvaeus (both formerly of the Swedish pop group ABBA), and British song writer Tim Rice - have also lent their support to *30by30 Chess in Africa Campaign*.



"We are convinced that playing chess will help children in Africa develop important critical thinking skills. It is our hope that the "Anthem" from our musical Chess, as the theme song for this CSDA Chess in Africa Campaign, will help promote this effort and inspire young people throughout Africa to learn and play chess now and in the future."

Benny Andersson, Tim Rice and Björn Ulvaeus

Credit: Chess in Africa Map Designed for CSDA by Armah Jones

The CSDA website has garnered interest since its launch a year ago and the increase in \$1 donations to the *30by30* campaign is considered a positive sign of the public's interest and commitment to chess. The organization is confident it will reach its target goal by 2030.

Passing of CSDA Advisory Board Member

CSDA mourned the loss of Mr. C. Gyude Bryant, a member of the Advisory Board and former Head of State of Liberia. Mr. Bryant passed away on April 16, 2014 in Monrovia, Liberia. He was very instrumental in helping CSDA focus its activities on addressing the critical need to educate Africa's youth. His advice and guidance will be sorely missed.



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CSDA ACTIVITIES IN 2015

April 2015, Washington DC: *2nd Modern Africa Symposium on Opportunities for Women in Energy, Water and Healthcare Access.*

Spring 2015: *Official launch of 30by30 Chess in Africa Campaign (virtually with partners across Africa).* More at www.csdafr.org/chess.

Fall 2015, Liberia: *Scholastic Olympics (Pending the resumption of schooling).* More at www.csdafr.org/scholastic.

CSDA to Commence European Activities

In 2015, CSDA Board Member Francis Stevens George will initiate and oversee the organization's European-based operations from Norway. The primary activities will include resource mobilization and brand marketing in Europe with the aim of increasing CSDA visibility and partnerships in the areas of education and health in Africa.

CSDA Ebola-Response Initiatives

CSDA is committed to supporting the efforts of educators to fill the void created by school closures and broaden access to alternative learning methods. We will also work with local organizations to rebuild communities faced with extreme lack of access to basic infrastructure amplified by the Ebola crisis. Specifically, CSDA will identify two programs in the Mano River Union region that it will support.

Visit www.csdafr.org for more details about our programs and activities.

PARTNERSHIP NEWS

CSDA's mission to advance sustainable development relies on strategic networks and partnerships with other organizations in the field. By leveraging resources and expertise, CSDA and its partners will substantively expand the efficacy and impact of their collaborative projects.

ENACT

the ENERGY ACTION project

EnAct (www.en-act.org) examines the personal impacts of insufficient energy supply and aims to promote collective, cooperative action in support of universal access to sustainable energy. EnAct will work with CSDA to help highlight the challenges and potential solutions to energy poverty in Africa.



MWETANA Consulting and Technology Group, Inc. (www.mwetana.com.lr), a Liberia-based consulting and technology firm working in and outside of Africa will provide essential IT services to maintain CSDA's website in 2015. It is important for CSDA to highlight enterprises in Africa and provide gateways for them to collaborate with US-based organizations and companies.



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Vahid Monadjem, is CEO of Nomanini (www.nomanini.com), a South Africa-based technology firm, builds tools that facilitate cash payments in informal markets across Africa. Mr. Monadjem will offer technical advice to CSDA on how to select, develop and deploy affordable IT solutions for playing chess on the internet and on mobile devices. This will allow CSDA to monitor the progress and impact of the *30by30 Chess in Africa Campaign*.

Community Responders

CSDA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Responders (CR), a grassroots organization based in Liberia that conducted door-to-door assessment, to collect vital and inaccessible data on families during the Ebola crisis. CSDA and CR will work together to promote and support the delivery of educational services in selected urban communities in Liberia.

AFRICA FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Africa Food for Thought (AFforT) is CSDA's program to disseminate positive information and knowledge about Africa by recommending books and other critical thought leadership sources that provide content on technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and political, social, and cultural issues. Visit <http://www.csdafr.org/library.html> to view a selection of CSDA recommended books.

SUPPORT CSDA

CSDA needs your support in realizing a vision of a sustainable Africa. Your contribution will enable us to meet our goals of strengthening the continent's current and future innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders.

Please visit www.csdafr.org/support to make your tax-deductible contribution.
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