

## KEY MESSAGES FROM 19 FEBRUARY 2019

1. ACEs were advised to work hard to increase the number of women scientists and the number of women in positions of leadership
2. The ACE IMPACT aims to train 5,000 PhD and 20,000 MSc graduates
3. Regional Networks take time to establish. They require commitment. ACEs are advised to evaluate which of their implementation plan activities are best done at the regional level.
4. The ECOWAS Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policies provide opportunities for researchers to engage and solve real problems faced by the ECOWAS countries.
5. Fifteen new experts have been added to the existing team of ACEI experts to support the ACE IMPACT Project
6. Some indicators for the success of the ACEI Project include:
  - a. **Strengthened Inter-ACE Partnerships for Research and Training** - 2iE has partnerships with 6 ACEs (4 ACE I & 2 ACE II)
  - b. **Visibility & Recognition** - WACCBIP is one of the highly sought-after partners by Global Health Networks
  - c. **Research Sponsorship** - MITIC has awarded over 300 travel fellowships and 280 scholarships
  - d. **Advocacy** - KNUST has launched a Regional Conference & School on Water Climate & Environmental Sanitation
  - e. **Entrepreneurship & Innovation** - OAU-OAK Alumni launched an e-commerce platform in Benin & set up the West Africa ICT group
  - f. **Employability** - 90% of CEFOR's March 2017 graduates are gainfully employed; WACCBIP employs 10 graduates as research Assistants
7. ACEI institutions are still to fully achieve the indicators on regionality of students and internships
8. Thirty (30) ACEI programs have been internationally accredited
9. The ACEI Project is closing in 12 months - to date 74% of the funds have been disbursed.
10. ACE centres must not accept or give kick-backs. No ACE funds must be transferred to staff accounts. Universities must identify other ways to motivate their staff
11. ACEs may only purchase two vehicles
12. The French Development Agency is contributing a grant of €6million for targeted support to selected STEM ACEs in the areas of technical assistance and regional networking.

## SOME KEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM 19 FEBRUARY 2019

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
How can the implementation of ECOWAS policies be simplified?	Compile best practices for renewable energy and energy efficiency in the ECOWAS region
How can the ACEs working in the energy sector respond to the ECOWAS Energy Policies?	Replicate these best practices to improve access to energy in the ECOWAS region Ensure that country plans are linked to the ECOWAS policies
Large regional networks eventually become ineffective. How does a network balance between size and efficiency?	Maintain realistic and modest objectives. Assess and adjust when necessary.
How do you deal with language issues in order to grow and sustain a regional network	Yes, language challenges are real. But Scientists are normally able to work together – a chemical

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
	equation remains a chemical equation irrespective of the differences in language. If resources permit – budget for interpretation. In addition, work towards being bi-lingual
The ACEs working in the mining sector are doing commendable work – but this work is not visible.	In general scientists need a great deal of support to profile their work and to simplify it for non-scientists
There are problems in the road transport sector in Africa – how has the University of Djibouti involved multi-stakeholders working in the broad transport sector?	Efforts were made to engage all the sectors in the transport and logistics in Djibouti. Yes, there is insufficient coverage of the road sector in the Djibouti Masters’ in Transport and Logistics
Have the ACEI graduates been traced yet to find out where they are after graduation?	A tracer study will be piloted soon to determine where the ACEI graduates are
How can the regional networks help the ACEs build their capacities?	The networks can support structured research partnerships, can connect scientists / ACEs, provide platforms for mentoring young research, can provide opportunities for joint research, teaching and resource mobilization.
What is the most important – the disbursement rate or performance?	The most important are the “results”. And ACEs need funding to achieve the results
Are Internships to the USA allowed?	If these are approved and are in your implementation plan. However, there is need to be frugal because overseas internships are costly
Are PhD students not more important than short courses?	Short courses enable the ACEs to achieve impact and visibility
Are we allowed to shift the short courses budget to enrol more PhD students?	Re-allocations are not supported because of the agreements signed.
In Senegal we cannot do international accreditation before national accreditation	Yes, national accreditation is a very important step before international accreditation
What can be learned in terms of institutional change?	Institutional leadership is key - this will be incorporated into the ACE IMPACT DLIs
How can the gains from ACEI be sustained?	Resource mobilization is key – including institutionalization of the ACE
Does an ACE have a legal status?	No, it is the university with a legal status A performance contract is signed between the government and the university, ACEs must be part and parcel of the universities.
Has the ACE Project begun?	The timeline for implementing the ACE IMPACT Project will be shared
What indicators make up the Institutional Readiness DLI?	The institutional readiness criteria are in the project document
The French Development Agency grant is interesting. Who qualifies?	STEM & Environment ACE IMPACT institutions from Nigeria, Benin and Cote d’Ivoire
Please clarify about funding of building constructions under the ACE Project	25% of the funds can be spent on buildings. ACEI’s must spend less on buildings
How are partnership activities funded under the ACE Project?	15% of the budget is for partnerships. Whether its industry, national or international partners. ACEs account for the 15% that they invest in

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
	nurturing or building partnerships and developing partnerships plan.
Is the 3 <sup>rd</sup> objective of the ACE IMPACT Project achievable? What are the indicators?	Development impact is difficult to measure. A team will evaluate the impact on development at the end of year 2.
Is there flexibility to alter activities?	There is a certain level of flexibility, but too many changes may require new approval.
Please give an example of risks	e.g. not building on campus land is a risk
How should faculty incentives be handled?	Financial incentives are difficult to control and sustain. Therefore don't do financial incentives. Find other ways to motivate your faculty and administrative staff
Can we purchase equipment	Yes, equipment can be purchased – but don't spend all on equipment.
We recruited students in October 2018 after maxing out the total number of allowed students - can they be included?	We count students from January
Does the \$10,000 earned from publications go to the faculty or the ACE?	It goes to the ACE
About earnings and spending?	You can earn on <b>A</b> and choose to spend on <b>B</b>
When are the funds being transferred to the ACEs? How much is each ACE getting?	The World Bank will finalize in collaboration with the governments and communication will soon reach the ACEs