

For Immediate Release

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New Initiative Launched to Support Entrepreneurship in Uganda

The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs and consortium of partners to build entrepreneurship capacity in Gulu and Kampala

KAMPALA, Uganda – March 28, 2018 – The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) announced the launch of a new initiative that will bolster entrepreneurship in two regions in Uganda.

This program, called the ***Uganda Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Initiative***, will take place in two phases. Phase I will diagnose and assess the current environment in which entrepreneurs in the Gulu and Kampala areas operate in order to produce recommendations to improve these entrepreneurial ecosystems. Contingent on the successful completion of the first phase, Phase II will constitute implementing these solutions as part of a multi-year, multi-stakeholder strategy. The initiative is a novel program that will take a systems-level approach to assessing the assets, networks, regulations and cultural values that make up entrepreneurial ecosystems.

“ANDE and our partners believe that creating an environment in which small and growing business entrepreneurs can thrive is critical to the long-term economic growth and opportunity for any country and its citizens. We are excited to launch this holistic approach to entrepreneurship support in Uganda,” said ANDE’s Executive Director Randall Kempner.

After a comprehensive selection process, a consortium led by the [Centre for Development Alternatives](#), a Uganda-based think-and-do-tank and consultancy, has been selected as the implementing partner of the first phase of the initiative. Other members of the consortium are [Enterprise Uganda](#) and [Koltai & Company](#).

The initiative launched Wednesday, March 14, 2018, and Phase I should be completed by September 2018. The first phase of the Uganda Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Initiative is funded by the [Argidius Foundation](#), the [Dutch Good Growth Fund](#), and the [Small Foundation](#). The second phase will be open to other funders and to other implementing partners.

The **Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE)** is a global network of more than 280 organizations from 150 countries that propel entrepreneurship in emerging markets. ANDE members provide critical financial, educational, and business support services to small and growing businesses (SGBs) based on the conviction that SGBs will create jobs, stimulate long-term economic growth, and produce environmental and social benefits. Ultimately, we believe that SGBs can help lift countries out of poverty. For more information about ANDE, please visit: <http://www.andeglobal.org>.

The **Argidius Foundation** promotes the growth of small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in order to improve the lives of the poor through increased income generation. Argidius helps build effective ecosystems that provide SMEs with the right services in all stages of their growth:

- By supporting growing SMEs to be investment ready and gain access to finance
- By providing tailored capacity development services that enable entrepreneurs to meet the challenges of growth, such as incubation, acceleration, training, coaching, mentoring and networking

The **Dutch Good Growth Fund** is a “fund of fund” investment initiative from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that aims to improve financing for the “missing middle” – i.e. entrepreneurs who have outgrown micro-finance but do not yet have access to conventional capital markets. The Seed Capital and Business Development (SC&BD) facility is established to further the impact of the DGGF by providing Technical Assistance, Seed Capital and Business Support Services to intermediary funds and local SMEs. In addition, the program incorporates a knowledge development and sharing component that supports research, tests assumptions and shares insights on financing SMEs in developing countries and emerging markets - fostering industry-wide knowledge exchange.

The **Small Foundation** is working to end extreme poverty and chronic hunger in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. Small Foundation aims to do this by catalyzing the proliferation of sustainable income-generating opportunities for extremely poor people in rural areas, most of whom are smallholder farmers. To that end, Small Foundation supports finance and technical assistance providers that improve the business ecosystem for on-farm and off-farm micro, small and medium rural enterprises by expanding access to knowledge, finance, technology, and markets. Small Foundation supports highly-leveraged interventions that do this in ways that are effective, sustainable and scalable.

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