



ADF TODAY

Friday, 21 November 2008

Action on gender equality, women's empowerment and ending violence against women in Africa

Governments urged to set up VAW fund

By Rosemary Okello



Gambian Vice President Aisatou Gaye. Photo: Trevor Davies.

ADF VI closes today with an urgent plea by over thirty ministers from diverse backgrounds to their governments to make good on the 2004 decision by the African Union (AU) to set up a special fund for fighting violence against women.

The provision is part of the Protocol on the Rights of Women that accompanies the African Charter on Human and People's Rights as well as the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality signed in Maputo, Mozambique in 2004.

The ministers from different parts of Africa attending ADF VI said that the time has come for the

government to start dealing with VAW as a national calamity. Giving the example on how her country dealt with the HIV and AIDS pandemic, Ugandan Minister of National Solidarity and Social Development Syda Bumba said the time had come to launch curative and preventive measure against violence.

"We have legislation, we have signed international conventions and protocols and also have institutions in place, but we have gone nowhere," noted Gambian Vice President Aisatou Gaye. "We have focused only on creating awareness instead of making women understand their legal rights."

She castigated her fellow government colleagues for leaving the fight against gender violence to NGOs: "We are suspicious of them, instead of working with them to eradicate VAW in our society. We think that we cannot bring ourselves to their level so we do not give them the support they require."

"The governments should show leadership in VAW by expediting the establishment of the fund," said Bisi Adeye Afeyemi, the Executive Director of African Women's Development Fund.

According to the co-chair of the conference and AU Commissioner Bience Gawanas, the mechanics of the fund were left to the AU Secretariat which is in the process of making this a reality after completing a feasibility study.

The ministers urged that the Plan of Action to be adopted on Friday include the allocation of a specific percentage of the budget to support all line ministries for promoting the rights of women and girls as recommended by the AU.

Dr. Jacinta Muteshi, an expert on financing for gender equality, cautioned that there is need to be careful about prescribing a percentage of the budget for fighting gender violence to avoid "interim mechanisms."

The Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Population and Development in Botswana Ronald Ridge challenged legislatures to take up the task of monitoring and evaluation.

Sudan's Deputy Minister of Defence Ismat Abed Elrhman said his country has come up with a law on rape by soldiers that has helped to reduce rape cases in Sudan especially in the war afflicted areas.

Answering to women

By Deepa Bhookhun



Micheline Ravololonarisoa (right) and UNIFEM colleagues at the launch of the report. Photo: Trevor Davies.

The UNIFEM Progress of the World's Women report launched at ADF VI last night posed a key question for the final day of the forum: who accounts to women?

"Good governance is about accountability and accountability is about good governance," noted Micheline Ravololonarisoa, Chief of the Africa Section of the United Nations Development Fund for women (UNIFEM).

"If any man asks why I support better accountability to women, here's my response: because a government that answers to women will answer to you too," says Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General in the 2008/2009 report that UNIFEM chose to launch at ADF VI in order to make a strong statement at this forum.

"For too long, we have discussed, debated, voted for resolutions, made promises but one realises today that there is a crisis of implementation. The time has come to answer to women", explains Ravololonarisoa who is from Madagascar.

"We wanted to appeal to African governments while this forum is on. This forum is different from the others in the sense that innovative mechanisms have been identified to allow follow up on the deliberations of the conference. This gives us hope that maybe a new chapter is about to start," she added.

Key facts in the report include:

- Violence affects between 10% and 60% of women and girls.
- Perpetrators are charged in less than one in ten cases of sexual and gender based violence.
- In Africa, 3 out of 10 women with tertiary education emigrate.
- Half of all married women in South Asia have no say in decisions regarding their healthcare.
- In Southern Africa, women are 300% more likely to be infected with HIV than men.
- One in five parliamentarians is a woman
- There is one woman for every nine men in senior management positions in firms.

The report highlights some progress including:

- Nine out of ten girls in the world are enrolled in primary education.
- Half of the 22 countries that have reached 30% representation of women in parliament come from developing regions.
- In Honduras and Croatia, more than 40% of the Supreme Court judges are female.
- One third of police personnel in South Africa and Australia are women.
- Gender-focused aid has nearly tripled (in absolute terms) from US\$2.5 billion in 2002 to US\$7.2 billion in 2006.

Reflecting on the situation in Africa, Ravololonarisoa said she believes "the political will is there because otherwise they would not have ratified the protocols. I think the problem is that there is no mechanism that allows implementation and follow up. They don't know how to go about it. And I'm sure we will be making progress if they let us help them".

Laws on trafficking needed

By Mercedes Sayagues

Delegates meeting at ADF VI have called for urgent and standardised laws to address trafficking - the newest form of gender violence that, according to UNICEF, afflicts more than four fifth of African countries.

Because of the newness and complexity of the issue, most countries lack specific, efficient and modern laws to deal with human trafficking. Blazing the trail, leaders of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) signed a Protocol on Gender and Development in August that requires its 15 member states to have anti-trafficking laws by 2015.

According to a 2006 study by the United States State Department, up to 800,000 people are trafficked in the world each year. This number does not include trafficking within a country's borders.

This staggering number of people - about 80 percent of them women and children - end in forced prostitution; forced labor in farms, factories, and sweatshops; domestic servitude; soldiering; in commercial or illegal adoption, or as sellers in the organ trade.

One problem that hampers the fight against human trafficking is its often imprecise contours. Trafficking lies in a grey area; it encompasses many issues and, being a fairly new concept, laws against it lag behind reality.

"There is a lack of data, a lack of legislation, few statistics, little reporting, and many people confuse it with kidnapping," says Karen Stefiszyn, programme manager of the Gender Unit at the Centre for Human Rights of the University of Pretoria, in South Africa.

"It is not sex work, it is not economic migration, it is not smuggling foreigners into a country, although trafficking can contain those elements," explains Stefiszyn.

Not all sex workers are coerced into prostitution. Many people willingly pay money to gangs



Trafficking of women and girls is a new form of slavery. Photo: UNESCO.

to be smuggled into richer countries. This is not trafficking. But the public, the police and the legislators often confuse the issues. It is easier to pass laws against illegal economic migrants and sex work than to tackle the complexities of human trafficking.

Botswana, for example, has laws that penalise kidnapping. But people who are trafficked into Botswana and are caught may say they agreed to be brought into the country. "Then that would not be against the law," says Ronald Ridge, a Member of Parliament and chair of the Parliamentary Committee on population and development.

Last year seven Zimbabweans were found suffocated in a container in Botswana, likely in transit to South Africa or to work on local farms. Is trafficking a problem in Botswana? "To a lesser degree, yes," says Ridge. But he stresses that the

extent of the problem is not known for lack of statistics.

The feeling is echoed by Zineb Touimi Benjelloun, Unifem regional director of programs in North Africa: "We need to invest resources to get a better understanding of the migratory fluxes, we need more studies."

In Southern Africa, the AIDS epidemic both feeds the traffic (luring poor or orphaned children) and the sex trade (leading to more HIV infection) in a vicious circle, says Stefiszyn.

In West and Central Africa, trafficking of women is growing for exploitation primarily in domestic services and the sex industry, remarks Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking. While civil conflict in West and Central Africa results in the abduction of boys and girls by rebels, to serve as porters, soldiers and sex slaves.



Hi Dad, please stand up and be counted!

By Trevor Davies

How many children in Africa grow up without knowing their dad? The answer is we simply do not know. A contributing factor to both low commitment and knowledge about fatherhood is the small proportion of fathers who register their names on their children's birth certificates. One simple step to start to raise the numbers of committed fathers, and equip children with knowledge of their parentage, is to get dads to register their names on the birth certificates of their children!

As part of an ongoing campaign to encourage greater male involvement in children's lives, the African Fathers Initiative is calling on fathers to commit to their children, and as a first step, ensure that their names appear on the birth certificate. The initiative is encouraging Dads: "Don't be a question mark in your child's life!"

There is a need for rapid re-orientation of society, and children and family services, towards a stronger expectation of the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children - through caring, providing financially and supporting their children's learning. This will benefit the child, the mother, the family, and the father.

Research conducted by the Human Research Council (HSRC) South Africa shows that an overwhelming 42% of South African children are growing up without a father in their lives. Linda Richter of the HSRC estimated in 2004 that only 20 per cent of fathers, who were not married to the child's mother at the time of the child's birth, were in contact with their children by the time the children reached the age of 11.

Article 7 of The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which most African governments have signed, gives the child the right to be registered immediately after birth, to a name, to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

Lindiwe Mokalake, a researcher at the University of Botswana, points out that not registering a child with the fathers' name not only affects the child, but also the rights of the father.

"Currently, a dad's name will only appear in the child's birth certificate if he is married to the mother, otherwise if the mother is not married, she is not required to fill in that part - many don't. However, this is in review, as some men complain that the Botswana Laws are not in favour of men concerning their children born out of wedlock. We are waiting for the new amendments, which we are hoping will require the father's name at birth registration, whether the woman is married or not, as well as other forms of access to these children."

Registering the birth details of the father along with the mother is an absolute must. It is the child's right and it gives us a starting point for all other research and policy development. African govern-

ments need to develop a legal and cultural expectation, and support for, substantial involvement of all fathers with their children from the earliest stages and continuing through their lives.

This would include taking steps to make it easier for fathers to participate in the care and education of their children and maintain their support for their children. For example, there is a need to tackle barriers in the workplace that discourage men to be involved with care giving. There is also a need to hold child and family services to a clearer and higher expectation of the father-child relationship, and to support these relationships more firmly and proactively from the very start.

Kudzai Makombe at the SADC Parliamentary Forum Secretariat says, "Supporting fathers' involvement in the care, education and financial support of their children is important for children and gender equality. The contribution of cash and sharing of care from both parents in low income families, and in the case of separation, is an important element in tackling child poverty."

Makombe also points out that emotional, along with financial support is vital. "It's not just about the cash," she says, "If the child loses contact with the father it also loses all the social capital and networks that the father has available to help the child develop. These will include paternal grandparents and other relatives, friends, workmates, social and education contacts. The value of these is inestimable."

African Fathers contends that there is no such thing as a fatherless child. Every child had a father or has a father somewhere, even if they do not live with their father or see their father very often. Many men can play the role of father to a child, including grandfathers, uncles, step-fathers, foster-fathers, older brothers, cousins, family friends, and men who have responsibility to care for children

The work of the African Fathers Initiative



Registering his presence. Photo: Trevor Davies.

proceeds from an explicit commitment to gender equality. It does not challenge the importance of mothering or mothers' rights to children, and it highlights the importance of working collectively for the interests of children.

Unfortunately, we truly are a generation of fathers known by our absence rather than our presence in our children's lives. Poverty, migration, and social expectations of low involvement of men in caring roles - all these factors play a part but we've come to regard the unacceptable as the norm. It is time to deliver the fatherhood revolution! In the end, everyone gains.

Trevor Davies is the Director of the African Fathers Initiative. This article is part of the *GL Opinion and Commentary Service* that offers fresh views on everyday news. For more information go to www.africanfathers.org.

Liberating Africa's men

By Kelvin Hazangwi and Mbuyiselo Botha

The ADF VI, convened under the theme of gender equality, women's empowerment and ending violence against women in Africa, offers us men an opportunity for reflection and self introspection.

The system of male domination - commonly referred to as patriarchy - has been with us for a very long time, from Cape to Cairo. It has produced men who thrive on dominance and violence. This has not helped us this far.

As we develop an action plan for the continent, men of Africa should work towards the empowerment of women and girls on the continent as an investment for this generation and beyond. This should never be seen as an act of charity. It's the right thing to do; it is in the liberation of women that we as men will also find our own liberation.

Patriarchy oppresses us as men as it dictates our behaviour. We are expected never to show any other emotion except anger and violence. We engage in risk-seeking behaviours such as multiple partners, making love without condoms, excessive drinking and driving under the influence of alcohol.

This has not helped us. It has fueled HIV infections. It has increased domestic violence to unprecedented levels. It has increased family break-up to the detriment of raising well rounded sons and daughters. The resultant image of manhood in our continent is one that we are not proud of. What can we do as men individually and collectively?

The first thing is to acknowledge that we need to change and reject patriarchy and its nefarious consequences. This will lead us to accept women as human beings, who should be accorded the human dignity that they deserve in their homes, workplaces, public spaces. They should never be regarded as minors or second-class citizens, a situation which has resulted in the challenges of gender inequality we are facing today, and deliberating on, at this forum.

Working to end the oppression and violence against women should never be viewed as a women's issue only. Doing so will deprive us an opportunity as men to work towards healthy relationships, families and communities. We want to be better husbands, uncles and grandfathers, who will never allow any form of women oppression to happen in their name. This is liberatory and human.

Finally, as men, we should never view gender equality or the empowerment of women as a negation of our manhood. We should celebrate it as an affirmation of positive masculine identity. Violence against women should never be done in our name. No form of discrimination against women should ever be done in our name.

We believe that all the men of quality are not afraid of equality should join us in building a continent of men who respect and stand for women's empowerment.

We should walk the talk and be accountable to women's leadership anywhere, however difficult that maybe. It is possible, practical and achievable.

Mbuyiselo Botha, works for Sonke Gender Justice in South Africa. Kelvin Hazangwi is with Padare/Enkudleni Men's Forum in Zimbabwe.



Mbuyiselo Botha. Photo: Joyce Chimbi



ADF Today was brought to you by a team of eleven journalists from South Africa, Zambia, Mauritius, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya and Ethiopia led by the Johannesburg-based Gender Links (GL) and the Nairobi-based African Women and Child Feature Service (AWCFS). The team worked in partnership with the Publications and Conference Management Section of the UNECA. Special thanks to the Documents Reproduction and Distribution Unit led by Charles Ndungu for getting the paper out each morning in full colour for the first time in the history of the ADF! This, in turn, was made possible by the all-woman reporting and editing team (and our two male photojournalists!) who made sure that the paper "went to bed" on time each night. Here is to gender equality! It works!

ADF Today is a partnership between the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Gender Links and the African Woman and Child feature Service (AWCFS).

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For the online version of the newspaper go to www.uneca.org/adf or www.genderlinks.org.za



OUT AND ABOUT IN ADDIS

Babylon called and delegates answered!

By Mercedes Sayagues

The top reggae bands of Ethiopia got delegates up and dancing on Wednesday night at the Hilton until nearly midnight.

Top star Johnny Raga, whose waist-long dreadlocks took eight years to grow, packs a punch of reggae fusion with Amharic rhythms and lyrics. The hottest singer among young Ethiopians, Raga was accompanied by the seven-member Mehari Brothers, fresh from a tour in the USA. Starting with the classic reggae song "Babylon called", the Brothers pumped a bassline that got people on the dance floor right away. And that is where we stayed.

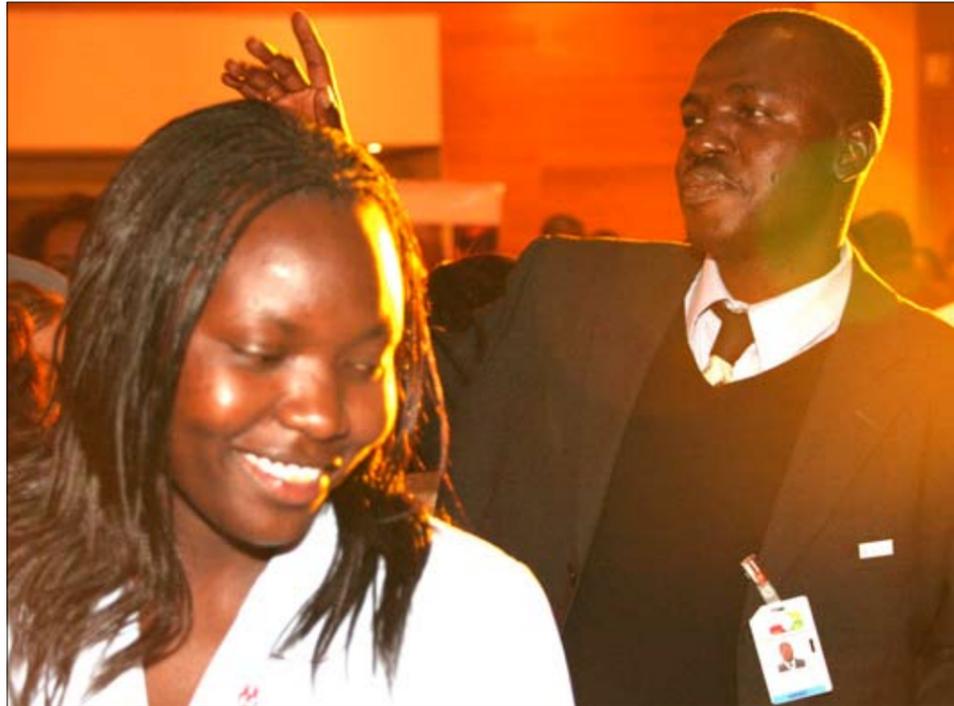
Raga, who is committed to social issues, plays two tracks in "We shall survive", a CD with music from Ethiopia's finest artists produced in 2005 to raise awareness and reduce discrimination against people living with HIV.

Raga played a short and powerful set. The dancing did not stop when the Imperial Majestic Band (IMB) and singer Sydney Salomon band took the stage. A big band with a strong wind and percussion section, the IMB took us through a melting pot of the reggae and ska of the diaspora.

The IMB was given its name by the grandson of Haile Selassie, His Highness Zara Yacob Amha Selassie, said I-Timothy, the band's poet, singer and producer, who hails from Los Angeles, USA.



The Imperial Majestic Band. Photo: Trevor Davies.



Reggae sounds: dancing away through the night at the Hilton. Photo: Trevor Davies.

A true product of the Diaspora, band members come from Jamaica, the USA, the UK, the Philippines and Ethiopia. They live in Shashemene, a village 250 kms south of Addis, where Emperor Haile Selassie gave land to Rastafarians.

Rastafarians believe that the late Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie was the Messiah. Since the 1970s, reggae music has celebrated Selassie and Ethiopia, and a young generation is joining reggae and Ethiopian rhythms successfully.

Catch the IMB this Friday after 10:30 at the Harlem Jazz café, in Addis. Raga leaves today for concerts in Milano, Italy, and Gottenberg, Sweden.

Useful websites

www.meharibrothers.com
www.orthodoxmusik.com
<http://www.nowpublic.com/culture/ethiopian-culture-meets-reggae-music>

TOP HITS

CDs of Ethiopian music to buy – what young people recommended to ADF Today
Zeritu Kebede, woman pop singer
Johnny Raga, reggae fusion
Eyob Mekoumeni, reggae
Aster Aweke, Ethiopian pop

Fun and flaunting at the ADF fair

By Joyce Chimbi

The ADF VI Conference is not all work and no play. As delegates took time out for refreshments, Rosa Kifle knew exactly what notes to hit. As her voice rose above the zealous conversations from networking delegates, it set the mood for a bit of spending at the Exhibition centre during the coffee and lunch breaks.

For Dawit Hailu of *Wudassie Souvenirs*, business is booming and very friendly to his pocket. "This is the second time I am bringing my wares to an ADF Conference but this is the conference that has brought me most money. The conference has more high officials (and women?) who are not afraid to spend!" Dawit exclaimed. "They don't have time to go out in the streets to shop, they come and pick everything they want and money isn't an issue to them, which is a good thing for my business."

His wares range from music and table cloths to beddings as well as Ethiopian music. An almost empty shelf of compact disc is a clear indication of how popular Ethiopian music is among delegates.

"I love Ethiopian music; I have bought Theodoros Kassahun's music. He is one of the most popular musicians here. His great hits are a souvenir worth having," says Ana Abebe.

Other than Ethiopian clothes, souvenirs and picture frames, information is the other product that business people are flaunting. Take the *Save Your Generation Ethiopia* for instance whose stand is one of the most popular with delegates. They are reaching out to the delegates with information regarding reproductive health, HIV and how to stand up against Violence Against Women. "It's good to be able to have information that aligns with a forum as prominent as ADF VI," Project officer Fetene Gebeyehu enthused.

Looking down at the exhibition center from the balcony is a bit like looking down at a market place with money and products changing hands. The rotunda at the centre of the conference venue is also one big capacity building session as information is shared in formal and informal ways.



Take a bit of Ethiopia in your suitcase. Photo: Trevor Davies.

As the sun goes down at the end of the last day of the forum today, many will take a little piece of Ethiopia back with them in the souvenirs they bought and friendships they made. For now though, another

desperate announcement is being made for the delegates to return to the plenary session where they are needed to wrap up a historic ADF VI that has indeed prioritised the needs of the African woman.

Answers for yesterday's quiz

1. 16 countries have laws against female genital mutilation
2. Angola has 37% of women in parliament
3. Libya has no women in the cabinet
4. Fewer than 10 is the average number of staff dealing with gender at the headquarters of main donor agencies
5. Three donor agencies include gender measures in most of their strategies and programs

Reponses pour le quiz hier

1. 16 pays africains qui disposent d'une législation pénale sur les mutilations génitales féminines.
2. 1 sur 22
3. 1 sur 7.300
4. 60% du chiffre total des personnes analphabètes âgées de plus de 15 ans en Afrique subsaharienne sont des femmes
5. Nombre moyen du personnel s'occupant du genre dans le siège des plus grands bailleurs des fonds : moins de dix

Women's land rights a "must"

It's time to talk about women's ownership of - not just access to - land, delegates at ADF VI heard yesterday. "We cannot talk about women's economic empowerment when they are denied access to secure and sustainable livelihoods through ownership of land," Kenyan Professor Okoth Ogendo told the plenary session on Gender and Socio Economic rights.

The University of Nairobi professor said governments had been slow to institute laws to protect women's ownership of land. He attributes this to the patriarchal nature of governments as well as cultural and religious norms that do not recognise women's equality.

Almost all African countries bar women from owning land even though they work on it all their lives. "Property grabbing, wife inheritance, not recognising a woman as an adult: all these inhibit women from owning and accessing land from which they can sustain themselves and their families once the man dies or abandons them," the professor said.

Ogendo challenged governments to come up with gender-aware land policies such as ensuring that a married couples' property is deemed to be owned by both the husband and the wife. This would mean that if either died, the other would automatically inherit the property. Consent laws should stipulate that a wife or a husband must consent to the sell or hire of matrimonial property.

The professor advocates independent and strong land administration institutions that are gender sensitive and adequately resourced. "No matter how good the laws are, if the land administration units are run by only men as they are now, are not adequately funded and lack capacity, then the laws will be for naught," he notes.

Ogendo cites the example of men in Kenya hiring women to pretend to be their wives and having them sign consent to sell property. The legislative units do not bother to verify whether this is the true spouse.

At an Africa-wide level, Ogendo says the ECA is supporting initiatives to improve land governance and management so that land rights are secured, there is increased access to land, equity in land distribution and a reduction in land related disputes.

"If we have an effective land policy, we will not only have a more orderly and equitable system for land distribution, but it means that women will no longer be in a position of vulnerability, leading to their empowerment and self esteem," he argued.



Women seldom own the land they work. Photo: Trevor Davies.

Governments urged: Put your

L'importance de financer l'égalité du genre

Le financement de l'égalité du genre est important pour le développement, comme démontré ci-dessous :

- C'est d'abord une obligation pour les pays qui ont ratifié une variété de documents internationaux relatifs aux droits humains.
- Le faire apporte un rendement élevé en matière socio-économique. En 2007, le *Economic and Social Survey* d'Asie et du Pacifique estimait que la région perdait entre 42 et 47 milliards de dollars américains par an en raison de l'accès limité des femmes à l'emploi et un montant supplémentaire variant entre 16 et 30 milliards de dollars américains annuellement en raison des écarts du genre dans l'éducation.
- Les études démontrent que les mères éduquées ont des taux de fertilité en baisse et que leurs enfants sont scolarisés et mènent une vie plus saine.
- En augmentant l'allocation de ressources vers l'égalité du genre, on contribue de façon significative à tous les objectifs de développement, incluant ceux du millénaire.
- Investir dans les femmes et les jeunes filles a un effet multiplicateur sur la productivité, l'efficacité et une croissance économique soutenue.

En mars dernier, la Commission sur le Statut de la Femme a exprimé des craintes à l'effet qu'un engagement politique insuffisant et le manque de ressources financières continuaient à être un obstacle à la réalisation des objectifs menant à l'égalité du genre et au renforcement des capacités des femmes.

Des progrès ont pourtant été réalisés en Afrique grâce à certaines Constitutions.

Autonomisation économique

Les progrès dans ce domaine ont été modestes. Le pourcentage de femmes à être employées dans un secteur autre qu'agricole passant de 25% en 1990 à 31% en 2006. Cependant, la plupart se trouvait dans le secteur informel où les salaires sont bas et où il n'y a pas de sécurité d'emploi.

Mais faire le bilan des progrès ne doit pas occulter certaines considérations :

- En 2005, le PNUD a rapporté que 18 pays avec une population combinée de 461 millions, avaient un indice de développement humain inférieur à celui de 1990.
- Le VIH/SIDA et la stagnation économique ont contribué à cette situation.
- La violence envers les femmes persiste en Afrique et peu de pays africains ont pris des mesures de prévention et de redressement.

Quelle somme faut-il obtenir pour atteindre ces objectifs?

- Une étude commanditée par la Banque Mondiale a identifié que des interventions directes à l'égalité du genre et à l'autonomisation des femmes, reviendrait à déboursier une enveloppe minimale de 7 à 13 dollars américains par tête d'habitant entre 2006 et 2015. L'étude estimait aussi que l'écart de financement du genre qui était entre 12 et 30 milliards de dollars américains en 2006 augmenterait pour osciller entre 24 et 83 milliards de dollars américains en 2015.

Comment mobiliser les ressources ?

L'exercice peut se faire de plusieurs façons, à travers les investissements étrangers directs, les aides officielles au développement, à travers le budget national ou en-dehors du budget.

Des allocations budgétaires à cet effet sont importantes car les programmes sont alors entrepris dans le contexte de priorités nationales. Les ressources hors-budget proviennent généralement du secteur privé, à travers des partenariats public-privé. Allouer une partie des revenus du commerce est aussi une bonne façon d'y parvenir.

Un budget pour les mères et les femmes

Par Saskia Naidoo



Ce budget cible les femmes pauvres. Photo: Rishi Ramnauth

Ce n'est pas facile d'être une mère célibataire. Sur une petite île comme Maurice, où les vies privées relèvent du domaine public, la société traditionnelle voit d'un très mauvais œil ces filles. Elles sont pointées du doigt et on dit d'elles qu'elles sont de mœurs faciles, des Marie-couche-toi-là. Et pourtant, en reconnaissant les réalités de ces filles dans le budget 2008-2009, Rama Sithanen, le ministre des Finances mauricien a pris des mesures concrètes pour encourager leur indépendance économique et les aider à s'occuper de leurs enfants.

Ce budget détaille dans les grandes lignes un programme détaillé offrant entre autres aux femmes, des formations et des possibilités de reconversions professionnelles qui tiennent compte des besoins des mères de famille d'avoir des horaires de travail flexibles et d'obtenir des facilités de crèches pour leurs enfants. Bien qu'il faille être deux pour faire un enfant, très souvent, ce sont les seules mères qui portent le fardeau des soins de l'enfant lorsque leurs relation amoureuse ne dure

pas. Ce qui les empêche de mener de front leur rôle de mère et celui de femme active en quête d'une stabilité économique.

Pour plusieurs femmes, ce programme les aidera à s'assumer pleinement, tout en veillant à ce que leurs enfants bénéficient de soins. Patricia, une mère célibataire de trois enfants, se dit soulagée. «Je serai désormais à même de gagner ma vie, sans avoir à abandonner mes enfants. L'avenir m'apparaît plus radieux», dit-elle.

Ce programme n'est pas seulement destiné à soutenir sporadiquement les familles. Il offre aussi la possibilité aux femmes d'acquérir des compétences et de prendre davantage d'opportunités qui ne pourront que les aider.

Par exemple, les femmes ont beaucoup de difficultés à obtenir des fonds pour démarrer une petite entreprise ou l'agrandir. Pour contourner ce problème, le gouvernement a mis en place le *Manufacturing Adjustment and Small Medium Enterprise Development Fund* qui leur permet d'obtenir un emprunt allant jusqu'à Rs 100 000 sans qu'elles aient besoin de fournir de garantie.

L'enveloppe budgétaire pour le programme de solidarité pour les femmes et les enfants a été doublé, soit 50 millions de roupies mauriciennes ou 1.8 million de dollars américains. Parmi les autres mesures budgétaires, il y a la formation pour les femmes en détention et le soutien aux enfants, dont les parents sont en prison. Le gouvernement a aussi augmenté le budget pour le VIH/SIDA afin que les organisations engagées dans la lutte puissent obtenir des enveloppes plus fortes pour leurs campagnes de prévention et de sensibilisation.

Ce programme inclus le soutien à Chrysalide, seul centre résidentiel de réhabilitation pour les usagères de drogue par voie intraveineuse, les travailleuses sexuelles et les séropositives. Bien que déçue que les autorités n'aient pas augmenté la dotation de Chrysalide, sa directrice, Marlène Ladinne, est heureuse car le gouvernement a renouvelé son engagement envers le centre, de même que ses promesses de soutien.

Alors qu'un des objectifs de développement du millénaire fait état de réduction de la pauvreté d'ici 2015, le ministre des Finances veut presser le pas. Plus de 7000 familles ont été identifiées comme vivant dans des conditions abjectes de pauvreté dans

229 régions à Maurice. Parmi celles-ci, il y a 5000 enfants qui ne sont pas scolarisés en raison d'une multitude de problèmes sociaux.

Dans son budget, le ministre des finances a alloué une enveloppe budgétaire de 395 millions de roupies pour éradiquer l'extrême pauvreté. Le gouvernement s'assurera que ces 5000 enfants aillent à l'école. Ils bénéficieront de transport gratuit, de vêtements, de manuels et autres matériels scolaires, de repas, de sessions de vérifications médicales et on leur fournira gratuitement des lunettes et des appareils auditifs en cas de besoin. Parents comme enfants seront accompagnés socialement. Les premiers nommés recevront une formation destinée à les rendre employables.

En développant de tels programmes, le gouvernement mauricien vient reconnaître que plusieurs problèmes sociaux ont un visage féminin. Le ministre des Finances a prévu des allocations pour réduire le chômage chez les femmes, éradiquer la pauvreté et soutenir les victimes et les survivants de violences qui sont généralement des femmes. De plus, ces allocations s'accompagnent de programmes et de plans d'action ayant leurs propres mécanismes de suivi et d'évaluation.

L'économiste Eric Ng pense que les mesures envisagées favorisent globalement le développement. Il accueille favorablement l'accent placé sur les infrastructures telles que les routes, l'aéroport, le port, l'eau, les eaux usées, de même que la reconnaissance que le financement pour tout cela doit se faire à travers le partenariat public et privé.

Il ajoute que «le budget dit clairement que l'éradication de la pauvreté est spécialement ciblée. L'accent est placé sur l'éducation des enfants et l'acquisition de compétences par leurs parents. Des mesures qui devraient atténuer la pauvreté. Toutefois, le succès de cette entreprise dépend grandement de la disponibilité de travailleurs sociaux et d'organisations non-gouvernementales efficaces qui doivent être adéquatement financées».

Maurice continue sa progression sur la route d'une approche tenant compte du genre dans tous ses plans économiques et en mesurant l'impact que les ressources nationales peuvent avoir dans l'amélioration de la vie de ses citoyens hommes comme femmes.

Financing media for gender equality

By Tiffany Tracey



Media women need funding to do their work. Photo: Trevor Davies.

In the fifteen years since the Beijing conference, media women have been called on as key allies in promoting gender equality. In so far as knowledge is power, the ability to find and use information effectively is central to women's rights and empowerment. In taking hold of media technologies and shaping them to their needs, women may be able to make access to information more appropriate for other women.

Yet women constitute less than five percent of media owners and managers in Africa, and donors are reluctant to fund gender work generally, and women's media specifically.

Recent research conducted by the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) indicates that many women's organisations are under-funded, experience greater difficulty in accessing funds than in the past, and may require up

to double the funding they did in the past to do the same work.

Research has suggested that donors may explain their gender blindness in the following terms:

- Efficiency: they will reach more people if they fund groups for both men and women;
- Democracy: organisations that work with women promotes exclusivity;
- Efficacy: work that targets women only is harmful to women; and/or
- Relevance: gender is an irrelevant category to their work as donors.

To date, four models appear to have emerged in support of women's media. They are:

- An individual donor, including Genevieve Vaughan's work funding the Feminist International Radio Endeavor (FIRE), and the Fund for A Compassionate Society (now dormant);
- Initiative of another individual donor that has evolved into a special fund with more contributors within a larger fund, such as the Women's Media Fund and the Global Fund for Women;
- A dynamic fund that recognises media as one of many tools to effect change, empowerment and work for human rights, for example Mama Cash; and
- State support, for example the Canadian Federal Film Agency's (NFB) support for Studio D, as well as the Forum for Women and Development (FOKUS) in Norway, support for the International Association Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT).

These models provide examples of how financial support for women's media organisations can effect change.

(For more information on this campaign, go to www.gmdc.org.za).

Money where your mouth is

Kenya blows HIV funding opportunity

By Joyce Chimbi

As the burden of the most devastating pandemic in human history continues to take a toll on women, an opportunity to invest in gender-responsive programmes in Kenya has been dealt a hard blow with the refusal by the Global Fund to support Kenya's round eight application to the fund.

No other round has been as gender-responsive as the eighth round of the Global Fund. Previous rounds have sought to address issues such as mitigating the impact of TB and HIV co-infection and the reduction of the impact of HIV and AIDS. Round eight focuses on work at community level where the majority of women live.

Kenya has not received the \$333 million that it applied for in round eight because it failed to adequately account for the money granted in the last round. Gender NGOs are incensed by the implications of this for women.

"Round eight was to address key issues to the Kenyan woman; the fund was to look into gender, community and health sector strengthening. The burden of this disease is, as it has always been, on

the woman. Any shortfall whether political, technical or purely financial is bound to leave heavy repercussions on the woman," explained Dr. Nduku Kilonzo, the Executive Director of a Nairobi-based NGO called Liverpool Voluntary Counseling and Testing.

Kenya began receiving grants from the Global Fund in 2003, with very little mention of gender until the latest round. An estimated 1.4 million people in Kenya are living with HIV and AIDS, with women representing three out of every five infected Kenyans. According to the Kenya Aids Indicator Survey (KAIS) 2007 results, among youths aged between 15 to 24 years, women are four times more likely to be infected with HIV than men.

An estimated 43 percent of married women face sexual and physical violence from their partners. This increases their vulnerability to HIV.

One out of ten pregnant women is HIV positive. Since 2003, 121,600 women have been receiving antiretroviral prophylaxis under the Preventing Mother to Child Transmission Program (PMTCT).

"Gender responsive initiatives have never been more urgent," stressed Kilonzo.



Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Making care work count

By Perpetual Sichikwenkwe

Research across Africa shows that women and girls are overwhelmingly responsible for caring for people who are ill, a burden that has increased significantly with HIV and AIDS. For two years the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network has mounted a campaign called "making care work count."

Recognising that care work creates not only a time burden, but also economic and opportunity costs for women and girls, the 53rd United Nations Commission on the Status of Women session (CSW) in March 2009 will focus the theme on "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV and AIDS."

The theme provides an important link with last year's CSW theme on financing for gender equality. No form of financing for gender equality can be complete when the unwaged care work of women goes unrecognised.

Although prevention and support for those living with HIV continue to be central to HIV responses, the CSW's focus on care work illustrates growing concerns that gains around equality and women's rights are being lost in the context of HIV/AIDS. World AIDS Day is just around the corner.

Since this year's theme focuses on "leadership," there is added encouragement for the world's leaders to give weight to links between gender equality and HIV and AIDS.

Care work is particularly relevant in the Southern African region, which has some of the highest HIV rates in the world. Abigail Mpho Mooketsi is one such a caregiver, who works for the South African organisation, "Let Us Grow." After attending a support group and learning the value of care work, when her health improved she later became a caregiver herself, visiting three patients every day.

"When I visit them at their homes, I wash and feed them. Sometimes I bring them food parcels and other amenities I get from the programme, she said. "It is encouraging to know how important this service is for many of my patients; for some people,



Care givers in Orange Farm, South Africa work with very little support or money. Photo: Lauri Waselchuk.

the food we bring saves them from starvation."

The challenge, she says is that despite how hard the work is, it offers no pay, few opportunities for training, and often means little respect from health care professionals, even when she brings patients to the hospital. "I would love the opportunity to train as a caregiver," she says. "However, more than that, I believe our work would be a lot easier if we were simply treated with more respect."

Mooketsi is just one of thousands of similar stories across the region. Studies show that approximately 90% of AIDS care takes place in the home and caring for someone with AIDS can increase the workload of a caretaker by one third. This is a significant challenge for women already balancing a multitude of house chores and responsibilities, apart from being workers or breadwinners.

According to GEMSA treasurer, Kubi Rama, the first phase of the GEMSA campaign focused

on advocacy, and included translating materials on care work into different languages and setting up reference groups. GEMSA successfully lobbied for the inclusion of care work in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development, signed in August by Heads of State.

The clause article reads: "State parties shall by 2015: Develop and implement policies and programmes to ensure appropriate recognition of the work carried out by care givers, majority of whom are women, allocation of resources and psychological support for care-givers as well as promote the involvement of men in the care and support of people living with HIV and AIDS." Rama said the campaign is now going into the second phase, which involves advocating for policy roll out.

(Perpetual Sichikwenkwe is GEMSA care work facilitator in Zambia.)

Make your voice count: Join the financing for gender equality campaign



GEMSA, in partnership with UNIFEM is running an awareness campaign on the outcomes of the 52nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) annual meeting that took place in February/March 2007 on financing for gender equality. For the background to this conference; the outcomes and implications for Africa visit www.gemsa.org.za where you will find fact sheets and resources on this campaign as well as the Making Care Work Count campaign.

GEMSA
Gender and Media Southern Africa

United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIFEM

Cyber-échange

Une soixantaine de participants

Le financement pour en finir avec la violence envers le genre, sujet au menu du cyber-échange de Gender Links hier, a grandement inspiré les membres de GEMSA. Ils étaient une soixantaine – une cinquantaine dans le forum de discussion en anglais et une douzaine dans celui en français – à échanger sur la question.

Le forum anglophone qui a vu la participation de membres de GEMSA du Botswana, du Malawi, de l'Afrique du Sud, de Maurice, des Seychelles et du Kenya a même bénéficié de l'apport de cinq experts en genre qui assistent en ce moment au sixième forum pour le développement de l'Afrique en Ethiopie. Ce qui explique le haut niveau des discussions.

Mais le forum francophone comprenant des membres de GEMSA de Maurice, de Madagascar et de la République Démocratique du Congo (RDC), n'a pas démerité non plus.

Par rapport à la première question qui cherchait à savoir s'il fallait avoir un budget spécial pour lutter contre la violence ou si la dotation à cet effet doit figurer dans le budget national, les avis ont été partagés aussi bien dans le forum anglophone que dans le francophone.

Dans le forum francophone, un représentant de la RDC a expliqué qu'il y a un ministère du Genre dans son pays et que c'est à cette institution qu'il appartient de gérer un tel budget. Mais une autre de ses compatriotes estime qu'il serait souhaitable d'avoir deux sources de financement, soit un budget spécial et une dotation dans le budget national. Les Mauriciens étaient davantage en faveur d'un budget spécial qui financerait des projets durables et qui aurait des mécanismes de suivi.

Ces deux écoles de pensées se sont retrouvées dans le forum anglophone. Un participant en faveur d'une dotation dans le budget national s'est toutefois demandé comment faire pour que l'argent aille dans les régions les plus reculées d'un pays. Quelqu'un a avancé l'idée que ledit budget soit décentralisé vers les administrations régionales. Un autre participant entrevoit plutôt la gestion de ce budget par un comité multisectoriel comprenant le gouvernement et la société civile.

Les participants du Botswana sont en faveur de ces deux options de financement et ont pris l'exemple de la lutte contre le VIH/SIDA dans leur pays où il y a non seulement un comité national de lutte mais où chaque ministère et chaque administration régionale disposent d'un budget spécial VIH/SIDA.

Le participant du Malawi a déclaré que dans son pays, les administrations régionales sont faibles et de ce fait, elles ne seront pas à même de rendre des comptes.

Par rapport aux aspects de la violence envers le genre qui sont sous-financés, les participants du forum francophone ont été très prolifiques. Ils ont cité la prévention, la prise en charge, la réhabilitation, la sensibilisation. Les participants dans le forum anglophone leur ont fait écho à ce propos. Le plaidoyer a aussi été mentionné.

Au sein du forum francophone, des participants ont aussi cité l'éducation des femmes à propos de leurs droits et la formation des leaders sociaux. Une participante de la RDC estime qu'il faut donner des incitations monétaires aux femmes pour qu'elles dénoncent leurs bourreaux.

En matière de mesures à prendre pour l'avenir, un participant de la RDC a parlé d'épurer les médias qui transforment souvent la femme en objet, en véhiculant notamment des publicités remplies de stéréotypes à son égard.

