

Remarks by Dr. Admassu Tsegaye, President, Addis Ababa University, at the project launch on October 26, 2016

We appreciate the World Bank for this regional idea. It is an innovative approach that gives us Africans a chance to work together. The Centers of Excellence will strengthen our capacity and it's in line with our objective and we appreciate the vision of the World Bank. We had a meeting of Vice Chancellors on facilitating the Centers of Excellence. We identified one of the major challenges [to implementation] as bureaucracy. If all the Vice Chancellors are on board I don't think that bureaucracy would be a serious problem to implementation. We need to have a roundtable of Vice Chancellors of ACEs to meet frequently and share experiences and solve the problem of bureaucracy which is a bottleneck in our institutions. The other issue [discussed] was incentives. We know that incentives are not included in this project. We need income generating activities and also to think of other sources of funding. The other issue [Vice Chancellors discussed] is how to attract female students. Women form half of our society. Women participation is important to achieve development.

When we go back we shall engage academic and support staff so that they understand the establishment of the Centers of Excellence. Finally, I would like to thank Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) and the government of Kenya for hosting us. After six months another meeting is expected to take place in Addis Ababa and we will welcome you. I would like to thank Prof. Ikyo from ACE I for sharing his experiences. These Centers will not be Centers for Eastern and Southern Africa, they will be centers for the world.