



API
African Planners Institute

African Planners Institute
A CONCEPT NOTE

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	3
1.1	Legal Background.....	4
1.2	API Background	4
2.0	MISSION.....	4
3.0	VISION.....	5
4.0	GOAL	5
5.0	Outputs of API	5
6.0	Outcomes of API.....	5
7.0	API Progress	6
8.0	Next Steps.....	6
9.0	Significance of API.....	6
10.0	Core Values	7
10.1	API Partners	8
11.0	Financing and Resource Acquisition.....	8
12.0	Membership and Registration.....	9
12.1	Individual Membership	9
12.2	Membership Benefits	9
12.3	CPD	10
12.4	Discounted rates.....	10
12.5	Stay in Touch/ Up to Date	10
12.6	Investing in the Planning Profession	10
12.7	Shaping Policy	10
12.8	Rewards	10
13.0	Membership Categories and Fees.....	11
13.1	Member	11
13.2	Associate Member.....	11
13.3	Honorary Member	11
14.0	Benefits of Joining API:	11

14.1 Membership categories and fees	Error! Bookmark not defined.
15.0 Completed Activities	12
16.0 Achievements Since Endorsement of African Planning Institute	12
17.0 Ongoing Activities.....	13

1.0 Introduction

The African Planning institute is a body with a principal mandate of carrying out training and capacity development activities in the fields of urban development, management, and planning for different institutions in Africa. This Integrated Planning Institute will work closely with the different professional bodies within the built environment and serve as a voice of the African planning community. Planning addresses the use of land, resources, facilities and services in ways that secure the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of individuals and communities whether living in urban or rural areas. This Institute will be at the center of ensuring that all planning activities are well coordinated in Africa.

The Institute will constitute members working in both the public service and the private sector, across fields such as land use planning, physical planning, environmental resource management, land development, heritage conservation, social planning, transportation planning, geo information systems, and economic development. It will advocate for planners across the African continent and internationally providing membership services that help planners advance in their careers. The Institute will be a Member-Based Organization with its management complemented by volunteers, who support and contribute to activities on various levels. The Institute will draw membership from all regions of Africa, including the countries: Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt, Cameroon, DRC, Liberia, Senegal, Republic of Guinea, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe etc.

1.1 Legal Background

The Constitutive Act of African Union Article 3 of the objectives among others states that Africa will achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;(d) endorse and preserve African shared positions on matters of interest to the continent and its general public;

(j) promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;

(m) Advance the development of the continent by promoting research in science and technology.

1.2 API Background

Against the above legal background, in 2020, the Head of the Makerere University School of Architecture and Physical Planning, and, members of the Urban Afrikanischer Traum¹, approached the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University with a proposal to set up the African Planning Institute.

The two organizations had realized that while high population growth, rapid urbanization, pressure on land development and climate change were key determinants to relieving Africa from poverty; the Physical Planning fraternity remain fragmented across the continent.

The API was formed. The African Planning Institute (API) is an international organization that seeks to integrate all Physical Planning Institutes in the African continent into one Think Tank.

2.0 MISSION

The Mission of the Institute is, to enrich the art and science of sustainable economic, social, environmental, human, physical development planning and design, and, the theory and practice relating thereto.

¹ Urban Afrikanischer Traum is a non-government organization that was established in Uganda in 2019 to promote sustainable urban growth. <https://www.urbanafriktraum.org/>

3.0 VISION

- A leading and globally respected voice of professional planning in Africa.
- To be a leading African think tank for spatial planning, policy, design and development in Africa.

4.0 GOAL

To advance and raise the profile of professional planning in Africa, through leadership, specialized services, advocacy, expertise, and education.

5.0 Outputs of API

A leading African think tank for planning, policy, design and emerging technologies in Africa.

API will connect and raise the profile of Physical planners including their institutes into one African platform, and,

A platform for African Built Environment professionals solving Africa's urban challenges.

Alleviate unemployment in the Built Environment Professionals sector.

To be Africa's leading Think Tank in planning and development sector represented by wider African planning community within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

To advance and raise the profile of professional planning in Africa, through active leadership, specialized services, advocacy, expertise, and education.

6.0 Outcomes of API

To advance planning research and integrate planning and development through active participation of academia, research institutions, public and private sector organizations.

To manage and plan for different institutions in Africa.

To develop relevant programs, products, and services that are suitable for the needs and value of members.

To communicate and promote the profession, related programs, services, and advocacy efforts internationally and

To develop public policy positions supported by advocacy and partnerships across the continent.

7.0 API Progress

The concept document has been drafted

- On 6 September 2020, an online Urban African Forum was launched. This Forum brought together different professionals from across the African continent.
- February 2021: meeting with Makerere University Vice Chancellor to explore the possibility of hosting API at Makerere University.
- 26 February 2021: API concept presented to the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Tourism and Transportation, Government of Japan.
- 12 April 2021 API concept note presented for approval to Makerere University Central Management Committee. Proposal accepted and approved.

8.0 Next Steps

The next steps below cannot proceed unless the MOU between Makerere University and the API is established.

- Makerere University to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with API.
- Makerere University to provide office space and infrastructure, including volunteer staff.
- African Cities Lab Call for proposals submitted by 15 June 2021
- Funding to be received from the Government of Japan.
- Fast tracked establishment and operationalization of the API in the short run.
- Integrated platform for planners across the African continent operational.
- Planning and development capacity building operational.
- Improved education and research productivity operational.
- International cooperation and collaboration (Japan) implemented.
- Knowledge resource hub operational.

9.0 Significance of API

API will undertake the following core activities to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

- i) Expansion of the planning network. Through engaging planners, architects, environmentalists, public and private sector officials, economic planners etc. from across the continent to interact and discuss experiences, solve real world challenges, and share employment opportunities.
- ii) Connect specialists and professionals. Through bringing together professionals with shared interests to communicate and network in the areas of academia/ research, institutions, and industry.
- iii) Avail Information and current updates. All members will have access to the current information regarding contemporary planning practices, and unlimited access to current and archived publications.
- iv) Carry out trainings and capacity building. Advanced trainings will be carried out and/or delivered either in-person and online at the reduced member rate. Thus, this will improve the skill set of the different planners across the continent.
- v) Planning Portal/ Repository. Develop and manage online African planning portal through digital presence as a comprehensive planning resource to serve the interests of its members and planning stakeholders.
- vi) Enabling African Planning & Development Capacity Building
- vii) We partner with the most established Built environment professionals, entrepreneurs, contemporary programmes, and emerging technologies in Africa
- viii) We show case the quiver-full of the most educated, entrepreneurial, and influential Built Environment professionals with potential to transform African urban melieu.
- ix) We unravel areas in Africa's cities that function as if there are no built environment professionals like Physical Planners, Architects, urban designers etc in Africa?
- x) We generate data base of African graduates from African institutions in the Built Environment and remain unemployed or cannot start a business?

10.0 Core Values

API core values and beliefs are essential in enhancing its performance and sustainability. These values include;

- Professionalism
- Quality
- Inclusiveness
- Openness
- Ethical
- Transparency
- Innovation
- Collaboration

10.1 API Partners

Makerere University was identified as an essential partner, which demonstrated willingness to host API. Following a legal framework, API will be hosted at the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT) at Makerere University. More still, API intends to participate in a variety of external projects under different programs with organizations such as:

- Association of African Planning Schools
- African Association of Architects
- United Nations
- African Center for Cities
- Economic Commission for Africa
- UN-Habitat
- Non-Government Organizations
- Government Agencies
- European Union
- International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP)
- African Development Bank
- African Cities Research Consortium and other organizations

11.0 Financing and Resource Acquisition

Funding sources will include: membership dues, fundraising, consultancies, short courses, study visits, private sector, for-profit companies, philanthropic foundations, grants from international, local, state and federal agencies, private donations, and purchase of API promotional items.

In addition to its core training and capacity development mandate, the Institute will also carry out policy research activities regarding urban-rural development, management and planning themes. Likewise, it will undertake policy advisory services at the request of African urban development institutions. The Institute will also respond to the potential funding grants such as Horizon 2020, multi-lateral and bi-lateral calls relevant to the advancement of planning. The Institute may also commission its own research studies on a need basis subject to the funding sources and requirements.

Research proposals seeking for external funding will be drafted to ensure that the knowledge base is widened. Research projects will encompass a wide range of fields related to urban development such as, Inclusive Cities, Urban Governance, Migration and Refugees in Urban Areas, Vulnerable groups, Climate Change, Livelihoods, Urban Transport, Urban Culture and Heritage, Urban and Spatial Planning and Design, Public Space, Informal Sector, Urban Resilience, Healthy cities, Housing, Smart Cities, land tenure etc.

The African Planning Institute will also undertake consultancies and organize regular series of master classes, planning studios, policy dialogues, public seminars, policy conferences, and study visits within Africa and beyond.

12.0 Membership and Registration

With members across 54 countries, API will have a valuable network of planners practicing across Africa and abroad. Through API events and membership of various local branches, the networking opportunities to enhance professional contacts will be significant. API membership will provide opportunities for learning, sharing, and collaborating with other planning professionals.

12.1 Individual Membership

The Institute will bring together members from 54 African countries and beyond, who work in the public, private and non-profit sectors. Members of API who share a common interest will interact, cooperate and network internationally to improve cities and urban areas through robust practices which include planning, research, training and education.

12.2 Membership Benefits

Members will have access to our exclusive members' area on the API website which will include job listings, press releases, and publications. API members' area will provide

access to a range of resources which will enable members to stay updated with research, circulars, law, and other briefings.

12.3 CPD

API will provide members with access to Continuing Professional Development (CPD), seminars, conferences, social and networking events nationally and regionally.

12.4 Discounted rates

API members will be eligible for discounted rates at all API events. This includes conferences, CPDs, and Branch events which debate current issues and showcase transformation in policy design and application.

API offers special membership plans for unemployed, retired, and overseas members.

12.5 Stay in Touch/ Up to Date

API will provide regular updates to our members in relation to African Union planning. Members will be updated through the API website, regular ezines, and social media.

Our CPD program will ensure members are updated with the current trends in policy and planning. The local branch network will provide support for planners at a local level with social events, lectures, seminars, and CPD events.

12.6 Investing in the Planning Profession

The African Planning Institute will use revenue from events, membership subscriptions, and grants to support work and advance planning for the benefit of the community and the common good. API membership will directly contribute to strengthening planning in Africa.

12.7 Shaping Policy

API will provide opportunities to prepare and contribute to API submissions thereby shaping policymaking regarding key planning issues.

API offers a special interest forum made up of experienced members who will contribute to informing policy for the Institute.

12.8 Rewards

API members can also avail of an expanding range of discounts and rewards.

13.0 Membership Categories and Fees

13.1 Member

API membership shall be open to any individuals or professionals registered by professional boards to practice spatial planning, urban and regional planning, urban planning, regional planning, land use planning, urban governance, urban design/Architecture, human settlement planning and/or development which fosters API objectives.

13.2 Associate Member

Associate membership will be granted to professional graduates in spatial planning, urban planning, regional planning, land use planning, urban governance, urban design/architecture, human settlement planning and/or development which fosters API objectives. In addition, individual in other professions which are related to spatial planning can apply for associate membership.

13.3 Honorary Member

Honorary membership (friends of API) will be granted to individuals of organizations based on their outstanding contribution in the pursuance of the mandate and principles of API.

14.0 Benefits of Joining API:

Organization's members will be able to connect with resources, and collaborate with partners to address common urban problems.

Institutional members will have access to a global audience and global career opportunities.

Institutional members may participate, contribute, benefit from activities of the Institute, and become part of its Advisory Board.

Institutional members will be able to transfer resources, networks, information and opportunities for professional development to members of society.

Members in good standing will have the privilege to use the name of API as a signature for their emails as well as enrich their CVs.

15.0 Completed Activities

According to the State of Planning in Africa by the UN-habitat, the following are the core areas that need immediate address by the Institute.

Nine out of fifteen countries have laws that regulate the registration of planning at a national level (Burkina Faso, Uganda, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia).

Countries that do not have such regulation in place include Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Countries where legislation to regulate the planning profession is being contemplated include Ghana and Uganda.

In some of the countries planning is not offered at higher education institutions (e.g., Burkina Faso); while in Mauritius planning courses are offered based on demand.

Countries such as Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe have relatively higher levels of registered planners per 100,000 people in comparison to others like Burkina Faso, Malawi, and Uganda which have less.

These will be the priority areas in the first 5-year work operation of the African Planning Institute.

- Develop a 5-year Strategic Plan.
- Advocate for laws to regulate planning at national level in the different African countries.
- Advocate for planning courses to be offered in at least one higher institution in every African country through collaborations.
- Carry out trainings for basic planning skills in each region.
- Seek for partnerships with international agencies.
- Solicit for funding through developing proposals for research and grants.

16.0 Achievements Since Endorsement of African Planning Institute

Support has been requested to help formalize the existence of API. This entailed, identifying Pan- African Institution that can host this Institute. Discussions have been held with Makerere University and an Understanding has been reached whereby the institution will be hosted as part of the university.

Extension of the forum has been forwarded to different platforms such as ISOCARP for purposes of securing financial, human and technical support.

17.0 Ongoing Activities

Networking to support professional exchange activities with different institutions including Association of African Planning Schools, Commonwealth Universities Forum, Commonwealth Association of Planners/Architects, ISOCARP, and Makerere University Kampala among others.

- Developing a membership Database.
- Professionalizing the Urban Group platform.
- In-depth discussions with members through phone calls, emails etc.
- Recruiting more members from African countries.
- Scheduling webinars for African Planning Institute platform.
- Developing a concept note for the African Planning Institute.
- Developing strategies to address some of the research findings published by the Commonwealth Association of Architects/Planners on the status of built environment professions in African countries.
- Virtual Conferences on all Programmes.