

ACE PROJECT UPDATE: NUMBER 2 OF 2018

(November 2017 to April 2018)

APPROVAL OF 2018 WORK PLANS

All the 22 ACEs submitted their draft 2018 work plans to AAU late last year. These work plans were sent to subject matter experts for review and recommendations, while World Bank gives the final clearance before AAU approval. There were a few delays due to restructuring and reallocation but all the 22 ACEs now have their 2018 Work Plans approved by World Bank.

APPROVAL OF 2018 AWP

All the ACE procurement plan were submitted by the ACE and reviewed by country procurement specialists before WB approval. Moving forward, the WB procurement approvals will be processed in a much faster time-frame.

M&E PROGRESS REPORTS

This year, it was agreed to use verification reports for the period January – December 2017 as the base documents for the performance reports to be shared at the project workshop. This was to reduce the burden of reporting on the ACEs and to focus on presenting the results submitted for the project verification. Project-wide and individual centre performance briefs have been prepared and would be shared prior to the workshop.

In terms of overall progress towards achievement of the Project Development Objective (PDO) the project is on track. Additionally, there are now at least 1,600 PhD students and 6,500 MSc students enrolled under the project. The biggest challenge continues to be internship and ensuring regional students. Further detailed assessment on the Disbursement Linked Results (DLR) is provided in the DLR Assessment section.

Disbursement Linked Results (DLR) in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD)	PAD Baseline	PAD target YR3	Cumulative Results 2017	On track
Project Development Objective (PDO) Indicators				
No. of national and regional students enrolled in new specialized short-term courses, and Master and PhD programs	1,580	9,500	15,657	Yes
No. of Regional students enrolled in new specialized short-term courses, and Master and PhD programs	987	5,300	4,987	no
No. of internationally accredited education programs	3	10	12	Yes
No. of Students and faculty with at least 1 month internship in a company or a local institution relevant to their field	1,037	4,300	3,448	no
Amount of externally generated revenue by the ACEs as paid into the designated ACE-Programme account	976877	5,000000	28,000,000	yes

VERIFICATION

1. DLR 2.1-2.4 Verification (Student Enrolment)

An improved template was shared with all the ACEs and an orientation meeting was held by WebEx in January to acquaint them with the new process and corresponding timelines. Following this, the centres submitted the required reports and received feedback for secondary submissions by February 16, 2018. The verification reports were then forwarded to Technopolis and after quality checks, feedback was shared with all centres for final revision. During the online verification survey which was launched on March 12, 2018, centres were provided with regular status reports on response rates so they could follow up on students who were yet to complete the survey. All through the exercise, issues raised regarding access to, and understanding of survey items, were promptly dispatched to Technopolis and the latter provided timely responses. Consequently, the deadline for the close of the survey was extended by a few days to allow additional time for centre to ensure students respond to the survey. At the close of the survey, centres were also provided with lists of students who could not be reached through the survey so they could be prompted about verification via telephone calls. Currently, the exercise has ended and a preliminary report is expected soon and would be shared with the centres prior to the Project Workshop in Ouagadougou.

For DLR 2.1 on short term courses, a new methodology based on centre feedback was introduced and starting February 2018, all centres can submit Short Term Course training DLRs every two months. Calls were made for submission of reports on short course students for the period January – March 2018. So far, 6 centres (ACEPRD; CERHI; CEFTER; 2iE, CEA-SAMEF; and KNUST-RWESCK) have submitted the required documentation. The results would be verified by the AAU and WB and results would be shared with Technopolis so they can be integrated into the overall results on student enrolment.

DLR 2.5-2.7 Verification

DLR 2.5 (Accreditation)

Results achieved under Accreditation were verified as and when they are reported by centres. Over the period, 4 centres (CERSA, CEA-SAMEF, CEA-SMA and RWESK-KNUST) reported respectively 1 International Accreditation, 1 National/Regional Accreditation, and 3 Self/Gap Assessments. The corresponding earnings would be credited to the respective centres along with that for student enrolment.

DLR 2.6 (Research Publications)

Nineteen (19) centres have submitted their lists of research publications for verification, the majority well after the deadline. Three more reports are expected before submission to Elsevier for verification. The DLI 2.6 report will be shared by June 2018.

DLR 2.7 (External Revenue)

For the period under review, only three centres (2iE, CERSA, CEFTER and KNUST-RWESCK) reported results. These have been verified and 2iE payment has been

processed in February 2018 together with DLR 2.8 milestone 1 and 3. Payment claims for CEFTER and KNUST would be processed together with those for student enrolment.

DLI 2.8 Milestone Verification

During the period under review, two verification exercises were undertaken. The third verification mission was undertaken in January 2018 to eight centres (2iE; CEFTER; ACEGID; ACEPRD; RWESCK; OAU-OAK; CCBAD; and WACCBIP) which reported achievement of Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLI) 2.8 milestones and requested for verification. The verification missions were held on 15 – 24 January 2018 for ACEPRD; OAU-OAK; RWESCK; and WACCBIP, while online verification of milestone achievements was undertaken for CEFTER; ACEGID; CCBAD; and 2iE. Following from the recommendations of the verifiers, the DLI 2.8 milestones of seven of the ACEs were approved by World Bank. ACEPRD has fully achieved Milestone 2 and Milestone 4, but Milestone 1 and Milestone 3 are yet to be achieved. For CEA-SMA, Milestone 1 was yet to be completely achieved, while Milestone 2 would be verified at the next Verification Mission. The fourth verification mission was undertaken in April 2018 to the following centres which reported achievement of DLI 2.8 milestones: CERHI at the University of Benin, Nigeria (reported achievement of 4 milestones); CEA-SMA at Universite Abomey Calavi, Benin Republic (re-verification of milestones 1 and 2); CEA-SAMEF at the Universite Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal (reported achievement of milestone 1); ACEPRD at the University of Jos, Nigeria (re-verification of achievement of Milestones 1 and 3); and CEFOR at the University of Port Harcourt (reported achievement of Milestones 1 and 2). According to the reports of the third-party verifiers, CEA-SMA has achieved Milestone 1 and Milestone 2. ACEPRD has now achieved DLI 2.8 Milestones 1 and 3.

5TH SUPERVISION MISSIONS TO 11 ACES

In line with the ACE project's monitoring and evaluation strategy, Supervision Teams consisting of experts in the thematic disciplines of Agriculture, Health and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) embarked on the 5th supervision missions to 11 ACEs in West and Central Africa between 12th March and 17th April 2018. The centres visited were CEFTER; CDA; PAMI; RWESCK; CERHI; ENSEA; CEA-MEM; CEA-MITIC; CERSA; ACEPRD; and CEA-SAMEF.

CEFTER: In line with the ACE sustainability strategy, the Benue State University has incorporated CEFTER as a unit of the institution and has in accordance with its Statutes appointed the Centre Leader as the Director and the Deputy Centre Leader as the Deputy Director in charge of Operations. The relationships with the partners are one-on-one and have not been organized into a coherent consortium of partners. The centre has challenges in attracting regional students, generating external revenues, and achieving international programme accreditation.

CDA: The centre has made remarkable progress on Short term courses (DLI 2.1); MSc admissions (DLI 2.2); PhD admissions (DLI 2.3); and Outreach Programmes (DLI 2.4). However, due to strike actions by academic and non-academic unions of Nigerian universities, the centre is not able to graduate students within the stipulated time period. It has challenges in attracting regional students especially females into its

programmes. Internships programmes for students need to be streamlined and more efforts should be made to accredit its programmes internationally.

PAMI: PAMI has good quality research students, working on problems in materials science and engineering. PAMI has achieved 171% in research publications, showing a commendable over-performance. However, being a technological university is an advantage which PAMI has not utilized to generate funds externally. No outreach activities have so far been undertaken. The African University of Science and Technology (AUST), where PAMI is located, has only six (6) resident faculty, while PAMI has only 2 (two) resident faculty. This model is unsustainable since AUST puts a disproportionate degree of reliance on non-resident faculty, many of whom do not reside in Nigeria.

RWESCK: RWESCK has established high quality education, research and capacity building programs. Enrollment of high quality and motivated students (MSc and PhD) that are conducting research on various topics critical to the success of the RWESCK and strong internship and capacity building programs are noteworthy. The Centre has become the de-facto graduate education and training program in water resources/management and environmental sanitation of the KNUST Department of Civil Engineering. RWESCK has made progress in building a network of national and regional partners. The Centre has made significant progress in the construction of its new education and research facilities. It is worth mentioning the KNUST administration is providing strong support to the RWESCK including additional funding toward the construction of office space for Centre faculty. In the areas of regional/female student recruitment, international accreditation and short-term courses, the Centre is facing a number of challenges that needs to be addressed.

CERHI: CERHI has made significant strides towards addressing the problems that were noted on our last visit. Excellent progress has been made in forging regional partnerships and conducting relevant short courses throughout the region. CERHI continues to identify and form meaningful linkages with a variety of regional partner institutions. Short courses have been conducted both within Nigeria and in the region. CERHI has reached out to students in the region through a variety of means, such as partner institutions and the representatives of regional governments, (eg. Embassy officials), to increase regional student enrollment. The centre has been incorporated into the University's budget and administrative structure and the University's commitment in supporting CERHI's drive to achieve excellence was reiterated by the Vice-Chancellor. However, there is slow progress on revenue generation and international accreditation.

ENSEA: ENSEA has made significant progress in the development and implementation of its education and research programs. The centre has made remarkable progress in the area of student recruitment and enrolment. It is noteworthy that ENSEA has about 50% of its students internationally recruited from 10 African countries. It has further introduced new Masters level courses in Actuarial Sciences, Agricultural Statistics and a research chair in Data Science. However, ENSEA is yet to develop a plan to initiate and complete the work required to gain international accreditation for its new academic Master's and Doctoral degree programs. It is

however yet to attain international accreditation. Also, while ENSEA has made much progress in implementing its statutory mandate of training of professional functionaries for governmental agencies and other public-sector institutions, it is yet to fully address one of the core functions a higher education institution, namely research. This is reflected in the poor research publications profile of the institution.

CEA-MEM: CEA-MEM has made significant progress in the implementation of its education and research programs. It has established four new Master's degree programmes. The centre has exceeded its target on students' enrolments; made noticeable progress on regional student recruitment. It is a mandatory requirement for all students of the centre to spend a minimum of 3 months with relevant industry before graduation. However, the students expressed the need to understand the overall mission of the CEA-MEM, and how the education/training that they are obtaining will impact their professional life and future. The centre is yet to develop a plan to initiate and execute the work required to gain international accreditation for its new Master's degree programmes. Revenue generation and overall project implementation are slow. The centre has been advised to revitalize the project and possibly hire a consultant to ensure that the day-to-day activities of the centre are diligently carried out.

CEA-MITIC: The centre has exceeded the target for Masters degree Programme (at 113%), while it is 70% achievement rate for PhD students. A total of 32 CEA-MITIC doctoral students have successfully completed their degree programme. The centre has further achieved 100% in both international accreditation and research publications. CEA-MITIC is also one of the four PASET-RSIF centres chosen to train doctoral students in Science, Engineering and Technology. However, the centre is performing poorly on short term courses (0.4%) and internships (7%). Also, its revenue generation profile stands at 31%, while improved teaching and learning relating to Disbursement Linked Indicator (DLI) 2.8 is 25%. Suggestions have been given to the leadership on what steps they should take to increase their performance on short term courses and internships. Even though their Mathematics students do not require internships before graduation, but because it is a DLI the centre was advised on strategies to make students spend a minimum of one month with key companies like Orange, Espresso, etc. and thereby achieve the DLI that will deliver the centre the money that goes with the result. The interaction with students revealed that they were satisfied with the level of academic engagement and contact time with their supervisors. They however requested for exposure to the industry to give them hands-on experience and prepare them for the world of work. The CEA-MITIC office complex is still under construction and the contractor informed the Supervision Mission team that the building would be ready in eight months' time. As a result, the centre has not bought any of the equipment it needs resulting in the low DLI 2.8 achievement rate.

CERSA: CERSA is the first agricultural ACE to achieve international accreditation. It has made considerable progress in the construction of the CERSA building scheduled to be ready for occupation within the next three months. CERSA has superseded its revenue generation target and has scored close to 100% on DLIs 2.1 (short courses), 2.2 (M.Sc. students), 2.3 (Ph.D. students) and over 100% on DLI 2.4 (Outreach activities). With the official appointments of the management team including thematic service leaders, CERSA now has the leadership structure in place. CERSA needs to pay more attention to its regional outreach for staff and students as well as regional

training through short courses. Also, its low number of research publications can be increased through: ensuring students publish their thesis before graduation; presenting publications covering all aspects of poultry sciences, basic, biological, biomedical, sociological, anthropological and economic. Funds release from government needs to be expedited in order to address CERSA's cash flow challenges.

ACEPRD: ACEPRD leadership conducted regional recruitment drives in Niger, Mali, Central Africa Republic, Togo and as far away as Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. This has resulted in increased regional applications and 49 new masters and PhD students from this pool have been admitted for the next academic year. On international accreditation, the centre has identified the Royal Society of Biology (RSB) as an appropriate accreditation agency. It has already completed and submitted the self-assessment and is currently awaiting the date for site visitation from the RSB. Although the centre has been incorporated into the university overall budget and planning, it is still making efforts to identify external revenue sources. ACEPRD still has challenges on internship programme for its students. The centre leadership was advised to consult their peers from other ACEs to improve the quality of internship made available to their students.

KEY INFORMATION ON MONTHLY ACE NEWSLETTER

In line with improving communication and engagement among higher education stakeholders, AAU introduced the ACE I Monthly Newsletter to highlight Centres' achievements and outputs. The Newsletter is presented as an additional communication channel for the dissemination of quality information related to the ACE Project and to improve information and knowledge sharing among the network. The newsletter features various activities, milestones, new developments and key undertakings by the ACEs in line with the project's objectives. The first issue, released in March 2018, outlined progress made by the various centres with regard to research and developmental impact. Stories featured included PAMI's alternative breast cancer treatment, sod-cutting for CEA-CCBAD's ultra-modern building, Update on fifth ACE supervision mission, and a feature on ACEGID's monkey pox disease diagnosis. The April 2018 issue would feature alumni and students' feedback on the ACE Project.

NATIONAL REVIEW MEETINGS

SENEGAL: Senegal held its National Review Committee Meeting on 21st December, 2017 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Dakar. The objectives of the meeting were to give an update of progress being made by the CEAs in implementing activities, make recommendations for internal and external audits, review regional and international partnerships, communications strategy of the centres and also review the work of the executive committee.

NIGERIA: The 6th meeting of the National Project Performance Review Committee (NPPRC) of Nigeria was held at the Centre for Genomics of Infectious Diseases (ACEGID), Redeemer's University, Ede on Monday, 16th April, 2018. The meeting examined substantive matters of the Mid-Term Review of the ACE Project; Reallocation of funds; Sensitisation Workshop on the Next Phase of the ACE Project (ACE III or ACE- Impact); Assisting the Nigerian ACEs through Funds Advances;

Research publications; Data on students Enrolment, internship and graduation; and National and international accreditation of ACE programmes.

GHANA: Ghana held its National Review Committee Meeting on 17th April 2018 at the Council Chamber of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). The main objective of the meeting was to ascertain the preparedness of the 3 ACEs for the 9th ACE Workshop in Ouagadougou with regards to their implementation reports, update on their finances and any challenges that they were encountering. Representatives of AAU and the World Bank were at the meeting. According to reports presented by the ACEs, implementation was on course and spending was going on as expected. A lot of progress was being made on externally generated funds. AAU took the opportunity to clarify a few things about the verification of the DLIs and explained the importance of the Higher Education Fair to the ACEs. The World Bank representative informed the ACEs about an ACE-Impact (ACE III) meeting that was being planned for stakeholders in Ghana in mid-May.

COTE D'IVOIRE: The first meeting of the National Monitoring Committee of the Cote d'Ivoire ACE Project for 2018 was held on Thursday, April 19, 2018 in the office of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The purpose of this meeting was to take stock of the activities of the centers ahead of the meeting of the steering committee to be held on May 7th, 2018 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All the centres have submitted their Interim Financial Reports (IFRs) due on February 15, 2018. The progress towards achievement of the Financial Management (FM) DLRs is on track with the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the external audit external audit in progress. This external audit should include a review of the Eligible Expenditure Programmes (EEPs) for the period referred in the IFR. In addition, for the current disbursement, EEPs submitted outside of the IFR submission have been accepted to process the withdrawal applications given the different results and FM dates. However, moving forward, for the next IFR due in August 15, 2018 and for the June 2018 IFRs, ACEs are expected to submit EEPs in the IFR. Additionally, all centres will submit their signed EEPs along with their withdrawal applications.

ACE RESTRUCTURING AND REALLOCATION

Five countries, notably Burkina Faso, Togo, Senegal, Nigeria and the Gambia have submitted the official request for project extension and reallocation. Benin has submitted request from Ministry of Higher Education with official request from Ministry of Finance on the extension expected soon. The project hopes to receive the official request for project extension from Ghana and Cameroon in the next month. Following the discussions in Senegal, Nigeria and Cameroon, final decision on the amounts of the reallocation have been made based on latest commitments and fund expenditures per center. In Nigeria, it is expected that approximately 5 million SDR (Special Drawing Right) would be reallocated across the ACEs as well as an opportunity to reallocate across DLRs. In Senegal, the reallocation is expected to be approximately SDR 2 million. Finally, in Cameroon following discussion with Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), Ministry of Higher Education and CETIC, it was agreed that a partial cancellation of 2 million would be made as part of the restructuring. It is anticipated that this reduction of funds would be

made available towards the ACE Impact. The processing for the restructuring is expected to be completed before the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2018).

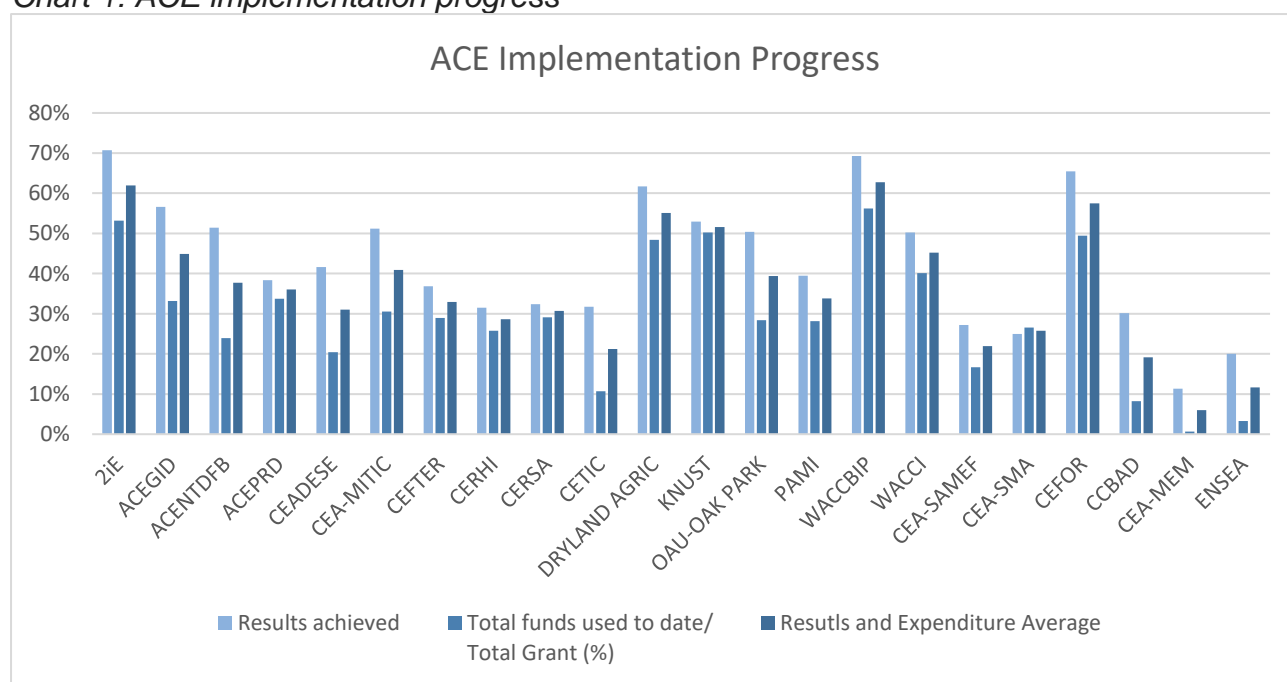
ACE DISBURSEMENT

Since November 2017 the project has made good progress on disbursements and with the submissions of withdrawal applications made for results achieved in January and February 2018, the overall project funds now disbursed increased from 45% to 54% as of April 2018. Based on the expected results from the ongoing verification, the disbursement is expected to increase to 60% by June 2018. In order to accelerate the reimbursement process of the advance provided at the beginning of the project and to avoid a large refund at the end of the project, we have started a 20% deduction process of your payment claims to document the designated accounts.

Country	Disbursement Rate as of April 2018	Planned disbursement (based on expected results) by June 30
Gambia	93%	95%
Nigeria	57%	65%
Senegal	47%	52%
Burkina Faso	75%	80%
Benin	35%	45%
Cameroon	31%	40%
Ghana	72%	75%
Togo	40%	50%
Cote d'Ivoire	26%	35%
AAU	91%	93%
project wise	54%	60%

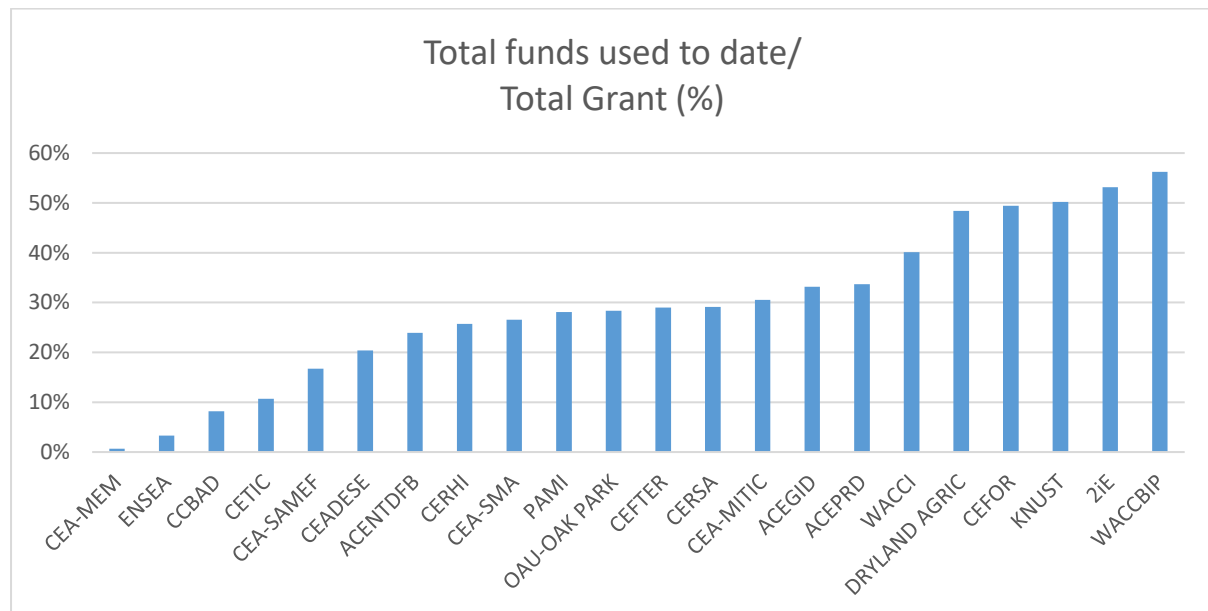
FUND UTILIZATION & RESULTS ACHIEVED

Chart 1: ACE implementation progress



The above chart shows the progress on both the fund utilization and results achieved per center. On the fund utilization, that is the proportion of funds that have been spent by each ACE has progressed, there needs to be a significant increase in fund utilization if the ACEs are to effectively spend their funds before the new project closing date of December 2019.

Chart 2: Fund utilization rate per ACE



ASSESSMENT OF DLR ACHIEVEMENTS

A review of the ACE DLR achievements per center shows considerable progress with an average achievement rate of 44%. Following the outcome of the ongoing verifications this year, it is expected that the assessment will be updated following Ouagadougou Workshop.

The ACEs have clearly achieved all their results on research publications with progress on student enrollments especially on PhD students and continued progress on MSc students. However, there needs to be a much stronger focus on the internship and outreach results now. The results on infrastructure and equipment keeps progressing and it is expected that most ACEs will achieve this in time.

ACE			SDR EARNED PER DLR										TOTAL AMOUNT EARNED (SDR)	Results achieved	
			1 Institutional Readiness	2.1 Short-term Students	2.2 Master Students	2.3 PhD Students	2.4 Internship	2.5 Accreditation	2.6 Research Publications	2.7 External Revenue	2.8 Teaching & Learning Environment	3.1 - 3.4 Fiduciary Management			4 Procurement
1	2IE	5,200,000	530,000	145,405	260,000	68,700	209,300	520,000	520,000	780,000	515,000	97,500	32,500	3,678,405	71%
2	ACEGID	5,100,000	530,000	64,285	35,750	146,750	36,400	130,000	510,000	760,000	505,000	105,625	65,000	2,888,810	57%
3	ACENTDFB	2,600,000	260,000	49,400	105,625	130,000	13,000	130,000	260,000	0	260,000	65,000	65,000	1,338,025	51%
4	ACEPRD	5,100,000	530,000	37,381	49,075	99,900	41,600	130,000	435,000	0	1,010,000	65,000	65,000	2,462,956	48%
5	CEADESE	5,100,000	530,000	0	89,700	163,950	23,400	130,000	510,000	0	505,000	105,625	65,000	2,122,675	42%
6	CEA-MITIC	5,200,000	530,000	1,040	260,000	182,800	36,400	520,000	520,000	241,860	257,500	81,250	32,500	2,663,350	51%
7	CEFTER	4,500,000	260,000	0	98,475	76,500	0	130,000	285,000	187,512	490,000	65,000	65,000	1,657,487	37%
8	CERHI	5,100,000	530,000	0	113,750	59,350	0	130,000	510,000	77,564	0	121,875	65,000	1,607,539	32%
9	CERSA	5,200,000	530,000	16,257	53,300	53,100	232,700	455,000	240,000	72,019	257,500	130,000	32,500	2,072,376	40%
10	CETIC	5,200,000	530,000	0	0	0	0	520,000	520,000	0	0	81,250	0	1,651,250	32%
11	DRYLAND AGRIC	4,500,000	260,000	12,480	65,000	250,000	46,800	260,000	465,000	750,000	490,000	113,750	65,000	2,778,030	62%
12	KNUST	5,200,000	530,000	4,111	105,950	142,100	55,900	0	450,000	780,000	515,000	105,625	65,000	2,753,686	53%
13	OAU-OAK PARK	4,500,000	260,000	55,900	56,550	134,300	18,200	260,000	105,000	750,000	490,000	73,125	65,000	2,268,075	50%
14	PAMI	5,100,000	530,000	154,423	27,625	171,800	0	195,000	510,000	0	252,500	105,625	65,000	2,011,973	39%
15	WACCBIP	5,200,000	530,000	16,510	79,625	260,000	2,600	510,000	520,000	780,000	772,500	97,500	32,500	3,601,235	69%

16	WACCI	5,200,000	530,000	13,585	34,775	260,000	13,000	130,000	465,000	780,000	257,500	97,500	32,500	2,613,860	50%
17	CEA-SAMEF	5,200,000	530,000	44,427	15,275	174,800	0	0	520,000	0	0	97,500	32,500	1,414,502	27%
18	CEA-SMA	5,300,000	530,000	2,210	94,900	131,250	0	0	435,000	0	530,000	97,500	32,500	1,853,360	35%
19	CEFOR	2,900,000	260,000	44,200	150,000	309,200	67,600	195,000	300,000	450,000	0	89,375	32,500	1,897,875	65%
20	CCBAD	4,037,927	403,793	0	32,079	201,896	2,333	0	403,793	0	161,517	12,619	0	1,218,030	30%
21	CEA-MEM	4,037,927	403,793	0	8,166	0	33,829	0	0	0	0	12,619	0	458,406	11%
22	ENSEA	2,422,756	242,276	14,173	121,138	0	100,320	0	0	0	0	7,491	0	485,397	20%
	TOT./AVE.		9,769,861	675,787	1,856,757	3,016,396	933,382	4,345,000	8,483,793	6,408,955	7,269,017	1,828,354	910,000	45,497,302	45%
	TOTAL MAX DLR		9,769,861	5,154,930	5,154,930	5,154,930	10,349,861	10,349,861	10,349,861	15,494,791	20,489,722	4,814,930	4,814,930	101,898,609	
	PERCENT EARNED		100%	13%	36%	59%	9%	42%	82%	41%	35%	38%	19%	45%	

ACE IMPACT FOR DEVELOPMENT

In parallel, there has been strong progress on the preparation of the scale of the ACE1 now officially known as ACE Impact for Development. A ministerial meeting was held on January 2018 and at least seven countries have officially expressed interest to participate in the project. The pre-announcement of the call for proposal is expected in the coming month and it is expected the new project will scale up at least half of the existing ACE1 centers. An ACE Impact Steering Committee is planned for on May 8th during the ACE1 Ouagadougou workshop.