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# REPORT OF THE OTTAWA CHAPTER INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE SUBMITTED TO ICAN-CANADA EXCO

JULY 08, 2022

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# Executive Summary

## Preamble

ICAN Canada Executive Committee inaugurated the Ottawa Chapter Investigative Committee (OCIC or the Committee) on May 17, 2022. OCIC's mandate was to investigate and report on the alleged apparent reputational damage associated with the launch of the Ottawa chapter on April 9, 2022, and to provide recommendations that will prevent a re-occurrence of such incidence in the opening of future chapters.

The Committee (comprising a team of five members) scheduled six interviews with the ICAN Canada Executives and other people involved to ascertain the facts surrounding the Ottawa Chapter launch. Out of the groups of people invited for fact findings, it is unfortunate to note that the following officers declined our invitations and several pleas:

- ICAN Canada District Chairman,
- Ottawa Chapter Coordinator
- Ottawa Chapter Ex-Officio member

Regrettably, the respect accorded to the District Chairman (Mr. Toba Dada) by our Committee went unreciprocated. The office of an ICAN District Chairman requires a higher level of professionalism in managing conflict resolution.

The following represents key findings and recommendations from our investigation:

## Findings

- There was no pre-approved budget for the Ottawa Chapter Inauguration.
- There exists an internal reputational damage and no cohesion within the ICAN Canada District Society (ICDS) Exco, leading to communication breakdown and Exco members working in silos.

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# Executive Summary

- There is no clarity regarding guidelines on spending, and approval. Some Exco members are not aware of current guidelines and procedures.
- Existing spending procedure and processes for inauguration appears to put emphasis on what used to be done rather than what should be done.

## **Recommendations**

- Subsequent yearly budget proposals should include budgeted items for Chapter inauguration, even though prior chapters were inaugurated with out-of-pocket funds.
- The District Bye-law should be updated, or a document created to include operational procedures that reflect delegation of authority and who approves expenditure on behalf of the District.
- The “Philosophy of the Chapter” document should be incorporated in the Bye Law as part of the Chapter Framework and strictly adhered to during Chapter formations.
- An inaugurating committee, including an Ex-official member, can be appointed to lead inaugurations. The committee chair is recommended to be someone with adequate knowledge of the District's operating guidelines.
- Training/orientation package to be created and provided to new ExcOs after being sworn in.
- ICDS Exco to have a team building event to talk through current issues and strengthen deteriorating relationship.

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# Background

On April 30, 2022, the ICDS executive committee met with the “Body of Past Chairmen” and agreed to appoint an independent committee to investigate apparent reputational damage associated with the launch of the Ottawa chapter.

Subsequently, the Ottawa Chapter Investigative Committee (OCIC) was inaugurated on May 17, 2022, by the ICAN Canada Exco, with the following terms of reference:

**A.** To investigate alleged violations in the Ottawa chapter, launch such as:

- Lack of pre-approved budget and committing District funds without Exco approval
- Reputational damage from unpaid third-party/ vendors debt for an extended period
- Appointment of non-financial ICDS members (guests) as chapter executive officers
- Non-involvement and exclusion of ICDS Exco and Past Chairmen from participation in the event
- The choice of a scheduled Exco meeting date (April 9) and time (4.00 pm EST) to undertake the Ottawa chapter launch.
- Non-adherence to the chapter formation guidelines (Non-financial members are guests and cannot hold any official position)

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# Background

**B** The outcome would serve as learning on what not to repeat by existing and/or future chapters of ICDS.

## **Responsibilities**

- Define the alleged violations specific to the Ottawa chapter launch
- Highlight the violations that do not conform with laid down norms, rules, regulations, and precedents of existing ICDS chapters
- Review the violations subject to the principles of ICDS Byelaw & Chapter guidelines and precedents
- Make appropriate recommendations to Exco

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# Methodology

To fulfil its terms of reference and appointment, the OCIC scheduled six video interviews. However, only three groups honored the invitation to ascertain the facts about the Ottawa Chapter launch.

Groups that honored the invitation:

- ICAN Canada District Executive Committee members (excluding the chairman)
- ICAN Canada District Publicity Secretary
- Body of ICAN Canada District Past Chairmen

The following officers were separately invited to video interviews but declined the invitations. Subsequently, several attempts were made to obtain any form of official response, but this was also rejected:

- ICAN Canada District's current chairman
- Ottawa Chapter Coordinator
- Ottawa Chapter Ex-Officio member

The respect accorded the District Chairman by our committee was not reciprocated by Mr. Toba Dada, and we think that speaks about the fitness for the assumed office.

The information obtained during the interviews was evaluated for compliance with the provisions of the ICDS Byelaw, Chapter Guidelines, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and Internal Controls expected of a professional accounting association such as ICAN Canada. The results of the evaluations are reflected in the Findings & Recommendations section.

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# Findings & Recommendations

The following are our key findings and recommendations in line with the OCIC's Terms of Reference.

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
1. Lack of pre-approved budget and committing District funds without Exco approval.	<b>Findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The \$500 line item for Chapters included in the ICAN Canada 2022 approved budget for the District was not allocated solely for the Inauguration of the Ottawa Chapter.</li><li>▪ The Ex-officio presented a budget proposal for the inauguration on the Exco social media platform. However, approval was not provided through this forum.</li><li>▪ There is no policy or documentation outlining expense approval authority/matrix. Section 7.6b of the District Bye law states that the funds of the Society shall be applied to expenditure approved in good faith. There is no written clarity on who provides approval.</li></ul>



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# Findings & Recommendations

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
1. Lack of pre-approved budget and committing District funds without Exco approval.	<b>Findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The actual amount spent on the inauguration was about \$2,200. Pre-approval was not provided by the District or Exco for this amount.</li><li>▪ The body of Past Chairmen and some Exco members paid out of pocket to settle the above amount.</li><li>▪ Prior chapters' inaugurations were funded out of pocket.</li></ul>
<b>Comments &amp; Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsibility falls on all Exco members to make prompt comments expressing reservations about non-compliance with approved processes and, in this case, the "budget" in the spirit of teamwork. Efforts should be made to avoid pitfalls, rather than allow activities to go on, only to express disagreement when the bills come up to be paid.</li><li>• Subsequent yearly budget proposals should include budgeted items for Chapter inauguration, even though previous chapters were inaugurated with out-of-pocket funds.</li><li>• The District Bye law should be updated to include operational procedures that reflect the delegation of authority and who approve expenditure on behalf of the District. It should include parameters around which the District Chairman can provide approval on behalf of the District or ExcOs and an allowance for how exceptions should be handled.</li><li>• Operational procedures may also be presented in a separate document if Exco does not wish to incorporate this in the Bye law.</li></ul>	

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# Findings & Recommendations

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
<p>2. Reputational damage from unpaid third-party/vendors debt for an extended period.</p>	<p><b>Findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Internal: Within the Exco, the circumstances regarding the Ottawa Chapter Inauguration have caused a lot of damage and sadly impacted the relationship between ExcOs.</li><li>▪ External: Potential reputational damage as vendors were not paid promptly, and their view of the Chapter and District may be low.</li><li>▪ Some Exco members commented that there might be a reduced reputational view from ICAN Nigeria.</li></ul>
<p><b>Comments &amp; Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The issue at stake seems more internal than external. As a result, there is more internal reputational damage within Exco than external damage to ICAN Canada's reputation.</li><li>• ExcOs to have a team-building event to discuss current issues and strengthen members' relationships.</li><li>• Training/orientation package, policies, processes, and the District operating guidelines and procedures to be provided to all new ExcOs after swearing-in.</li></ul>	

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# Findings & Recommendations

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
<p>3. Appointment of non-financial ICDS members (guests) as chapter executive officers.</p> <p>4. Non-involvement and exclusion of ICDS Exco and Past Chairmen from participation at the event.</p>	<p><b>Findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ We could not verify the list of Ottawa Chapter executive officers as we were told to confirm this with either the District Chairman or the Ex-Officio. Unfortunately, they were unwilling to meet with the Committee during this process.</li><li>▪ It was revealed that while there was communication about forming a chapter in Ottawa during Exco meetings, Exco members were not provided with the opportunity to provide input such as date, time, presence etc. Neither was the body of Past Chairmen. There were only three Exco members (Chairman, Former Ex-Officio and Publicity/Social Secretary involved in the inauguration planning.</li><li>▪ There was no social media forum through which ExcOs could actively participate at the inauguration. Only a Facebook link was provided, which limited interaction and participation.</li><li>▪ The body of Past Chairmen was informed to provide a written speech within a short timeframe to be presented on their behalf. We were told that they were not invited to the inauguration.</li></ul>

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# Findings & Recommendations

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
3. Appointment of non-financial ICDS members (guests) as chapter executive officers. &  4. Non-involvement and exclusion of ICDS Exco and Past Chairmen from participation at the event.	

## Comments & Recommendations:

- As the Committee did not have a chance to discuss with the District Chairman or the Ex-Officio, there was no opportunity to get further information on the exclusion of ICDS Exco and Past Chairmen.
- While there is no written policy or law that Past Chairmen are to be at inauguration activities, this should be taken as a convention with a formal invitation sent to the body out of respect.
- "The Philosophy of the Chapter" (chapter formation guideline) document should incorporate who is responsible for inauguration activities.
- The District Bye-law must specifically address procedures for inauguration and activities within the Chapters as recent events and growth have overtaken existing guidelines.
- An inaugurating committee, including an Ex-official member, should be appointed to lead inaugurations. The committee chair, preferably an exco member with not less than two years of experience and with adequate knowledge of the District's operating guidelines, is recommended to have the responsibility of providing feedback at Exco meetings and answering questions in respect of inaugurations.

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# Findings & Recommendations

Purpose (as stated in the OCIC Terms of Reference)	Key Findings and Recommendations
<p>5. The choice of a scheduled Exco meeting date (April 9) and time (4.00 pm EST) to undertake the Ottawa chapter lunch.</p> <p>6. Non-adherence to the chapter formation guidelines (Non-financial members are guests and cannot hold any official position).</p>	<p><b>Findings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Exco members were aware of the preparation for the inauguration, the dates (the initial and final) but did not push back or express their disagreement/reservations. They had the time to ask questions or possibly cancel the inauguration based on non-adherence to the ICDS Chapter formation document.</li><li>▪ As stated under item (3) above, we could not verify the list of Ottawa Chapter executive officers as we were told to confirm this with either the District Chairman or the Ex-Officio, both of whom were not willing to meet with the Committee during this investigative process.</li></ul>

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# General Observations & Conclusion

In addition to the key findings and recommendations, the following are our general observations and conclusion

## 1. Relationship/Harmony and Leadership

- a. There is no cohesion within the Exco, which may have contributed to members of the Committee working in silos and unwittingly at cross purpose to the corporate objective.
- b. The coincidence of the inauguration date with the regular exco meeting date validates this lack of cohesion and harmony amongst committee members.
- c. The leadership style of the Chairman may have contributed mainly to the lack of cohesion and trust deficit amongst the Exco. In particular, an Exco member reported being pressured by the Chairman to make payment based on the Chairman's direction and felt personally attacked. In addition, some other Exco members alluded to non-professional etiquette and choice of words during Exco meetings.

## 2. Internal Control/Adherence to Procedure

- a. There is no adherence to guidelines on spending and approval.
- b. The existing spending procedure and processes for inauguration appear to emphasize what used to be done rather than what should be done. More emphasis on how previous chapters were inaugurated cannot be said to be precedents for subsequent chapter inaugurations. The District should not hold the next administration to the benevolence and generosity of our past Chairmen and inaugurating committee members.
- c. It appears that some Exco members are not aware of current guidelines and procedures.

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# General Observations & Conclusion

In addition to the key findings and recommendations, the following are our general observations and conclusion

### **3. Communication**

- a. The communication between Exco and the body of Past Chairmen appears weak and may have contributed to the communication gap in the period leading to the inauguration. Members of the body of the Past Chairmen should not be notified of the inauguration program on the District's WhatsApp platform.
- b. Unless the District is able to bring the different interests together, a significant breakdown in the relationship with individuals within the Exco and amongst members can affect the viability of the District.

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# Committee Members



**Dr Bolutife Oluwadele**  
**FCA PhD**  
**[Chairman]**



**Mrs. Bolu Idowu**  
**ACA, CPA,CGA, MBA**  
**[Secretary]**



**Mr. Rotimi Fadipe**  
**FCA, FCIT, FAcSC, MCILT, SCMP**  
**[Member]**



**Mrs. Ayodele Folabi-Odetunde**  
**FCA, CPA,CMA, CPM**  
**[Member]**



**Mr. Abidemi Aremu**  
**FCA, FCCA, CPA, CGA**  
**[Member]**



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