

## **PROPOSED SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP — MILWAUKEE AND BOMET (KENYA) INFORMATION SHEET**

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### **Demographics**

Bomet County is one of the 47 Counties of Kenya (created under the 2010 Constitution). Bomet town, which is a multicultural urban centre with a population of approximately 110,000, is the capital and administrative centre of the County government. The population of the County is approximately 800,000 and is mainly youthful; that is, two out of five people are under the age of 15. The ethnic composition of the population comprises the Kipsigis (the largest group), the Kisii, the Kikuyu and the Luo. Christianity is the main religion (82.7%) of the people of Bomet (the same as the rest of the Kenyan population), while the second largest religion is Islam (11.1%). Other religions are Hinduism, Baha'I and traditional African religions.

### **Geographical description**

Bomet County is situated in the western highlands of Kenya, approximately 50 kilometres south of the Equator, and about 230 kilometres southwest of Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. The County is characterised by undulating topography, which can be divided into two ecological zones; namely, a hilly shelf that runs between the Mau Escarpment in the north, and the lowland plains that extend to the world-famous Maasai Mara game reserve in the south (between 2,500 and 1,800 metres above the sea level). Five major rivers traverse the County and drain into Lake Victoria (the source of River Nile) 100-odd kilometres to the west.

### **Historical background**

Bomet County was founded as a British colonial sub-district in 1902 when the Kericho district, of which Bomet was part, was established as the main colonial administrative post in the early years of colonial rule in Kenya. In 1907, British colonial authorities introduced European settlement in parts of Bomet County to develop commercial farming (dairy and crop farming) in the region and a modern economy in general. In the 1930s, tea was introduced in Bomet County. Today, the County is the top tea producer in Kenya (while Kenya in general is ranked third as a world producer of black tea after China and India).

### **Governmental structure**

Kenya is a republic (having become independent of British colonial rule in 1963) with a presidential system. The country is governed on two levels under the 2010 Constitution; namely, National and County government levels. The National government is headed by a President elected directly by the people, a two-chamber House of Parliament (comprising the National Assembly and the Senate) and the Judiciary. The 47 County governments are headed by Governors elected directly by the people (as the executive arm of County governments) and County Assemblies (legislative arm). These two levels of government work together in cooperation and consultation under the Inter-governmental Act as provided by the Constitution. Currently, the government of Kenya is headed a President elected in 2013 under the Jubilee coalition of political parties while the Opposition is headed the Cord coalition of parties.

### **Educational system**

Kenya's public education system is 8-4-4, that is, 8 years of primary education, 4 years of secondary education and 4 years of college or university education. This was introduced in 1985 after many years of a quasi-British system that had existed since Kenya attained independence from Britain in 1963. At the primary level, students take the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and at secondary, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). However, some private schools in Kenya offer a system of education similar to the British system of education with ordinary level exams, "O-levels" taken at the end of 4 years of secondary school and advanced levels "A-levels", taken after two years of high school. Kenya has several world-standard public universities such as University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University.

### **Areas of mutual interest**

Bomet town and County can offer rewarding opportunities for investment and trade to the residents of Milwaukee under a sister-city relationship. There are also social and cultural possibilities that can be explored. Similarly, Bomet could gain a great deal from the experiences and rich history of Milwaukee in a sister-city relationship. Areas of mutual interest include:

- Direct tea exports to Milwaukee. Currently, the bulk of tea produced in Bomet is exported to Egypt, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Afghanistan and Sudan
- Investment in horticulture. Bomet has the ideal climate for horticultural crops
- Fresh fruits and vegetable export to Milwaukee. Tropical fruits include bananas, passion fruit, avocado, chillies, pineapple, onions, leeks and peas
- Investment in energy. There are large rivers in the County that can be harnessed to produce hydro-power generation
- African traditional hand-made artefacts could be exported to Milwaukee for cultural exchange and tourism
- Importation of manufactured goods from Milwaukee
- Investment in American education. Kenya has a shortage of American college education system yet it is in high demand (many Kenyan students travel to USA every year for this kind of education)

### **Details of communications**

The Bomet Development Trust (BDT) is the non-governmental organization that has been mandated to lead the sister-city relationship project in partnership with Pan-African Community Association (PACA). BDT is managed by a board of trustees headed by the Managing Trustee. The organisation enjoys the support of the County Government of Bomet, the Bomet Chamber of Commerce and the farming community of Bomet.

## **Information about the NGO:**

### **Pan-African Community Association (PACA)**

**PACA's organizational status:** 501c-3

#### **Board of Directors:**

O. Peter Akubeze, President (Department of Africology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)

Kwabena Falson, Vice President (Retired, Brady Corporation)

Fessahaye Mebrahtu, Executive Director (PACA)

Solomon Tesfai, Treasurer (Miller Coors)

Ishaq Andreku, Secretary (IT professional, African music expert)

#### **Board Members:**

Dr. Peter Ruta – Retired from Froedtert Hospital – Chaplain Director and Psychologist (Therapist)

Paulette Bangura – Faculty Staff - UWM-School of Continued Education: Center for Urban Community Development

William Johnson – Urban Economic Development Association

Dr. Aaron Buseh – Professor – UWM-College of Nursing

John Avudria – IT Consultant – Johnson Controls

Khay Khong – International Marketing & Sales Director, Inpro Corporation

Yainkain Fofana – Self-Employed Entrepreneur

Dr. Alemayehu Dashow – Blood Center of Wisconsin (a veterinarian by training and long experience in Ethiopia)

Steven Kaimuiru – Self-Employed – Entrepreneur (Civil Engineering Business Owner)

Serge Miamiaghe – Financial Analyst – General Motors Financial Services

John Muoria – Bio-Chemist and Master Brewer, Miller-Coors Brewery

Claire Von Fossen – Fund Developer for Nonprofit organizations

Tsimankinda Kadima – Retired Teacher: Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS)

### **Goals of PACA regarding the sister city relationship:**

PACA has a division called African Diaspora Development Institute (ADDI), which coordinates resource development programs such as sister city initiatives. The African immigrants and refugees are over 3 million in the United States, and among the most highly educated and upward mobile compared to other groups. ADDI was formed to reduce the effects of brain-drain by opening up entrepreneurial and cultural exchange opportunities between USA and Africa.

PACA provides social services to a large number of Southeast Asian refugees. In the African spirit of community, this Medan-Milwaukee sister city initiative is a natural fit under PACA's ADDI.

### **Current Activities of PACA in relation to the proposed sister city**

PACA is in communication with the NGO in Medan City, the Chamber of Commerce of Medan, and also the Consulate General of Indonesia in Chicago. We are also reaching out to the Indonesian community in the metro Milwaukee area. We have also offered to assist in Midwest-Indonesian Forum scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup> in Milwaukee.

### **Methods that PACA will use to meet the goals of the proposed sister city relationship**

The local African communities are organized by nationality or ethnicity. PACA acts as a conduit, encouraging these local communities to spearhead sister city relationships with their African places of origin. We will use the same approach to reach out to the local Indonesian and Asian communities for funding and support.

PACA has direct experience with sister city relationships. It has two projects, namely, Morogoro in Tanzania and uMhlathuze in KwaZulu Nata, South Africa. Another project with Bomet County in Kenya is being developed.

### **Financial base of the organization and funds available to support the sister city relationship**

The financial backing will come from ADDI's efforts to raise funds through the various local African and African communities. This extends beyond the communities in Milwaukee and should include the rest of the state of Wisconsin, and even Illinois.

### **Evidence of local community support for the sister city relationship, including financial support and interest in exchange program**

The Asian community in Milwaukee is vibrant and growing. Indonesia is a major Asian country, and a sister city relationship will create much excitement. It will bring mutually beneficial exchange in trade, culture, education, research and goodwill.

There are Indonesian students and faculty members at top colleges in Wisconsin— Marquette University, University of Milwaukee-Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin-Madison, MSOE, etc. There are also professionals in Milwaukee and Madison who are from Indonesia. There are a number of Indonesian and Malaysian restaurants that the Indonesian community often meets at. In fact, one of the restaurant owners is from the city of Medan.

PACA has resettled a significant number of Myanmar refugees who had lived in Malaysia on transit. Many learned to speak Malay or Indonesian fluently. They stand to benefit from this relationship with Indonesia.

The outlook on financial support and interest in the program is exce