

Africa's film industry gets a boost

NAIROBI, Kenya - Structures endorsed by the African Union have been finalised to promote the audiovisual and cinema industry in Africa which accounts for US\$5 billion in continental GDP.



African Union member states endorse the draft statute of the African Audiovisual and Cinema Commission (AACC) to boost the African cinema industry.

The African Audiovisual and Cinema Commission (AACC) has been formally established and will be responsible for the promotion of the African audiovisual and cinema industry. Ministers of youth, culture and sport of the African Union member states meeting in Nairobi endorsed the Draft Statute of the African Audiovisual and Cinema Commission (AACC) at the Extraordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Youth, Culture and Sport (STC-YCS2).

The AACC was established in June 2016 in Addis Ababa Ethiopia as a specialised agency of the African Union. The Ministers also approved establishment of the AACC Temporary Secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya.

The establishment and the endorsement of the statutes is the result of concerted efforts led by the Government of the Republic of Kenya; the [Pan African Federation of Filmmakers](#) (FEPACI), currently hosted by the Government of Kenya; the African Union Commission (AUC); and leading film producing countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe among others.

Establishment of AACC was first called for by the AU Executive Council in Maputo, Mozambique, in 2003.

African cinema

The African Audiovisual and Cinema Commission (AACC) will be responsible for the promotion of the rapid development of the African audiovisual and cinema industry and shall encourage creation of appropriate structures at the national, regional and continental levels; strengthen cooperation between African States in the area of audiovisual and cinema; and promote the use of audiovisual and cinematic expressions as factors of job creation, integration, solidarity, respect of values and mutual understanding in order to foster peace, a positive image of Africa, and prevent conflicts.

The audiovisual and cinema industry accounts for US\$5 billion in continental GDP, employing an estimated 5 million people. With the current push for its development, this industry is expected to grow to over 20 million jobs and US\$20 billion in annual GDP contribution.

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The AACC is part of a four programme ecosystem that is mobilising US\$410 million in programme funds for the promotion of this industry over the next five years. These resources will be raised from both the private and public sector and will be implemented primarily by the private sector.

The National Governments and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) shall have the responsibility of incorporating sectoral activities of the audiovisual and cinema industry into their economic and social priority strategies to give the right signals for resource mobilisation.

Benefits

This renewed effort will have following benefits for African countries:

1. Grow the sector from 5 to 20 million jobs in the medium term.
2. Grow the sector from US\$5 billion to 20 billion in annual GDP contribution, in the medium term.
3. A robust audiovisual and cinema industry capable of projecting a positive image of Africa.
4. Facilitate attainment of Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want, and be a good base for the export of African film products and services to international audiences and customers.
5. Enhance capacity of the continent to meet its foreign policy objectives particularly peace building, integration, and Pan-Africanism.

The meeting also took note of FEPACI's proposal on Regional Centres of Excellence in Film Production and Post-Production for the promotion and development of the audiovisual and cinema sector in Africa. Members were requested to support the creation of these centres across the continent to enhance production of more quality films.

It also took note of the initiative by FEPACI and AUC to develop cinematic expressions on African Union's Agenda 2063 that will encompass all players in cinema production. This will also enable better domestication and popularisation of the AU Agenda 2063.

The Pan African Federation of Filmmakers, founded in 1969, is the 'voice' of the African filmmaker. The FEPACI Secretariat moved to Kenya in 2013 and began its work of facilitating, strengthening, and promoting the interests of the African Filmmaker through creation of structures and programmes.

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