

**AFRICAN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC POLICY NETWORK
(AWEPON)**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2003**

**“Poverty Alleviated is poverty Postponed. Join the Campaign to Eradicate
Poverty”**

Plot 2, Sturrock Road, Kololo

P.O. Box 33576

Kampala-Uganda

Tel: 256-41-533265

Fax: 256-41-290211

Email: awepon@africaonline.co.ug

Website: www.awepon.org

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ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	All African Conference of Churches
AWEAPON	African Women's Economic Policy Network
AU	African Union
BEACON	Building Eastern African Community Network
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUTS	Consumers Unity and Trust Service
ECOSOC	Economic Social and Cultural Council
NGLS	Non-Governmental Liaison Service
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
SEATINI	Southern and Eastern African Trade, Information and Negotiation Institute.
ISGN	International South Group Network.
WCC	World Council of Churches
SIPAA	Support to International Partnership Against Aids
WIDE	World Women in Development Europe
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organization
NGLS	Non Government Liaison Service
LDC	Least Developed Countries
WTO	World Trade Organization
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa Development
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

FOREWORD

On behalf of AWEAPON, I wish to express our delight at successfully completing another year of Civil Society activism. Two years ago we had a small secretariat run mainly on voluntary basis, with limited funding, but with a large and growing constituency. Today, through committed and focused programmes, AWEAPON has become the gateway and mouthpiece of the majority of African Women and men. It has also provided space for discussion and analysis of critical issues of our economics in Africa and created linkages between our women and men with the international community.

The year 2003 has seen the consolidation of our vision through concrete programming planning and implementation of a 3-year strategic plan that has provided a good framework for implementation of our activities and a clear focus on priorities. It has also facilitated resources mobilization. As our membership continues to grow, our mandate and commitment towards enhancing Africa's goals of development for all women and men are strengthened. We continue to relentlessly fight for economic justice as the path to equity and poverty eradication.

Our achievements in this year have been captured in this report, as is typical of any report that summarizes issues but it may not be comprehensive enough to bring out the complete picture of the feelings of successes in the minds and hearts of those we have been representing and those who benefit directly from the programmes.

Despite the strides AWEAPON has made, many challenges continue to emerge. Amongst these is the need to have dependable core funding to support institutional development. Our partners deserve many thanks for their relentless support to AWEAPON. We are confident that with the support of all, the ultimate goals of economic justice and poverty eradication are achievable only if we all appreciate and embrace the vision of economic justice.

By Ms Alice Mwajuma Abok
Chairperson AWEAPON

BACKGROUND

AWEPON owes its beginning to the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) Women's Desk that initiated faith based consultations on economic policies. Born in 1997, the main focus has been on the impact of economic policies on women and families in Africa. The founding principle of AWEPON is that women have the fundamental right to shape economic policies that impinge on their lives.

As a network, AWEPON connects four major geo-political regions in Africa; Anglophone, Lusophone, Arab phone, and Francophone sub-regions. This annual report provides an account of macroeconomic analysis and the advocacy journey so far travelled by AWEPON.

YEAR REVIEW

In 2003, AWEAPON went through a consultative process with partners that led to formulation of a three-year strategic plan drawn for the period 2003-2006. The main components of the strategic plan that comprise AWEAPON's focus areas are: Economic literacy and advocacy on macroeconomic policies and trade issues; and following up on the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Implementation of the programmes has come with both challenges and breakthroughs.

The network strives to build capacity for African women to participate in making economic policy decisions and indeed bring benefits to the African women and men. It is for this reason that economic literacy and analysis of macroeconomic and trade policies have been priority programme areas. Central to both analysis and advocacy have been values and principles of economic justice, gender equity and socio-economic rights for all.

The organization has also forged strong strategic alliances with other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), taking an active role in the African Social Forum in which the spirit of Pan Africanism/World Social Forum and Regional Ecumenical fora reminds all in Africa the need to search for solutions to our development paradoxes within the continent. The starting point is for Africa to begin developing points and alternatives that challenge the neo-liberal ideology/neo-classical model that puts profits before people, commodifies global common goods for example water and energy.

In the context of globalisation, AWEAPON has conducted various trainings in Global Trade and its gender implication as well as joined other alliances at the international level, on campaigns targeting debt cancellation, the 5th WTO trade negotiation in Cancun, the World Water conference that took place in Kyoto, and at the UN Non-Governmental Service (NGLS). Significant in this was also the ECOSOC meeting and setting up an international network of CSOs under the Least Developed Countries' Watch in which AWEAPON has been accorded committee status.

A major challenge experienced by the organization was the scope of programmes vis-à-vis the institutional capacity to effectively implement them. That notwithstanding the organisation took advantage of various national, regional and international initiatives/strategies to ensure strategic placement of women's divergent and dynamic

development needs. Institutional capacity limitations both in terms of human resources and finance, affected the pace of implementation.

Strengthening credibility for partnership with authentic organizations was instrumental in realization of programme set objectives. This was the case with the commissioning of the HIV/AIDS, Gender and Macroeconomic Policy project in November 2003. The 5 months' project implemented with partnership of the Support for International Partnership Against AIDS (SIPAA) set off in 3 countries, Cameroon, Tanzania, and Swaziland, aims at addressing HIV/AIDS-gender linkages to mainstream in Poverty Reduction Strategies of the pilot countries. Concretely, we have depended on outsourcing and broadening the group of members.

To address institutional capacity challenges, AWEAPON has forged a think tank network with partner organisations such as Action Aid Uganda, OXFAM and Action Aid Africa regional office, and the Southern and Eastern Trade Information and Negotiation Institute (SEATINI). The Think Tank for the African region brings together AWEAPON's expertise in the thematic areas of gender and macroeconomic advocacy, Action Aid's comparative advantage on poverty analysis, and SEATINI's wide experience in trade matters. Such synergy did lessen institutional weaknesses in programme implementation and impact creation.

Inadequate funding and sometimes delays in disbursements tended to delay implementation, but with resilience and commitment of the membership, activities never stalled. It is challenging to face the demands to reach out to the whole continent, with four languages spoken in different sub-regions, but "where there is a will there is away". To face up to this a sub-regional chapter in Southern Africa was launched, and country initiatives in other sub-regions helped reach out even to the remotest parts of the larger countries like Tanzania. The sections below give a narrative of activities undertaken within the framework of the three-year strategic plan.

DEMYSTIFYING ECONOMICS

The Tanzania rural women unpack macroeconomic policies of NEPAD

Rural women in Tanzania examining the impact of macro-economic policies on their life; In Bukoba-Tanzania, women challenged the principles underlying macroeconomic policies in their country and also examined the principles of New partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD).

One of the specific objectives of AWEAPON is promoting the gender concern into macroeconomic policies and lobby for gender responsive budgeting and allocation of resources within NEPAD framework. In 2003, AWEAPON facilitated and funded a workshop, which sought to create awareness on gender and macroeconomics of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This is an achievement for AWEAPON as a forum for discussion and dissemination of information on existing policies. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania hosted the workshop. Thirty-five participants, who included local women, men, civil society, teachers, technocrats, and church leaders, participated at a five-day workshop (4th to 8th August 2003) in Lake Victoria Zone, Bukoba-Tanzania.

Lessons from Tanzania

Tanzania, unlike its Great Lake regional counterparts has achieved and maintained a stable political climate over the past two decades. This represents a rare opportunity for its leadership to strengthen the country's development agenda. It also uniquely makes Tanzania a role model for its regional partners. Despite Tanzania's political calm, a large population experiences diverse poverty.

The government's response to increasing and widespread poverty has concentrated on implementation of macroeconomics policies. In addition, the government of Tanzania has adopted the NEPAD initiative that it views as fitting well within the existing national frameworks for poverty reduction: The National Development Vision 2055; the National Poverty Eradication Strategy (NPES); Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS); and Tanzania National Reduction Paper. The government of Tanzania has prepared an Action Plan to effectively participate in NEPAD initiatives in the areas of commerce, private investment

and Development Assistance. The programme is also directed at creating conditions for sustainable development, development of infrastructure, social sectors and productive sectors.

At the workshop, Miss Jovita Mlay of the Tanzania Gender Network Programme (TGNP) presented Tanzania's position on NEPAD and its challenges.

The challenges that are well known to government of Tanzania are contained in the national Household Budgetary Survey 2000/01. According to the survey more than a third of its citizens can not satisfy their basic needs; 53% of the rural population have no access to protected water.;90% have no access to electricity or gas ; and 13% still have to travel for more than 6 kilometres to health centres or dispensary.

Other challenges relate to complex manifestation of urban poverty, are critical concerns such as youth unemployment, informal sector operations, vulnerability of infrastructure and environment. Escalating spread of HIV/ AIDS and impact on human resource is another challenge for the government of Tanzania.

The biggest challenge remains, translation of policy measures into real benefits for the poor. To meet the challenge requires investment in education, health and supportive infrastructure, and avert leakages of public resources.

NEPAD was “recognized by the women from Lake Victoria Zone Tanzania as a development programme for Africa with a mechanism for poverty reduction.” But the architects need to heed to the opinions of participants below:

On free trade, low coffee prices and skewed investment policy environment that favour non-citizens combined with other factors such as ignorance, rampant poverty, and disease, make NEPAD's main objective unachievable. Participants recommend a more consultative and involving decision-making process in which women are given chance to contribute to development matters.

Other contributions by the participants were that;

- NEPAD's objective of eradicating sever poverty is still a dream, but one which is achievable if grassroots stakeholders, including youth, are empowered.

- NEPAD should have holistic strategies for debt cancellation in highly indebted African countries.

A conducive environment is created for both local and external investors with emphasis on equity and distribution of resources between investors, Government and local community.

- A forum should be created to debate on the NEPAD document so as to give room for input by the people of Tanzania
- NEPAD programme should be discussed at different levels to create awareness from grassroots to national level and be popularised using various media.

ALIAT Grass root Women's Project in Uganda

The ALIAT project located in Kumi is one of the concrete attempts at addressing all the economic, social, curial and gender concerns related to the household economy.

As one of the ways of assessing the impact of macroeconomic policy on the livelihood strategies of the poor as well as developing a basis for an alternative development paradigm relevant to Africa Economies, AWEAPON initiated a micro project to enhance women's participation in livestock production. This project seeks to strengthen women's participation in livestock farming that has traditionally been a male domain. And also seeks to transform livestock farming that has been ruined by cattle rustling. So far the outcomes of this year project indicate that gender roles have changed in favour of gender equity as women have more rights in decision making and control over property.

The project has also enabled the beneficiaries who are mainly women to challenge government policy of privatising agricultural services for the rural poor and the whole policy of liberalisation of Agriculture. The issue of marketing products from livestock is of critical concern and continues to create challenges for the whole agriculture sector in Uganda as farmers loose interest in increasing production because their produce is spoiled / wasted because of lack of ready market. The other emerging issues are water and good pasture.

The beneficiaries have been exposed to economic policy analysis and advocacy skills that have empowered them to take part in policy discussions and decision making both at the household and community level.

In partnership with send-A-cow Uganda, the project replication in two other communities has commenced.

It is a case study of good practice in addressing gender issues at the household and enhancing women's property rights, and has been a subject for a post graduated study on, "gender relations in livestock production and their implications for food security in the Teso Farming System.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND THE AFRICAN THINK TANK

The African Think Tank Project

For about two years, Action aid (AA) Africa Regional Office and AWEAPON have been exploring the concept of strengthening "A Think Tank" for Africa. This would work towards effective economic policy analysis and formulation of alternative economic policies to address Africa's underdevelopment.

It is worth mentioning that, while a number of national and regional research and advocacy institutions and networks exist and have a critical role to play, it is apparent that the ideological orientation of these as think tanks for Africa is in nascent stage and, consequently, Africa finds itself disadvantaged in contributing to debates and in engaging with fast changing global events, issues and processes bearing on its socio-economic and political development. There is an increased need for deepening understanding of economy issues and dissemination of information among national and regional governments, civil society and other stakeholders. Strengthening the capacity of existing think tanks is also important for building synergy, complimentarily, and sustainability of work currently undertaken independently by different think tanks by encouraging collaboration and networking amongst them.

The Think Tank Project is currently on going and is mainly geared towards;

Building

- a network that will provide intellectual and professional expertise and backup on trade, investment, governance and macroeconomic policy analysis.
- Providing a professional analysis of macroeconomic policies with a gender perspective

- Enhancing the capacity of the emerging think tanks to engage in critical analysis and negotiations
- Promoting the thinking and voice of Africa on major world events and processes.
- Develop and publish resource materials for training and advocacy

HIV/AIDS AND MACROECONOMIC POLICIES PROJECT – SIPAA.

AWEAPON in collaboration with the Action Aid programme on ‘Support to International Partnership Against Aids in Africa (SIPAA) began a project on HIV/AIDS and macroeconomic policy. The project aims to promote mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS concerns in macroeconomic and trade policies with a gender, economic, social and cultural rights perspective. The studies on HIV/AIDS and macroeconomic policy will initially cover three countries, namely Cameroon, Swaziland and Tanzania.



NACWOLA-Uganda women during an HIV/AIDS workshop

This being the first phase of the project, it was therefore planned that the project should mainly focus on;

- i. Conducting a Poverty and socio-impact assessments in 3 countries
- ii. Reviewing PRSPs and MTEFs in 3 countries
- iii. Mainstream HIV/AIDS concerns in 3 sectors, namely; Agriculture, Trade and Education.
- iv. Documenting best practices and possible interventions for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in macroeconomic and trade policy work

HIV/AIDS presents a challenge that not only requires a cross-cutting approach that is responsive to economic, social and cultural rights concerns, but more so gender responsive.

The three countries have been very receptive and have shown positive response towards achieving the objectives of this project. The project has also led to strategic alliances between AWEAPON and other organizations like the First Ladies Association Against HIV/AIDS, in Swaziland with SWAGA, in Tanzania with the TGNP and East African Members of Parliament.

Preliminary results from the Poverty and Socio-economic impact assessment indicate that, as the Africa region grapples with poverty issues, HIV/AIDS not only presents a challenge, but also eliminates even the very basic economic achievements. The governments in all the three countries have demonstrated commitment to addressing the outcomes of this project and are currently working closely with the AWEAPON membership to ensure clear outcomes in order to facilitate government interventions.

The studies also reveal that little or no deliberate effort is being taken by policy makers, implementers and civil society organizations to ensure that all economic and trade related policy interventions take into consideration HIV/AIDS concerns. It is this realization that is the driving force behind AWEAPON's proposed intervention and commitment to take a lead role in not only engaging in policy influencing but create increased awareness and build capacity for a wide and strategic continental movement to curb the continued spread of HIV/AIDS and its negative implications on African economies.

HIV/AIDS is one of the factors that has exacerbated poverty on the African continent for the past 20` years, yet little has been done to address its economic, social, cultural and gender implications. The current policies/strategies undertaken by African governments, address HIV/AIDS as a moral and health issue and marginally its socio-economic impact. NEPAD for example recognizes the economic implications of the pandemic but does not take a position nor provide solutions to tackle it. Sub-Saharan Africa alone has two-thirds of the world's 33 million suffers from HIV/AIDS. Estimates are that 25% of the workforce in some countries might be lost to AIDS by 2020. A sick labor force does not have sufficient energy for example to till land for its survival given that agriculture is the mainstay of most African economies. Reduced agricultural productivity as a result of AIDS worsens food insecurity in some areas while threatens food security in traditionally rich agricultural areas.

HIV/AIDS impact on the economic status of women is not given priority as the case is for existing policies that disadvantage HIV/AIDS positive women's economic ability to pay for Anti-retroviral. Liberalization policies in particular being implemented under the PRSPs, have led to huge budgetary cuts in social services (education and health). This has increased women's economic burden as both family laborers and household and community health caretakers. Privatization leads to expensive, totally out of reach healthcare for many poor women. Removal of cost sharing in public hospitals coupled with lack of drug, equipment and human resource facilitation of these public health centers makes even supposed to be cheap treatment for HIV/AIDS opportunistic infections expensive. It means that women have to look for alternative financial sources to provide for their families' basics.

With far reaching implications on overall developing economies therefore, HIV/AIDS needs a more holistic and gender responsive approach that is crosscutting interdisciplinary at both macro and micro levels.

A DESK STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PRIVATISATION OF WATER IN UGANDA

As follow-up to resolutions made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), October 2002 in Johannesburg, a study on Privatisation of water in Uganda by AWEAPON was completed in 2003. The Commonwealth Foundation supported this study. At the Commonwealth Civil Society encounter, Ms. Hellen Wangusa presented study findings in Darussalam, Brunei, August 2003. Earlier in March, Elizabeth Eilor represented AWEAPON at the 3rd World Water Forum, Kyoto-Japan, during which she challenged the notion of privatisation of water and poor's inability to pay for water and sanitation services in Africa.



Participants at August 2003 a Civil Society Commonwealth Consultation of Provision of Essential Services in Darussalam Brunei.

As a fundamental human right, access to water should be considered a birth right of every human being. The idea of managing water as a human right enhances the idea of managing water as a basic need, and emphasizes that it is not simply why people should have access, but that individuals have inherent rights and entitlements to water. It is also important to note the fact that, water has no substitute yet without it life cannot be sustained.

The study documents some of the specific and general problems associated with a dogmatic “neo-liberal” approach to water that has been adopted by government. Some of these problems are;

- Benefits have flowed almost entirely to those managing the process.

- The social costs have been high especially for the poor.
- The major point on water privatisation is that it is conditionality within the Poverty Reduction Support Credit (PRSC) instrument for loan access from IFIs.
- Participation of Ugandans in the process has been almost zero.
- High Prices - Pricing of water for its various uses has got to take into consideration a critical concern of water as a public good or global common good.
- Access to clean water is central to health and productive lives for the poor. Yet only 42% of the rural population in Uganda has access to clean water.
- Increase in Morbidity and Mortality rates due to, environmental sanitation related diseases account for 49% of the outpatients reporting at health units in Uganda (NASIP 1997). These include diarrhoea, malaria, intestinal worms and skin related diseases.
- “Staff numbers have been reduced by about 30% since June 1998, i.e. from about 1800 to 1215 as at 2000. This has created uncertainty among the staff and fear of job insecurity in the sector.
- Increased workload for women – In search for cheap water, women have to walk long distances to collect water from a source that is often not central or a water source that dries up during the dry season. Somehow the same woman has got to find time to cultivate land, prepare food, fetch firewood, and care for children, sick, and elderly.

Based on review of existing government policy documents, the study highlights the macroeconomics of water pricing and public utility management, for it is here that contrasts between water as a commodity and water as a social, spiritual, ecological good and a human right are greatest.

The study gives an insight into the various alternative options that need to be put under considerations so as to halt the negative economic growth resulting from this model.

These alternatives are:

- Improve assessment, monitoring and evaluation of poverty impacts of water supply interventions. An immediate end to privatisation of water and to the installation of water meters. This has been done in developed countries like the United Kingdom for example; water meters have been declared illegal.

- Call for more local consultation and assessment, not business. No mention of improving understanding of local institutions, of integrating social and environment concerns, or even of monitoring the effects on the poor.
- Taking into consideration local knowledge (software) especially of women on the mineral composition and location of water sources.

- *Improve public sector capacity, as alternative- Getting the private sector to focus on the alleviation of poverty in a way that does not discriminate against the poor has proved hard to achieve in practice. The private sector focuses on profit making and therefore requires high tariffs to ensure its existence.*

- Increase Access to the poor - There is concern among NGOs that the new focus on private sector participation has adverse consequences for the water sanitation
- Needs of the poor. Non - urban areas lack the economies of scale so attractive to private investment. And peri- urban areas pose the biggest service challenge to public and private sectors alike, particularly as they tend to house migrants escaping from rural poverty. So, where the private sector cannot deliver or sees the risks as too high, there may be a case for the Bank to intervene to improve capacity and policy to upgrade public sector utilities.
- Re introduce local technology of windmills to pump water in drought areas such as Karamoja – a semi arid area occupied by pastoralists. This would also promote the use of simple and appropriate technology to improve access to water. Most importantly also is the need to support transfer of technology that will enhance sustainable access to water services to the poor in a more cost effective manner.
- Strengthen community maintenance of water sources - Participation of communities in water resource management is important. Respect and secure the rights and knowledge of peasants and fisher people. A water-secure and the monopoly control of food ecologically and socially sustainable future is incompatible with water development projects such as mega-dams, industrial farming and monopoly control of food and seeds by multinational corporations.

Uganda's experience of privatisation is largely a desk review that draws analysis of reforms in Uganda's water sector placed within the macro-economic policy envelop of the Poverty Reduction Policy matrix. The future plans are now to undergo an in-depth gender analysis of the impact of Privatisation of Water in the context of the East African

Community and the Lake Victoria discourse. This part of the work will be done in collaboration with UNIFEM.

GENDER ANALYSIS OF UGANDA'S POVERTY ERADICATION ACTION PLAN (PEAP).

Since 1997, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) has provided the national planning framework for Uganda's development. The PEAP was first prepared in 1997 and revised in 2000. The second review was conducted in 2003. During this review process in Uganda, CSOs come together under the umbrella of *NGO forum to provide input to the review and also make suggestions for way forward*. AWEPON took an active role in providing a gender analysis of the PEAP mainly focusing on the underpinning economic policy principles that form the foundation for the PEAP.

The analysis clearly brought out elements of neo-liberal policies that have continued to undermine the development initiatives in most African countries. The Uganda case also demonstrated clearly how the PRSPs are actually increasing poverty rather than eradicating it.

The neo-liberal framework that is targeting increased Foreign Direct Investment, opening of the economy, trade liberalisation and greater involvement of the private sector in service delivery is critically worsening the situation of the poor as there is no safety nets to address the huge number of the poor whose livelihood are being crib led by lack of initiatives to enhance their economic under being.

The Uganda Poverty Eradication Action plan (PEAP) does not stay at the level of broad aggregated economy but actually comes down to the level of the economy as it is lived in practice. **That is why gender relations are so important to it. It is at this level that macroeconomic policy comes to impact upon the ideologies or gender, class, power at the meso-level.** This level is the level of the labour market and of discrimination in credit for and against women and thus makes the gender aspects of PEAP more evident. The labour market is gender discriminatory, as women get clustered into occupations that have the characteristics of women's domestic work and then are systematically underpaid; likewise, in the credit and money markets here are certain assumptions and biases in place where by women have no rights to land or property, or the criteria for getting credit. Women in particular are greatly disadvantaged by this neo-liberal economic model.

AWEPON's analytical findings in this exercise were;

- A challenge that, gender in the case of the Uganda PEAP was an add-on
- Integrating gender into the PEAP is superficial because this process does not alter the conceptual assumptions that inform the policy choices and options for poverty eradication. For example, feminisation of poverty should have been a basis for understanding poverty and developing mechanism for its eradication.
- With no land, food and trade policies in an agro-based economy, poverty reduction that depends on agro-based economic performance does not have a domestic policy base.
- In spite of implementing an export driven policy that emphasises diversification of exports, the country does not have a food policy and yet gender division of food production is a factor that cannot be ignored. The predominant dependence on female labour for production does not inform the gender responses in the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture.

However policy influencing is a full time and demanding role that calls for a critical mass of CSO to come in if change has to be realised. Yet the experience from this exercise also showed how economic literacy is lacking. As a response to this experience therefore, AWEAPON is launching a series of economic literacy training programme for CSOs at the national and regional level in order to address this need.

AWEAPON's future plan is to publish this document

LOBBYING AND ADVOCATING FOR PROPOOR POLICIES WITH A HUMAN FACE

The Second Summit of the Heads of States and Governments of Africa;

With the establishment of the African Union (AU), CSOs in the continent agreed that it is useful to consult on the modalities that could enhance their role and participation in the AU. A number of consultative meetings have been held and a draft Code of Conduct for CSOs was drafted with the assistance of the AU Secretariat.

From June 27th – July 2nd 2003, CSOs gathered in Maputo ahead of the Summit of the Heads of States and Governments of African Union that took place from 4th – 12th July 2003. AWEAPON actively took part in this meeting and was given the role to take lead in formulating the Africa Civil Society Organisations input to the heads of states; called the Maputo CSO Declaration.

The declaration, aimed at strengthening partnerships between CS and the governments as enshrined in the constitutive act of the African Union. AWEAPON's specifically raised the concern over; the deteriorating terms of trade within the continent and the accessibility barriers to international markets; and deterioration of basic social services such as water, energy, health and education. Critical in our recommendations to the heads of states and governments were;

- The Heads of states and governments to take a united stance and common position in rejecting the “New Issues” at the fifth ministerial meeting of the WTO – investment, competition, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation; and rolling back agreements that have exacerbated poverty, underdevelopment and economic injustice;
- Reclaim and retain policy space for the regulation and monitoring of movements of capital investments and trans-national corporations on the continent;
- Enhance intra-regional trade and harmonise policy frameworks in regional economic communities including establishment of mechanisms for regulation and control;

- Take collective action on the call for total and unconditional cancellation of African countries external debt, restitution of our stolen wealth and the “demand” for reparations;
- Halt and reverse water privatisation, bio-piracy planting of GMO and life patents through national laws, collective positions and strategies at WTO, IMF and the World Bank, implementation their commitments to multilateral and regional environmental agreements, ensuring corporate accountability
- Sign up to the Protocol on the Rights of Women in the African Charter

It is planned therefore that more work has to be done to lobby the AU to address these concerns. Some of the follow up activities will include, linking up with the African Union Parliament, and close collaboration with the Directorate of Gender in the AU.

The Africa Social Forum

The first World Social Forum was held under the banner “Another World is possible” in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2000. It was a response to the World Economic Forums that have traditionally taken place in Davos, Switzerland bringing together political and corporate leaders, mainly from the rich countries of the world. This idea has resulted in the organisation of similar regional and sub-regional fora in other parts of the world by social justice activists.

One of such meetings was held in Addis Ababa from 5th – 9th January 2003, in preparation for the World Social Forum. AWEAPON took part in this meeting and 5 of its members were selected to represent Africa as part of Africa’s CSOs delegation to the World Social Forum.

The Social Forums are activists’ platform to strengthen popular democracy and mobilization. They serve to critically challenge the status quo, which puts markets and profits before people. They serve to build global and regional solidarity around issues of social and economic justice.

AWEAPON’s participation in the forum has provided a platform for engendering the debates around the role of the social movement in Africa in developing alternative policies to address poverty and create gender equity and economic justice.

The World Social Forum in Porto Alegre

In Porto Alegre, AWEAPON was actively involved in enhancing the voices of the African women and men towards addressing the critical issues of poverty and the need to come up with alternative economic policies different from the neo liberal approach by the World Bank, IMF and the WTO. We launched a serious campaign against water privatisation and the need for Economic Social Cultural Approach to development. It was also an opportunity to allie with like-minded CSOs at the international level, some of whom have become active partners to AWEAPON.

In her presentation titled “War Against Social Care and Reproductive Rights: Feminist Interrogation of Imperialist Wars”, the Central Coordinator decried the corporate economies of imperialist wars. She noted that, the most obvious interpretation would be on physical wars. She observed that,

Mine is a deviation into the mental, emotional and psychological war that has hijacked the intellectual capacity of economists and other people in the academia, to general intellectual missiles against all the powers in the global market that are killing social care”

Hellen G. Wangusa

The battle starts with the power in global financial markets that lie primarily with private Banks, leaders and corporations. In this battle, money is invested where it is most profitable not where there is the greatest need such as social care.

In her presentation she also noted that, the war is ideologically based and it is driven by multinational institutions and the United States Treasury. The most dangerous aspect of this type of war is that it is borderless and limitless. It is not a war against a historical regime that presents itself as originating from military conquest but economic conquest. This type of war creates the very world it inhabits and it replaces human interaction with economic interaction.

The other characteristic of this war is that it thieves on exclusion. This begins with membership and decision making that is based on shareholders not democratic principles. This is built into the governance structure of the financial and trade institutions that regulate financial and trade flows to serve the interests of mostly the private sector. This inclusion has led to the reduced role of the nation state because this has gone into the private sector, corporate entities even in the social sector provision.

World Bank, IMF and the World Council of Churches Encounter No.1

The meeting whose theme was “Wealth Creation and Justice” was held in Geneva, from 13-14 February 2003. This was the first encounter between the World Council of Churches with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The Central Coordinator of AWEAPON took part in this important event. For AWEAPON it was a very strategic event to present the voices of Africa women it was an opportunity.

AWEAPON “ has no pretensions of superior insight and technical knowledge about the complex realities of economic and financial globalisation.” Ecumenical discussions on the issues and advice of just economic order has been informed all along by the insight and advice of competent experts it has also primarily sought to articulate the voice of those who have little opportunity of influencing the decisions. However, those who have to bear their consequences have not been listened to. Some of these experiences entered the dialogue and gave it the human face, which is a critical concern for AWEAPON and indeed the central focus of this meeting. The seminar had two main objectives:

- To enable the three institutions to look critically at their mandates and their approach to development.
- To raise fundamental questions for further debate. Wealth creation, social justice and the co modification of public goods. Such as were also discussed.

More issues of discussion included;

- Institutional governance
- Ethics and equity, and how they can guide markets and finance
- The responsibility and accountability of institutional actions
- Economics as a matter of faith
- Sustainability

As a next step, the participants generally agreed that the process of dialogue between the three institutions should be continued in form of collaborative seminars, notwithstanding continuing differences between the three institutions

The debate among civil society today is whether to engage or to disengage from discussing issues with IMF, the World Bank and WTO. For AWEAPON, the answer is critical engagement through dialogue. The scriptures tell us of the stories such as the unjust judge whom the poor women importuned, demonstrate that change of heart is

possible. This was the case with SAPs that AWEPON through SAPRI and now PRSP analysis continues to be challenged.

World Council of Churches and World Bank, IMF Seminar: Encounter No.2

In Washington DC, the second encounter between the ecumenical group and the Bank took place. The questions that AWEPON placed to the table for discussion was; ***“WATER IS CONSIDERED AS A SACRED ELEMENT IN SOME RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUALITIES. IS IT ETHICAL TO PRIVATISE IT, WHO BENEFITS FROM THE PRIVATISATION OF WATER?”***

Privatization, we were made to understand, usually referred to full sale of state owned assets but it also included various kinds of divesting of public duties to the private sector. This form of contracting out, introducing commercial principles and reducing governments role in providing some goods and services is what is generally understood to mean privatization.

Hellen Wangusa in her presentation to the meeting observed that;

“If gender analysis and civil society participation is disregarded over water management, governments will not be able to beat the global industry and Titanic corporations such as Vivendi Universal, the Suez popularly called the General Motors and Ford companies of the global water Industry, that specializes in the privatisation of water”.

In Tanzania the other issue raised was privatisation as a conditionality even within the PRSP for example, the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (DAWASA) was asked to privatize water. Wole Akande in his article cites how the Tanzanian government has to raise USD 145 million to upgrade DAWASA before it could be privatized. This effectively increased Tanzania’s debt as well as chances of the poor to access water and sanitation services. USD 47 million of that money was raised from the Africa Development Bank and the rest from the World Bank and the European Investment Bank, and Agence Francaise de Development. The big question that rocked people’s minds was;



Rogate (center) of World Council of Churches (WCC)

This project in Tanzania was seen to bring about improved accessibility, quality, reliability and affordability of water as well as the well being of the people and subsequently contributing to poverty reduction.

In Ghana five Multinational corporations bid for the Tema Water Service. These corporations are known to have annual sales incomes that are higher than the GDP of Ghana. Some of them have questionable social and environmental records. This directly raised concerns about the capacity of the Ghanaian government to monitor, regulate or even hold these companies accountable on any grounds that they might be seen to go beyond national prescriptions on social or environmental issues.

“Once water services are privatized...local governments frequently lack the clout needed to ensure that water quality and pollution standards are met and to penalize corporations who fail to meet them.”

On efficiency it has been noted that “The anticipated increase in efficiency of utility companies, when it did occur, in most cases did not result from improved operations. Rather, the ratio of revenue to expenses rose as a result of price increases facilitated by virtual monopoly situations and weak government regulatory mechanisms”

Under Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPS) privatization had always been one of the pre-conditions for loan access from the IFIs and it continues to be under the Poverty

Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) Policy Matrix. Under the PRSP privatization includes services like water and electricity.

Besides reducing government expenditure, privatization is seen as a valid and effective means to rescue non performing public assets, to ensure efficiency and often access and finally to contain corruption.

What is amazing is the deceitful nature of the pro privatisation campaign to deceive the poor that what matters is the availability of water outlets, yet this does not guarantee access per say without money exchanging hands in the name of “willingness of the poor to pay” when in reality it is because “water does not have a substitute” so the poor have to pay for water at the expense of not accessing other essential needs such as food, education, health care and other essential goods.

AWEAPON will be perusing a more rigorous campaign to challenge the privatisation of water in Africa.

“Water is the Mother of all MDGs”

THE WATER CONFERENCE AT STAVANGER –NORWAY.

“Water for the poor “ was the theme of the water conference”. In a key note address, the Norwegian minister quoted a French saying,

“You will never know the value of water until the well is dry”

MDGs designate the need for water and thus the objective of cutting it into half the people who have no access to water and sanitation are critical in achieving the other MDG goals. But focus on action at national level should include the ability to mobilize the creativity of local people as well as the role of multinational Institutions on implementation. The essential components of achieving the MDG water goal are:

- Investment in software and hardware interventions as well capacity building at all levels.
- Instituting policies for actions that need to be taken.

Workshop Recommendations

- a) Policies that ensure that all national actors articulate the rationale for the provision of water and sanitation. Making the full argument also to include a balance between ethical, human and moral imperatives but also top (Quality?) bidding.
- b) All national actors to focus their efforts on “hot spots” and formulate effective response to each of the categories.
- c) There is need to focus on service delivery rather than infrastructure only.
- d) Focus on the short- term, to the meeting WSSD targets of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) as the first step to choosing MDGs.
- e) Internalize these targets and have for example PRSPs aligned to the MDGs.

At the end of the discussion the following prepositions were made:

- 1) Need for ODA for water and sanitation to be fully aligned even within the Basket funding or sector funding.
- 2) Revamp global institutions and streamline how these institutions align funding around MDGS i.e. UN system that has no lead agency on water and sanitation
- 3) Monitoring and assessment at the global level i.e need for a small group to assess water investment structure etc.

THE CANCUN 5TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE WTO NEGOTIATIONS

Achieving more gender-equitable trade policies require a serious dialogue on the need for new institutional structures and how the WTO can be reformed to carry out some of the needed functions. In this regard AWEAPON went into the WTO negotiations with two key strategies in mind;

- Work in the inside of the negotiations to ensure that the negotiations take into consideration the concerns of women and men in Africa, by working closely with the negotiators and lobby from within and;
- Act from the outside of the conference meetings to put pressure to the negotiators through demonstrations and campaigns

From the outside the AWEAPON delegation presented a joint paper on the “The impact of Trade liberalisation – The African experience” This was a synthesis of the outcomes of a consultative process in the region that brought out clearly how trade liberalisation has failed the African men and women. This paper was presented at a Gender and Trade seminar outside the main conference area.

In addition to failed food security, the paper also brought to light to the international community, the impact of this trade policy that has caused gender inequality in the labour market, poor and inhuman employment conditions; unfair competition with cheap subsidised goods; failure of African countries to the fight against HIV/AIDS and the destruction of the local investment initiatives.

AWEAPON was represented in Cancun by; Ms. May Ssendendo and Ms. Daisy Owomugasho both of whom are academicians and are scholars of economic and trade policy issues at Makerere University Kampala these two provided a policy analysis, Elizabeth Eilor - Uganda and Josephine Kamel – Egypt were part of the team that worked with the government negotiators both in the corridors and linking the delegations with the outside campaign, in order to bring close a common African position, while Tiny Leshika of South Africa and Gilda Listure of Mozambique strategically worked on the campaign strategy outside the main conference negotiation halls to create alliances and create pressure towards CSOs consensus on key issues of concern like the fight against Agricultural subsidies. This was made possible by the prior alliance created with the government teams and the CSOs at country level.

It should be noted that, in practice, gender awareness has not been included as a factor in the negotiation of trade agreements and policies. In addition to ideological constraints, most of which derive from the insistence that expansion of markets and increased market incorporation of women and poor people translates into higher income and well being, there are a number of institutional constraints on the incorporation of gender perspective into these agreements. These constraints need to be overcome through restructuring of the negotiations and most importantly placing gender concerns at the centre of the negotiations.

Many trade-related issues have far-reaching implications for other areas, such as investment and competition policies. Since gender relations in fact permeate all economic structures, gender analysis is necessary for all policy outcomes, including those in what are called trade-related areas.

For AWEAPON this is not the conclusion. The experience of Cancun continues as a challenge for AWEAPON to work towards;

- Making visible the gender-trade and poverty links in trade analysis
- Promoting gender awareness in the continent so as to create a critical mass of CSO and parliamentarians and professionals towards gender responsive trade policies
- Integration of gender perspectives into all levels of WTO work and together with other groups work towards including gender in the Trade Review Mechanisms.
- Improving on skills for negotiation, lobbying advocacy and strengthening strategic partnership with other CSOs as well as government negotiators.
- Developing a media strategy.
- Strengthening the capacity of rural women to lobby and influence national trade and gender policies.



Participants at the Gender and Trade workshop

GENDER AND TRADE WORKSHOP FOR THE SADC REGION

The workshop on Gender and Trade for the Southern African Development Community - SADC (27th –29th June 2003) was organised by AWEAPON and supported by Action Aid Africa. The forum sought to elicit discussions and analyses on gender and trade issues in the SADC region. It also aimed at supporting a training and capacity building process for civil society on trade, gender and poverty in southern Africa. The workshop that attracted participants from Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana, and Uganda was timely given the mood of then eminent WTO negotiations in Cancun, Mexico, 14-18 September 2003.

Gender and Trade dimension was chosen a theme of the workshop because:

- Men and women are affected differently by trade policies and performance, owing to their different needs command over resource within the economy;
- Gender – based inequalities impact differently on trade policy outcomes, depending on the type of economy and sector, with the result that trade liberalisation policies may not yield expected results.
- Gender analysis is essential to the formulation of trade policies that enhance rather than hinder gender equality and human development.

While women provide 70% labour force of world's production, their effective participation in trade remains limited. Women are constrained by possession of meagre resources, low level of education and a narrow knowledge base, performing a subsistence role mostly in agriculture, and high reproductive role. Successful trade to

bring about development in Africa will result from improvement of the production base. The central role of women in production therefore should be key priority in all-national planning frameworks.



(standing) Dr. Molefe Tsele, General Secretary of SACC delivering the opening speech at the workshop

In his speech, Dr. Molefe was outspoken on the status of poverty and resultant loss of human dignity in Africa. Vulnerability and exposure to HIV/AIDS eludes a generation, while Africa is increasingly impoverished, the unbelievable concentration of wealth in a few hands has not been problematized.

There are also economic policies that produce poverty and others that don't work. Theologically, laws are relevant only in as far as they block out poverty or a problem and create a bridge. This is not what economic policies are doing therefore they are unjust and immoral laws and policies! They are evil! This Gender and trade workshop launch of AWEAPON in the SADC sub-region is making a significant step in the life of the churches. The church can then say how do women engage in the budgeting process... How relevant is the budget and how does it address the needs of the poor?"

Dr. Molefe Tsele

Regional Integration. The Global Challenges

The search for alternatives by like minded trade activists in the south converge on the need for regional economic integration seen to bring stronger negotiating positions and safeguard of regional trade interests. Regional integration in Africa is commonly reflected in Organization of the African Union formed in 1963 that is today called the African Union. Two of Africa's most prominent regional groupings are Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). In all are over 7 economic and political blocks in Africa.

The most immediate challenge before the regional groupings is negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the European Union. EPAs enclose reciprocal (trade liberalization) trade agreements that are to replace non-reciprocal and preferential trade agreements granted by the EU to African Caribbean and Pacific countries. Such preferential trade relationships include EU's Everything But Arms. Ratification of EPAs will occur in 2008.



Malcom Damon, keynote speaker and facilitator discussing challenges facing SADC in the negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

Focus on SADC in its preparation for the first phase of negotiation of EPAs is important given the impact of an already existing trade protocol between European Union and South Africa. The Economic integration of SADC and its preparedness for trade related aspects of the Cotonou (Benin) Agreement could best be analyzed by discussing the SADC trade protocol. The Cotonou Agreement based on reciprocal trade replaces Lome (Niger) Agreement-a non-reciprocal agreement.

Trade in SADC is influenced and directed by three related policies. Intra trade within the SADC region, trade within the South African Customs Union -SACU is a merger between Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa- and SA-EU Trade

Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA). These three trade regimes make the SADC region fairly unique and an interesting case study or model for the upcoming Cotonou trade negotiations.

"It is of prime importance that the EU does not intervene in the SADC region in ways that push intra-regional trade and regional integration project towards "open regionalism" to serve "the global economy" and global interest. Nor should the EU push SADC towards special reciprocal inter-regional arrangements that even more directly and tendentiously serve EU interest."
(Dot Keet)



Participants listening to Malcom Damon at the SADC Workshop

The likely impact of EPAs on the region is further erosion of local industries as a result of dumping of cheap, heavily subsidized EU industrial goods. The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) on agricultural subsidies influences loss of jobs in South Africa's tomato canning industry, while impact of dumping of cheap beef on the South African market has trickled to Namibia and Botswana resulting in the collapse of the beef industry in the two countries. Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland became reciprocal trade partners with the EU because of SACU and its integrated tariff structure. Gotfried Wellmer in his study on Regional Integration and Reciprocal Trade with the EU shows that most of the inter-trade is between processed goods but only 10% of processed goods are exported.

Agriculture is the comparative advantage of SADC, yet it's the area where EU has strengthened its protectionist and subsidy policies.

Reversal of negative impact of CAP on SADC economies and especially their agricultural sectors ought to be a common goal of all SADC countries in the negotiations of EPAs.



Elizabeth Leshika (with back to Camera) taking participants through a group discussion at the SADC workshop.

Workshop outcomes

- i.** Launch of AWEAPON Sub-Regional Chapter. The chapter was launched during an ecumenical mass and ceremony with the South African Council of Churches offering office premise and support to the activities of the chapter.
- ii.** Mobilized resources for participation at the 5th WTO Ministerial. Action Aid Africa facilitated by Ms. Elizabeth Leshika at the Ministerial.
- iii.** Workshop Report

CUTS PARTNERSHIP CONCLAVE, NEW DELHI.

AWEPON's major objective is to lobby and advocate for fair economic policies by participating in different fora. In March 2003, AWEPON participated in the CUTS partnership Conclave, New Delhi- India whose theme was, "Governance and its Relationship with Poverty Reduction".

The conference that captured all the prominent themes concerning poverty was attended by delegates from over 30 countries. Issues discussed in this meeting were of great concern to AWEPON as it pursues for fair and just economic systems. Such issues included the need for policymakers to involve civil society from early stages of policy-making and legislation since governance has an important impact from the local level right up to the international level. Focusing on the theme of the event, it was emphasized that the ultimate decision-making power lies with the policy-makers: it is their decisions that determine the quality of governance. To AWEPON policy decisions to tackle poverty have not always promoted good governance and have not been well thought through, even if they were well intentioned.

In one of the panels attended by AWEPON, issues of privatization of public goods was discussed a concern raised by participants worldwide. This discussion was timely for AWEPON as it was preparing to carry out a study on privatization of water. The major concern was the privatization of goods that are considered to be the traditional preserve of the public sector, such as water supply, education and health. The demand for privatization arose because of intrinsic factors, such as the shortage of funds with the State, or through extrinsic factors such as commercial pressures from domestic or overseas companies.

Other issue of concern by AWEPON in this workshop was the impact of the TRIPs Agreement on public health, especially the poor. This is because the vast majority of patents are held by just two countries – USA and Germany, has resulted in high prices for life-saving medicines. For many goods, this doesn't matter, but for medicines it is a

matter or life and death. The TRIPS Agreement of the WTO however provides some important flexibility on the protection of intellectual property

On the relationship between globalisation and the Millennium Development Goals, emphasis on the need for the State to ensure that basic needs of the poor are met. Policy coherence is therefore required to ensure that the process of globalisation is oriented towards achieving poverty reduction goals.

“If the Millennium Development Goals are to lead to action, the UN needs a body to coordinate poverty-alleviation and inequality reduction measures”.

AWEPON learnt the following lessons from the Conclave:

1. Civil society has the power to initiate and shape debates, a strength, which they can use to promote long-term poverty reduction.
2. For Northern governments and multinational institutions, the challenge is to bring concerns about development and poverty into the mainstream of policy-making, including trade policy.
3. Policymakers should involve civil society from early stages of policy-making and legislation.
4. Governance has an important impact from the local level right up to the international level.
5. There is need to empower people to comprehend the dynamics of globalisation constructively and for targeted interventions to make sure that the benefits of liberalisation reach the poor.
6. Policy coherence is required to ensure that the process of globalisation is oriented towards achieving poverty reduction goals.
7. For MDGs, there is need for countries to secure ownership over the goals and tailor them to their national development objectives.

MOBILISING AND CREATING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Zambia Council of Churches strengthens ties with the Moslem women.

Bonded together by the spirit of ecumenism and the fact that “Poverty has no religious boundaries! the Zambian Council of Churches Women’s Desk, a member of AWEAPON organised a meeting to strengthen the relationship and partnership between Moslem and the Christian women. Observing that the September 11th was unfortunately creating a rift in the relationships between the Moslems and Christians; the women’s desk took the initiative to show solidarity with the Moslem women and to create a strong alliance together to fight poverty. This was also aimed at eliminating the wrongly conceived rift.

The meeting come up with activities to demystify the question of religion as a reason for war. They also come up with concrete activities such as,

- A campaign against violence against women
- Common programmes to address economic empowerment of women e.g. credit
- Economic literacy training programme for women.

Their main and common concern is to address community development needs of their countrymen and women.



Suzanne Matala, left, of Zambia Council of Churches

The Zambia membership lead by Suzanne Membe Matale and Susan Cholwe Mulenga have been a very instrumental in steering the role of AWEAPON in influencing government policy on issues of economic policy with a gender perspective. Their active involvement in the economic policy discussions has brought the voices of the women to the public discussions with public marches against child abuse, writings on HIV/AIDS highlighting the economic challenges facing the African continent.

South African People's Solidarity network (SAPSN)

With the ever-increasing poverty among African nations and peoples, never before has the need for solidarity been more apparent. The challenges of globalisation and pressure on the small underdeveloped economies of Africa need to be salvaged through not only economic integration, but also through the solidarity of the CSOs trying to strengthen the voices of the poor men and women in the continent.

Victoria Kisarale, a member of AWEAPON participated in a planning meeting to chart out a strategic plan for the South African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN). Coalition building among CSO based on thematic issues around trade and macroeconomic policy issues was one of the outstanding decisions that come out at the end of the meeting. Part of the outcomes also emphasised the need to have a strong alliance among the African negotiators in Cancun with support from the CSO.

THE PAN-COMMONWEALTH TRI-SECTOR CONFERENCE ON PARTNERSHIP FOR GOVERNANCE.

On the 12th to 14th August 2003, representatives of civil society organizations from over 14 Commonwealth countries gathered in Kampala to develop recommendations on Tri Sector partnerships to feed into the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting planned for later in the year, to take place in Abuja – Nigeria. The discussions and the proposals were based on outcomes of tri-sector dialogues held in eight countries; Uganda, Gambia, Canada, Jamaica, Malaysia, India-Bangalore, and Seychelles.



A Cartoonist impression of Democracy

The conference held in Kampala and facilitated by AWEAPON Coordinator. The Conference addressed governance issues of globalisation, private sector, liberalization of the economy, essence of partnerships, service delivery, and challenges there in for Tri-Sector Partnerships in ensuring good governance.

The conference analysis of governance issues started with the global context of governance and processes legitimising function and operation of external actors e.g. Foreign Direct Investors in development processes of poor countries. Participants at the conference noted that private sector has been given lead in most poor countries to ignite growth and development but the rhetoric is that privatisation puts profit above and over people. Possible coherence of partnerships in ensuring effective governance is not value ridden; besides it is challenged by lack of accountability, transparency and equity between partnerships involving Civil Society, public sector, and private sector. Effective

governance through partnerships is relevant in as far as it addresses issues of equity, equality, freedom, social justice, and empowerment of communities. This entails compromise of institutional values for the benefit of the wider population. The merger of political interests (government) and economic interests (private sector) must not subdue service delivery.

In the spirit of the out come of this conference AWEAPON will continue with lobbying for inclusion of CSO in key policy decision making meetings. In light of that, capacity building for CSO to understand issues of global governance and partnerships will be a key activity and theme for the subsequent year.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON WOMEN AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

The Keynote speaker at the seminar to discuss the financing for the Millennium Development Goals was no other than, the Central Coordinator of AWEAPON. The role and active participation of AWEAPON members at the Financing for Development Conference (FfD) in Monterrey anchored AWEAPON's role in influencing international discourse on financing development.

The seminar was organised by the Commission on Women and Development Belgium. The Commission on Women and Development is an advisory commission situated under the Ministry of Development Corporation. It has a mandate to give advise on development in broad sense and on its impact on equality between men and women. It aims at contributing to the improvement of lives of women in developing countries through lobbying for application of international conventions and declarations. It is in this regard that the commission called for this seminar.

This seminar was organised in order to;

- Critically examine the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a framework for development from a gender perspective, through concrete case studies from women in the south;
- Interpolate the Belgian delegation who were to attend the high-level dialogue of the ECOSOC for the financing of the MDGs (28-30 October 2003);
- Follow-up of the engagements made by the Belgian government with regard to FfD and MDGs with specific focus on the gender dimension.

In her presentation, Hellen Wangusa highlighted the need to increase financing to the social sector as a means to achieving the MDGs.

Some of the mechanisms identified for financing MDGs are Official Development Assistance (ODA), funds released from Debt relief or the HIPC initiative, money generated through increased trade and some that is harvested from investment.

There is scepticism even among African leadership about feasibility on Financing for Development agenda.

“...without concrete commitment and results, we will have signalled recognition that the MDGs will remain a dead letter. In addition, we also may have to re-examine the wisdom of calling such mega-conferences if they consistently fail to deliver a minimum of real advances.”

President Olusegun Obasanjo, address at UN International Conference on Finance for Development, Monterrey Mexico 2002.

For the World Bank, additional funding for the MDGs is only considered effective if they are coupled with necessary changes in policies and institutions. Yet these policies, including export-oriented production; a diminished role of the state, privatization of public services, and opening of borders to foreign trade and investment, have devastated jobs and livelihoods.

The IMF required Cameroon to create a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper with specific expenditure ceilings. Yet within these budget limits, infant mortality will be 44% higher than the MDG goal in 2015. The IMF has called for a reduction in current spending that, if used to address domestic needs, would be enough to double the health budget.¹ Oxfam 2002.

This shows the double bind African nations face—they are locking in budgets that will undermine efforts to achieve the MDGs, at the behest of the IMF, even as these same institutions tout the MDGs and poverty reduction as institutional goals.

Commitment to Women’s rights and Gender

At the Millennium Summit, all government commitments to women’s rights, gender equality and Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) were reaffirmed and incorporated into the Millennium Declaration (and thus, the MDGs). Gender equality is listed as an MDG in itself and is acknowledged as critical to the attainment of all the development goals. According to Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director UNIFEM, the Millennium Declaration “...resolves to promote gender equality and empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.”

However, despite government commitments to women’s rights, the process of globalization has increased women’s employment insecurity and shifted much of women’s remunerated work to the informal and casual sectors. There is a growing

number of displaced women both as refugees. These are the experiences that need to be factored into MDG financing.

Achieving the MDGs needs to start with holding governments accountable to women for the commitments they have made, backed by collection of gender specific data needed to monitor implementation.

AWEAPON is committed to the empowerment of women in line with the United Nations provisions and to promote affirmative action and the Convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and a focus on achievement of MDGs is critical in this path. To uphold women's rights in MDGs, NGOs should pursue the following priorities:

- Step up economic literacy and awareness on MDGs.
- Do a policy analysis of all economic instruments for poverty reduction
- Build strong North/South and South/South partnerships for advocacy and to monitor government performance and commitments.
- Develop sector-based case studies for advocacy and demonstration of impact.
- Open up analysis and debate of the macroeconomic framework that is currently contradicting country efforts to attain the MDGs because it is not driven by recipient countries and ignores poverty needs.

The Millennium Goals are technically and economically within our reach.

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN STRATEGY MEETING.

The democratisation of global governance is generating a lot of debate lately accelerated in no small part by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2002, and the subsequent threat of extended war. AIDS and other infectious diseases continue to kill millions. While global warming expands the range of the West Nile mosquito and other vectors. Mad Cow disease, E. coli: contamination, and genetically engineered DNA threaten our food supply. Famine, Drought, and floods are rampant. A sense of urgency provokes us all. (Kristin Dawkins)

Provoked indeed was a group of CSOs that met at the Blue Mountain retreat centre in the US. Elizabeth Eilor participated in this think tank meeting to try and strategise on how CSO world over can challenge the current crowing lack of respect for democratic governance and the world powers like the United States continue to spend billions on war and taking unilateral decisions to invade other countries, under the guise of a ‘preventive’ or pre-emptive attack.

Of all the international institutions, the UN is certainly the most democratic to date with one country, one vote is the fundamental decision making principle, and diplomatic practise grants every country a virtual veto. Together with the group 25 of CSO representing different regions in the world, AWEAPON participated in launching campaign militarism and strategically working to strengthen the UN.

AWEAPON is supportive of the UN and it’s over all agenda, although critical of the recent trends towards corporatization in the organization. These include “The Global Compact” with the business community, which appeals to, rather than requires, then to put into practise the principles of human, social, and environmental rights; the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development’s promotion of “partnerships” with the private sector to supply what were previously public services, including the delivery of water and electricity. AWEAPON is also critical of the failure of the UN to fight poverty, misery and conflict as these continue to worsen the lives and dignity of people especially the African women.

COUNTRY REPORT

AWEPON LESOTHO



AWEPON Lesotho members during an economic Literacy Discussion.

Groups Year achievements

1. Formulation of a Strategic Plan

“The purpose was to strategize on how to go about the issue of advocating for quality working life for factory workers because we felt that we have to ensure the sustainability and success of the project”. The group undertook a study “*the Plight of Women Factory Workers in Lesotho*” that would be used to advocate against harsh working conditions in the textile factories in Lesotho. Significant findings from the study include low salaries, harsh working conditions, abuse of worker’s rights such as unpaid maternity leave.

2. Leadership Skills for Young Women

Recognizing the limited space for young women in the development of their community the group came up with a plan to equip young women with leadership skills.

CHALLENGES

The group faces the following challenges in pursuit of its work.

- The biggest challenge is **youth mobility**. The group’s most active personnel are mostly young women, who have to take up new jobs, or go back to school.
- Resources limit. Most personnel do not have access to email/internet, which hinders fast and effective communication. We also have financial limitations.

EDUCATION AS A GATEWAY TO POVERTY ERADICATION

The programme on training in education as a gateway to poverty eradication is envisaged to nurture and involve youths/students and teachers in Development Education (DE) viewed as a bridging gap between the school environment and the community in which they live. DE's basic tenets of critical thinking, citizenship, social justice, interculturality, sustainability, global understanding, awareness, empowerment, peace etc coupled with its cross-curricula nature make the school and community important agents of change that is borne within the local environment rather than imported into it. (DEEEP 2003)



Ms. Victoria Kisarale, AWEPON member

Achievements in this programme area were modest though. Only one Ugandan teacher, Ms. Victoria Kisarale-Serunkuuma was trained in Development Education at Summer School in Peniche Portugal, 27th Oct. - 2nd Nov. 2003. Summer School is an outcome of the Development Education Forum Europe in collaboration with the Development Education Exchange in Europe Project (DEEEP). The theme of summer school 2003 was “The Role of Development Education in Schools.” Ms. Kisarale has gained skills and knowledge of the school-community linkage, of the formal and non-formal

education from an institutional perspective, as well as in the context of DE, and skills in delivering grass roots development education within the formal education system. This is a valuable resource benefit to AWEAPON as a network.

Organisation challenges in the above program activity concern logistical and capacity issues. The organization was limited in its support to a greater number of teachers trained in development education. Other challenges envisaged are institutional in nature. These challenges are an impediment to the promotion of DE in schools. They include: finding space for Development Education in the curricula; pressure on schools to impart in pupils and students, competencies that are measurable and quantifiable. These challenges will be met over the remaining programme period through advocacy and policy advice on relevant education.

A Youth programme will be formulated to follow-up on the DEEEP meeting as a way of domesticating the key outcomes and also enriching the Uganda system of education.

AWEPON AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

AWEPON recognizes the need to promote human rights in tackling poverty. In 2002 the East Africa Coalition on Economic, Social Cultural rights (ESCR) was formed in a meeting held in 2002 in Mombasa-Kenya. This coalition is composed of membership of association of like minded organizations from six countries of Eastern Africa sub region namely: Uganda, Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda. The outcome of this meeting was that National consultative meetings in each country be held on ESCR; hence AWEPON was chosen to take lead in the Uganda national chapter. Follow up meetings organized by BEACON and attended by AWEPON include a regional workshop on Economic justice, whose theme was “the reciprocal influence between economic ideas and Social realities” The outcome of this workshop was that AWEPON was given the task to organize a national workshop on Economic, Social and Cultural rights (ESCR) to be held in 2004.

AWEPON strategic plan is to integrate ESCR in all it’s programmes while influencing decisions of policy makers on human rights and to promote and advocate against policies that violate human rights. It will also advocate for rights responsiveness in the policies formulated. AWEPON has planned to make a coalition with CSOs in Uganda on human rights e.g. HURINET, Action Aid, UWONET, Land Alliance, National NGO Forum and DENIVA.

This is in recognition of the need of the civil society not only to identify the Human rights violated but also to participate in seeking solutions.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Staff matters

Recruitment of new staff

Since 1996, AWEAPON was mainly depending on voluntary staff to run its programmes. This had been a big contribution but also a challenge in terms of ensuring commitment and sustainability of the organisation. A part from a small allowance given to the coordinator, most funding was aimed at programme implementation. The 2003 however saw a turn in events with recruitment of five permanent staff. Though still skeletal, given the scope of the programmes, it made AWEAPON face up to the critical needs from the continent and at international level.

The challenges now is to retain and motivate the existing staff while also seeking to build the capacity of AWEAPON to effectively meet its mandate in terms of institutional capacity, as voiced by one of the staff thus,

I have a working experience of 3years with Africa Women's Economic Policy Network, where I first worked as a volunteer. I am privilege to be part of this growing organization, have worked with a good working people and learnt a lot from them, which makes me proud because the working condition was convenient and conducive. However, I now need training in the area of information management in order to be more effective in my work
Pamela Anena Latim

There is also an urgent need for two more programme staff to boost implementation especially on economic literacy and Gender and trade work. Internally the organisation has tried to address this through innovative ways one of which has been in house training and orientation of staff prior to major meeting. The in house orientation of staff through economic literacy programmes conducted and also through participation in various for a, such as the World Social Forum, training programmes organised by partners and other CSOs. One of the staff who has benefited from such training had this to say,

Before joining AWEAPON, I had been working with women. I believed that all you had to do is to mainstream gender in a policy then women automatically benefit! Two months in AWEAPON I was awakened by the fact that the policy in itself could be the problem and policy has many facets. Hence unless one unpacks what is underpinning the policy and start with addressing that, then gender equity is far from becoming a reality – Elizabeth Eilor

This view was shared by the finance people who come into AWEAPON as a fresh graduate from the University. Ester Kamiza had a lot of excitement when she was speaking in one of the review meetings when she said,

*... Fresh from the university, I was challenged to take up a voluntary job with AWEAPON... I am indebted to this organisation for making me grow both intellectually and professionally... Apart from managing the accounts work, AWEAPON has ushered me into a world of economic dialogue. I now appreciate the need to stand up for economic justice. We must fight against unjust economic policies that impinge against women and develop alternative policies that will bring economic development. I am proud to be in AWEAPON and we continue to make sure the voices of the women are heard... Women must get their voices heard..
Easter N. Kamiza*

Similarly from one of the experiences gained from the activities undertaken, one of the staff persons had this to say,

*I am privileged to be part of a challenging work programme that visionalizes economic justice but whose tenacity is tested by both logistical challenges and most importantly pressure globalisation. Through its economic literacy and advocacy programmes, AWEAPON has set the pace for women and young people at the continent to take control of the analysis surrounding Africa's development.
Rebecca Ajabo*

One of the achievements in terms of institutional development has been the launching of AWEAPON Website. This in itself will enhance dissemination of information and help us reach a wider audience. So far the feedback from partners and other organisations visiting the website have been very encouraging, with some partner organisations expressing interest in linking up their websites to the AWEAPON one and also interested in posting their programme work onto AWEAPON's website. The statement from one of the staff provides a picture of where we come from when she says,

I joined AWEAPON in 2002 as a volunteer, when the organisation had a skeletal staff, working on voluntary basis. During all this time, I have witnessed AWEAPON grow into a well-established institution, at both regional and international level. The process of developing the strategic plan gave me an eye opener to what AWEAPON is destined to do in Africa and the World at large. It also gave me the motivation to work harder even in times when the organisation experiences difficulty in raising funds for salary and programmes, the mission and vision provides the motivation.

Josephine Pedun

The above may sound exciting but there are challenges too. Some of the challenges in the year have been.

- Difficulty is raising staff salaries as most donors prefer to fund programmes and not overhead costs;
- Communication with French speaking membership has been costly. There is an urgent need to recruit and train the existing staff in French so as to cut down costs of translation and interpretation.

The future plans now are to,

- Capacity building in the form of short courses/ training
- Strengthening the sub-regional focal points e.g. the SADC chapter
- Developing a staff end of contract gratuity or business plan

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Partnership with WEDO

AWEPON has had a long partnership with WEDO more concretely with preparations for the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development (FfD). WEDO funded a continental consultation on FfD held in Kampala. The meeting was attended by thirty five (35) participation from all over Africa. The purpose of the consultative meeting was to.

- Identify Financing issues to be taken to the UN prep-conferences
- Prepare lobbying materials for country advocacy.
- Select 20 African representatives to attend the UN Conference - FfD

WEDO also funded 20 African women (members of AWEPON) to attend the United Conference on financing for Development in Monterrey and also worked together with AWEPON in preparing them for. Participation in inter ministerial high level panel discussions during the conference.

During the year WEDO and AWEPON collaborated and make joint inputs to the following meetings,

- Kyoto Water World Water Conference, in which both challenged the privatisation of water and sanitation in developing countries especially in Africa and provided a gender perspective to the discussions
- Follow up to FfD commitments to financing development and eradicate poverty
- Held a joint panel at WSSD in Johannesburg. The main thrust of the panel discussion was policy interventions from a gender perspective and issues related to sustainable development.

As a continuation of the support and partnership, WEDO preparations are under way for a Regional meeting for MDGs slated for May 2004 in Senegal.

Uganda National NGO Forum

Collaboration and partnership started with the NGO Forum hosting the joint work on Structural Adjustment Participatory Review International Network (SAPRI). This was a tri-partite civil society-lead exercise that included the government of Uganda, the World Bank and Civil Society. The NGO Forum also co-sponsored the East, Central and Southern African Workshop hosted by AWEAPON on NEPAD, as well as the AWEAPON Youth Consultants' workshop out of which the research report on the status of education was presented.

To date the NGO Forum has close linkages with AWEAPON in currying forward the outcome of the SAPRI study and working together on the review of the Uganda Poverty Eradication Programme (PEAP).

Ha ha ha!

International South Group Network (ISGN)

ISGN is a network of individuals with roots and active involvement in social movements and centres of research and learning.

It is active in the advocacy of various concerns affecting peoples of the South, disseminating critical analysis of global issues, propagating people's on-the-ground struggles, conducting studies and workshops to forge unity among social movements, and enhancing efforts to discover and promote people-centred development alternatives.

ISGN is an initiative of African and Southern people's democratic institutions, created to respond to historical transformations taking place in the era of globalization.

It's Mission Include:

- To promote a value system that places people above profit in the development process and consider money as a means and not an end:
- To promote the principle of the rights of peoples to self-determined in all its dimensions, internal as well as external, political as well as economic, social and cultural, based on the principles of democracy, justice and equality.
- To promote a systematic and structural approach to development, human and democratic rights, environment and peace and propagate an understanding of these various components as indivisible and interdependent.
- To promote direct access to organisation of affected peoples and their dual participation in decision making at the international level in a sustained, structured and comprehensive manner.

- To promote alternative economic strategies to the dominant neo-liberal model that shall encompass democratization of control, ownership and management of productive assets and resources.

AWEAPON has been greatly involved in this tri-continental network as a means to championing its vision for a just, peaceful and human society. A Gender perspective in analysis and influencing forces of globalisation require such global initiatives.

AWEAPON's involvement is further premised on the fact that the war on Iraq and the US continued campaign of pre-emptive military strike against nations to complete its global hegemony signify a critical and dangerous period in the history of modern civilization. The crisis of neo-liberal economic globalisation that has ravaged whole economies and livelihood of people has taken the ultimate military solution to control nations and peoples economically, politically, ideologically and militarily. In the meantime, imperialist powers continue to make use of the WTO, the IMF-World Bank and other instrumentalities to protect and promote corporate interests amidst a lingering economic recession.

Eastern African Coalition on Economic and Social Cultural Rights (EACOR).

In April 2002, a number of Faith Based organisations and other CSOs came together in a meeting organised by BEACON to discuss the need for a rights based approach to development. This workshop culminated into a formation of a sub-regional coalition now referred to as EACOR. AWEAPON has been a founder member and still continues to support the initiative to grow. EACOR-East Africa Coalition on Economic Social Cultural Rights is therefore a coalition of ecumenical organizations in the Eastern and Greater horn of Africa in the area of Economic Social and Cultural rights (ESCR).

The coalition is a result of the experience in East Africa with development work aimed at poverty eradication has shown that a lot of work needs to be done to address the structural causes of poverty and economic injustice, which continue to impoverish the people of the region. It is therefore the belief and commitment of this coalition to apply ESCR approach to tackling poverty.

To AWEAPON, the challenge is integrating ESCR in all development work, decisions, policies and programs of participating organizations and other relevant actors. As ecumenical organization playing a critical role in meeting the immediate needs of the poor are faced with the challenge of how to match service delivery which aims at addressing immediate needs of people living in poverty with a more long term structural

approach of the underlying cause of poverty. Hence poverty is not defined as just the lack of resources and a measure of macro economic growth but rather as an economic phenomenon that is a result of human rights deficit that can be addressed by negotiation for more economic growth that is human rights oriented.

As a follow up to the first meeting, in 2003, a meeting was again held to concretise implementation of the agenda set for the membership. In this meeting AWEAPON was requested to take lead in Economic Literacy Training and within that mainstreaming the ESCR approach to development. One of the series of workshops on this is to be conducted by AWEAPON in 2004.

Capitalism without bankruptcy is like Christianity without hell

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE YEAR

PROGRAMMES	ACTIVITY	OUTPUT
To build capacity for policy analysis, engendering macroeconomic policies and advocacy for gender equity.	Economic Literacy training workshop in Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 women that trained in macroeconomic policies and Trade issues and the economic policy impact. • These women are now able to influence policy debated and discussions. They are involved with policy debates and influencing at national level. • An activity report disseminated to various interest groups
To establish whether PRSP's address the feminisation of poverty	A study to the Gender Analysis of the Uganda PEAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear proof that PRSPs do not adequately reduce feminisation of poverty, • Activity reports • Country specific lobby and advocacy issues on PRSPs , during the PEAP Review exercise
Economic empowerment of rural and policy awareness on land, agriculture and gender issues	Women in livestock production ALIAT project in Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 women have benefited from cows and their products • Increased income and well-being due to income from sale of livestock products • These women are now aware of their land rights, agricultural and gender policies related to livestock production • Training livestock and production, agricultural and gender policies
Education as a gateway for poverty eradication and wealth creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness building and skills training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country specific links that show the link between poverty and bad education policies • One teacher from a Secondary school participated in a teachers training seminar
To evaluate country policy prescriptions on water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study on the Impact of Privatisation of water in Uganda • Awareness building based on study results of Uganda • Regional meeting on Privatisation of Social services in Africa – In Ghana • Participation in the World Water Forum in Kyoto - Japan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness building and training on privatisation of utilities: Water Uganda • Study Report • Policy brief for the Review of the Uganda Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) • Papers presented at regional and international level • Coalition building to challenge privatisation of water and sanitation services
Strengthening the network /institutional capacity.	<p>5 new staff recruited to manage programmes and provide programme support</p> <p>Launch of the Website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely implementation of programs; • Highly motivated and skilled and professional staff; • Team work that enhances coalition building;

PROGRAMMES	ACTIVITY	OUTPUT
	Launch of AWEAPON Southern African Sub-regional Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional growth • Enhancing AWEAPON's presence at the sub-regional level
Study on the Socio economic impact of HIV/AIDS and review of PRSPS and MTEFS	Study ongoing in 3 countries, namely. Cameroon, Tanzania and Swaziland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS and its affecting on the economic growth in Africa • HIV/AIDS and macroeconomic policy country working groups
Campaign on MDGs	Presented various papers in both regional and international fora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 papers presented at regional and international level on; Financing MDGs; MDGS and Globalisation; MDG Goal 8 and gender mainstreaming.
Building Capacity and coalitions for analysis on trade and advocacy on WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on gender and trade with a focus WTO, AGOA, Cotonou in Southern Africa- S. Africa Sub-regional workshop Report • Also identifying issues for lobbying delegates at country and WTO level on trade. • Participation at the WTO 5th Ministerial Conference in Cancun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 women drawn from continental networks and AWEAPON; countries; • Lobby issues for the WTO, AGOA, Cotonou is being formed. • Capacity in Gender approaches to Trade policy analysis • Paper on the impact of Trade liberalisation on Africa presented at the gender and trade group meeting in Cancun
To make a follow up to FfD: Capacity building for advocacy, lobbying and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the UN. ECOSOC meetings, to follow up on FfD UN Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for increased financing to Africa • An activity report • Campaign to counsel Africa's debts
To develop a Resource centre	Compiling existing materials on women's analysis and advocacy activities on economic policies for references and future research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document papers and research reports on gender studies and economic policy analysis by women and on women • A data bank of women activists on thematic areas related to gender and economic issues set up.
Coalition building and hosting public debates	Country based meetings with Africa Growth Opportunity Act Group and Cotonou and WTO groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women groups in dialogue with the rest of civil society and government on AGOA, Cotonou and WTO • Public discussions and debates to popularize trade issues
To involve and nurture the youth on education as a gateway to poverty reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training selected teachers and students. • Training and analysis of education policies starting with Uganda as a pilot country and using SAPRI findings as baseline material. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A country specific link between poverty, growth, and national educational policy; • Demonstrable link between quality education and poverty reduction.