Tradequity
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Year 7, No. 1/2008

New Poverty Model to Empower Poor Farmers

A new concept, agreed upon at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2007, to end poverty and hunger, by enabling farmers to increase yields and add value to the harvest, has been rolled out in Kenya.

The concept combines unique business models and partnership between the private and public sectors to grant subsidies to poor farmers. The funding is aimed at enabling the farmers to purchase inputs that can boost crop yields. The model is being tried for the first time in Siaya district, which is acting as the "learning laboratory". The model will then be rolled out in other districts.

Experiments are being carried out to find out if these business models really end up empowering the poor and cutting the dependency syndrome on financiers. Almost one year after the launch of the Siaya projects, Cornela Roettger, former head of Unilever in China and Eastern Europe, now heading the Siaya "learning laboratory", says the results are "encouraging".

The project is an initiative by companies to devote part of their corporate social responsibility resources to help end hunger and poverty in developing countries. To facilitate the implementation, the public sector is also a partner. The ultimate aim of the project is to change farmer's income levels by 2015, as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aim at halving poverty by then. Siaya district was chosen because it has a high rate of poverty level, which stands at 64 percent for those living under US$1.137 (Kenyan Shilling 70) per day.

The Business Alliance against Chronic Hunger, a public-private partnership managed by the WEF was launched. Companies who are members of the alliance are required to use their expertise to help set up market-based solutions to hunger and poverty which are self sustaining.

The project has many dimensions. The first one aims at enabling the farmers to improve the yield of their staple crop, which is maize, and have surplus. To improve farm yields, the alliance includes farm input makers to ensure that farmers have the right inputs and farming techniques, through the support of agro-dealers, who have direct contact with farmers.

The second focus involves supporting the farmers to grow high value crops, like Soya beans, herbs and spices, which can give better returns in the market. The next process involves adding value to the food chain, from storage, processing, packaging and retail to distribution.

The alliance's major entry point is the market level, where it will be working with farmers to identify weaknesses in the market infrastructure and act on them. Already, some corporate partners are providing a ready market for the surplus produce. For instance, Honey Care and Dominion Farm have trained 44 farmers to start beekeeping projects on contract. The companies will also provide credit and quality control services to the farmers.

Farmers have the potential to earn up to US$1,624.96 (Kenyan Shilling 100,000) per year from the project. Unilever and Technoserve have also contracted farmers to grow herbs and spices. The companies have financed farm inputs. The project has the potential to make US$812 (Kenyan Shilling 50,000 per acre, per season.

Others include, Nakumatt and Fresh Juici for contract-growing of vegetables and Spectre International for growing of sweet sorghum that will be used to produce bio-ethanol, while Sealed Air has helped develop appropriate packaging machine. At the moment, at least 14,500 farmers, most of who are maize growers, are benefiting from the project.

The alliance will establish 12 such green houses, each measuring 240 square metre. The green house can serve the farmers up to three years. The model aims at experimenting on how farmers can maximise the use of one acre of land to boost food security and commercial gains, especially after processing. Successful processing of surplus would be a major gain, because of its ability to increase the returns for the farmers. A survey done in Siaya, using the already successful projects, like that of soybeans, shows their value would go up by 29 times, if processed into flour, 114 times into beverage, 27 times into milk and 18 times into nuts. *(BD, 21.02.08)*

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Fishing Industry Under Threat

Lake Victoria's US$0.097bn (Kenyan Shilling 6bn) fishing industry is under grave threat, following the countrywide post-election skirmishes. Kenya is already losing a huge chunk of its fish export market, as fish filleting and exporting companies scale down operations, due to insecurity and transport problems.

With roads blocked by rioters and fishermen afraid of venturing into the waters, the companies now risk losing lucrative overseas markets to neighbouring Uganda and Tanzania. The problem has also been compounded by the hyacinth weed invasion in the lake.

The disruption of fish processing and export business is expected to have a spiral effect, not in the fishing industry, but in the Government and its agencies. The Government is set to lose about US$324mn (Kenyan Shilling 200mn) in 2008, in uncollected export licenses, if the industry does not recover fast enough.

(TEAS, 08.02.08)

Flowers: Sign of Growth

Pictures of emaciated children dying, in their mothers' arms, during the famine in 1985, cemented the country's image as a barren land, where nothing grows. But, 30 minutes south of capital, Addis Ababa, green hills and lush valleys abound, perfect for cultivating the country's fastest growing export-flowers.

Tsegaye Abebe opened his farm, ET Highland Flora, three years ago. Now, he employs 400 people and exports 90,000 to 120,000 stems every day. "The biggest of all is Valentines Day", as workers harvested roses in one of his 23 green houses, each one containing around 35,000 stems.

While flowers account for only one percent of Ethiopia's gross domestic product (GDP), they are one of the most visible signs of a fast growing economy that is becoming less reliant on its traditional coffee exports.

Five years ago, Ethiopia made just US$159,000 from exports of cut flowers, cuttings and summer flowers. In 2007, that had grown to US$63.5mn, and in 2008, it is expected to hit US$166mn.

(BD, 14.02.08)

Africa to Open Economies to India

As a result of the resolute spirit of South-South cooperation, and accompanied by changes in the global economic structure, traditional partners Africa and India have arranged to forge a mutually-beneficial economic partnership guided by long-term goals.

The Indian economy is viewed by Africa as a successful model which it hopes to emulate. Governments and companies in the region see Indian technologies as the most appropriate, adaptable and affordable, and Indian companies are being welcomed into African countries with keen interest.

The African leaders look towards India for value addition in the conversion of their natural resources into productive assets, meaning that India has a key role to play in enhancing Africa's manufacturing and agricultural sectors' competitiveness. Bilateral trade between Africa and India measured US$25bn for 2006-07 period, increasing from US$967mn in 1990-91.

(FE, 28.03.08)

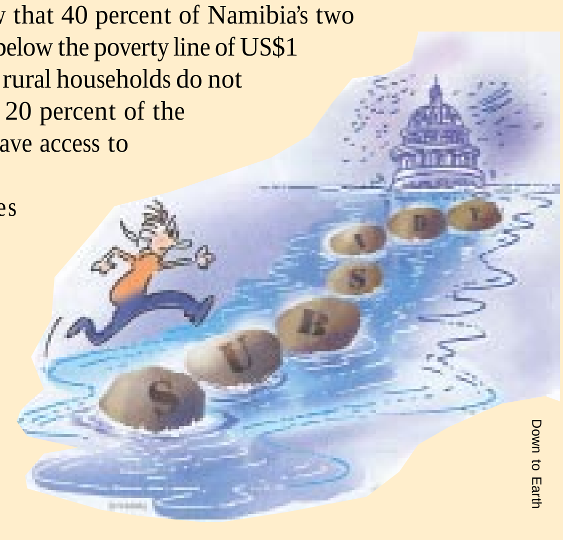
Water Subsidies For Poor

The Namibian Government, frequently accused of making water unaffordable to the poor, is finally taking steps to address this countrywide problem that threatens to hamper the country's efforts to meet the eight MDGs.

The Government is considering the viability of including water subsidies for poorer families in a new development plan set to begin in April 2008.

The latest statistics show that 40 percent of Namibia's two million people currently live below the poverty line of US$1 per day. About 75 percent of rural households do not have proper sanitation, and 20 percent of the rural population does not have access to safe drinking water.

A Water Resources Management Agency would be created to ensure that more water is made available to the population by finding new sources (especially groundwater), using more water from rivers, better recycling processes, and expanding desalination plants. *(IPS, 05.02.08)*



Down to Earth

Political Will to Check Hunger

The lack of political will to invest in agriculture has affected the chances of halving poverty and hunger in Africa by 2015. "Investment in agriculture, more than other sectors, provides four times the returns," said Kanayo Nwanze, Vice-President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a UN agency working to end rural poverty.

Most depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, directly or indirectly, so a more dynamic and inclusive agriculture could dramatically reduce rural poverty, helping to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on poverty and hunger.

Africa has had some success, particularly in Ghana, where agriculture drove the poverty rate down from 51.7 percent in 1991/92 to 39.5 percent in 1998/99, and then to 28.5 percent. Between 2001 and 2005, agriculture grew at 5.7 percent a year, faster than the overall GDP of 5.2 percent.

(IRIN, 21.02.08)

Economic Performance Praised

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has commended Ghana for its impressive economic performance over the past few years, with high real GDP growth rates, decreasing inflation, improved fiscal situation, and substantial progress in poverty reduction.

The recommendation came up at the just ended Third Trade Policy Review of Ghana by the WTO, in Geneva, Switzerland, from January 29-31, 2008.

Daniel Okaiteye-Blessyn, Head of Chancery, Ghana Embassy, Berne, Switzerland said that WTO members noted that the strong growth of Ghana's economy had been supported by trade liberalisation, through, *inter-alia*, reduction of tariff rates and the number of bands, as well as the streamlining of customs procedures.

The country's commitment to the WTO, including the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations was welcomed, but Ghana was encouraged to increase its notifications under various WTO Agreements. *(Accra Mail, 05.02.08)*

AfDB: Promoting Development

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has been a major force in private and public sector infrastructure development in Africa through the provision of financial and technical resources. According to the Bank's Strategic Plan 2003-2007, lack of adequate social and economic infrastructure is one of the key constraints to short- and medium-term poverty reduction in Africa.

However, the Bank promotes infrastructure development with special attention to public-private-partnership (PPP) investment by providing financial support through direct equity investment and loans; advice to enterprises on the structuring of such projects; and advice to governments to introduce a conducive legal and regulatory framework and technical assistance to enhance their capacity to structure and handle PPP programmes.

The key objective of the Bank's private sector strategy is to boost confidence in other lenders and investors to mitigate the risks resulting from the relative long-term maturity of infrastructure investments.

(SPONSOR WIRE, 18.02.08)

New Partners in Fighting Poverty?

If Zambia and Africa as a whole is looking for partners in combating hunger and poverty, they need look no further. They can find credible partners in rural women. Research shows that rural women, the majority of them farmers, are crucial partners in the fight against hunger and poverty.

Indeed, there have been various commitments and agreements, to enhance the status of rural women and promote gender equality in agriculture and rural development. The MDGs on reducing hunger and poverty by 2015 recognises that in rural areas, where 70 percent of the poor live, women's equitable access to resources is a key to national development.

Despite all these initiatives and campaigns to better the lives of both rural and urban women, rural women remain voiceless in decision-making processes and are rarely taken into account when it comes to designing, implementing and monitoring agriculture development policies and programmes. *(ToZ, 06.03.08)*

Growth for Rich and poor

South Africa's poorest households have seen their incomes grow sharply in real terms since 2000, as the economy has grown and the social grants system has expanded, but inequality remains high, with the richest 20 percent earning nearly 70 percent of the income.

The latest five-yearly income and expenditure survey (IES), provides support for assertions by the Government that poverty has been declining. Though real per capita incomes have increased for all income groups, the increases are greatest for the poorest 30 percent and the richest 10 percent, so that the gap has hardly narrowed.

The survey shows that as incomes have risen, spending on food has fallen as a proportion of the total, while spending on transport has risen. Food now makes up nearly 26 percent of the consumer price index (CPI) basket, and since food inflation is in double digits, cutting food's weighting could trim the overall inflation level. *(BD, 05.03.08)*

Farmers Fail to Reach Markets

Gitau Macharia, a seed and firm inputs supplier, has spent sleepless night wondering how he is going to deliver his products to the North rift valley of Kenya. Macharia, Chairman of the Agrochemical Association of Kenya, is also expected to help his members who cannot access the market in the violence-hit north rift and western regions.

Experts in the rural development are also worried whether the farmers will buy the inputs at a time when some of them are displaced, while others have no money, because they are yet to sell the last season's crops.

The Agricultural Permanent Secretary, Dr Romano Kiome, is wondering how thousands of tonnes of processed sugar will be transported from the sugar belt markets, mainly in the urban markets.

Analysts predict an economic slow down, if the political crisis is not resolved urgently, to enable the over 200,000 displaced farmers to go back to their lands. Besides affecting the maize farming, the violence has also affected the cash crop production, mainly in the tea, dairy, sugar and pyrethrum sub-sectors. *(TEAS, 05.02.08)*

Liberalise Foreign Investment Rules

Mozambique would liberalise foreign investment rules and offer more incentives to investors in a bid to boost overseas inflows by 50 percent to US$12bn in 2008.

The Planning and Development Minister Aiuba Quereneia said the move was a key to spurring the country's economy, one of the smallest but fastest growing in Southern Africa. Mozambique recorded US$8bn in foreign investment in 2007.

"We expect to attract more investors this year than in 2007," Quereneia said. "We will offer attractive fiscal incentives and simplify the investment process, particularly in agriculture, tourism and mining".

Greater inflows would help Mozambique hit its seven percent gross domestic product (GDP) growth target for 2008 and allow it to limit inflation to within single digits.

(Reuters, 22.02.08)

MDGs Challenge SADC to Improve

"The Southern Africa region is going through a complex process of transformation perhaps much more complex than what Europe has ever been through" said Trade and Industry Minister Neo Moroka.

Speaking at the joint Southern African Development Community-European Commission (SADC-EC) Ministerial meeting in Gaborone, Moroka said this occurred at a time when other important transformations were taking place both at the continental and globe levels.

He said the African Union (AU) had built momentum on the aims and objectives of the Abuja Treaty to accelerated African Economic Integration. The process and effects of globalisation, at the global level including the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agenda presented further challenges not only to SADC, but also to most African and other developing regions.

In addition, he said the MDGs also challenged the region to do everything it takes to improve the socio-economic and general living standards of our peoples.

(BOPA, 10.03.08)

Single Regional Currency for EAC

Central Bank governors from five East African Community (EAC) countries will face the test of establishing a Monetary Union and single currency for the regional trading bloc by 2012. A special meeting of the EAC Monetary Affairs Committee (MAC) was held in Kampala to plan a framework for fast-tracking the ambitious targets.

Five central bank governors which were present at the meeting recommended that an international expert should conduct a study over the next six months to present "an independent assessment of the progress towards macroeconomic convergence and recommend actions for fast tracking the EAC monetary union".

In order for a monetary union to be realised, individual EAC countries need to fulfil several criteria. The primary benchmarks needing to be achieved within the period 2007 to 2010 include achieving an overall budget deficit to GDP ratio (excluding grants) of six percent or lower. Secondary criteria include an overall budget to GDP ratio (including grants) not greater than three percent.

(NV, 30.01.08)

EU to Increase Market Share

The real impact of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) on the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries' economies will be "small". However, the fast pace of negotiations and liberalisation of markets will damage their economies.

The EPAs form part of the wider Cotonou Agreement, signed in June 2000 between the European Union (EU) and the ACP countries, and replaced the Lomé convention which gave ACP countries special access into European markets. The Cotonou pact covers trade, aid, and political cooperation between the two.

According to a study conducted by the Research Centre in International Economics (CEPII) in Paris, the impact of the EPAs on ACP countries would be negative, if small. However, the liberalisation of trade with Europe would represent a growth of 22 percent in imports from the EU. *(IPS, 29.01.08)*

Customs Union by 2008

According to officials from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the launch of a Customs Union is top on their agenda. The secretariat from the 19-member trading bloc stated that the Customs Union should be in place by the end of 2008, which will open up the market for possible gains for manufacturers and services providers.

Doubts remain, however, as seven of the member states (Angola, Comoros, Congo DR, Eritrea, Seychelles, Swaziland and Uganda) chose to defer joining the bloc's free trade area (FTA) that is considered a prerequisite to a customs union.

13 members of an FTA have, however, lowered their tariffs by up to 80 percent and have helped to increase the value of intra-COMESA trade by over US$3.17bn (Kenyan Shillings 200bn) to reach US$7.49bn (Kenyan Shillings 469bn) in 2007.

A Customs Union would ease costs and processes of trade by placing member states under a common external tariffs scheme. The establishment of a Customs Union would also eliminate import duties and other restrictive regulations which relate to cross-border trade, although customs duties and other regulations of commerce would apply to any goods from regions that are not included in the union.

(BD, 24.01.08)

AGOA Exports Fall in Uganda

Clothing exports from Uganda to the US under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) have fallen by over US$3mn since 2005.

The AGOA Secretariat in Kampala said that statistics have shown that garment exports dropped from US$4.7mn to US$1.2mn between 2005 and 2007. The report stated that exports to the US market have not grown as expected, with other major products being vanilla, coffee, fish and base metals.

The US$10mn investment was irregularly loaned to private company Apparel Tri-Star Uganda in Sri Lanka and 'went to waste' after the firm closed its doors. It was loaned at an interest rate of 7 percent, although the Uganda Development Bank had advised that no offer for funding should be made at less than 12 percent interest.

The Government has, however, decided to write off all debts incurred by Sri Lanka in an agreement with a new company that has taken over Tri-Star.

(TEA, 13.02.08)

News on Trade

Bush's Commitment to Africa

US President George W. Bush has expressed the US' commitment to a successful conclusion of the Doha Round of trade talks to help solidify the progress already achieved by African countries. His commitment is informed by the "striking changes" he witnessed during visit to Africa and which he attributes to the resolve of leaders to pursue transformation and good governance.

Bush described his visit to Africa as "the most exciting, exuberating trip". He stated that he was not interested in unfulfilled promises but rather in seeing results. He explained that chaos, poverty and disease make people susceptible to "violent ideologies", and that the US is on a mission of mercy while treating African leaders as partners.

He disclosed that he signed a Compact Agreement with Tanzania worth US$698mn in order to help improve transportation, a US$350mn initiative with Ghana to help fight tropical diseases, and a bilateral treaty with Rwanda worth US$100mn. Bush promised that the US will double its aid to the continent to US$30bn within the next five years.

(TD, 29.02.08)

Sugar Industry Under Threat

The sugar industry is facing hard times, following reports that huge consignments of contraband products are being shipped into the country from neighbouring Somalia. Dr Evans Kidero, the Managing Director of Mumias Sugar Company, said traders were taking advantage of the porous border to sneak in illegal consignments of sugar.

Proliferation of illegal imports is expected to erode the gains that the sugar industry has made in the recent past, as it enters a crucial reform phase ahead of the full liberalisation skills. In a pact reached in November 2007 with the partner states in the COMESA, Kenya has up to 2012 to fully liberalise its sugar markets, in readiness for competition against low cost producers such as Malawi.

Experts opine that cheaper illegal consignments would hamper local producers from selling their sugar, a situation that would deny the sector the revenue it needs to bankroll efficiency enhancing programmes political uncertainty after the disputed presidential results.

(BD, 15.01.08)

India-Africa to Do Business

Undeterred by China's growing presence in Africa, Indian business is planning a major push in the continent with its 'win-win' formula of low-cost technologies and mutual empowerment at a conclave next week that will be attended by the largest-ever business delegations from 33 African countries.

Africa's economic resurgence, with many of its oil-rich economies notching up double-digit growth spurred by stability and vigorous reforms, has spurred Indian businessmen to take a fresh look at burgeoning business opportunities in the continent.

Although India's bilateral trade with Africa is a little over US$20bn, half of that of China's with Africa, Indian business people are upbeat about expanding their operations in the resource-rich continent.

(Sify, 14.03.08)

Governments to Remove Tariffs

African countries could gain significantly from intra-regional trade liberalisation. According to the World Bank, dropping trade barriers could increase intra-regional trade by 50 percent.

The Nigerian agricultural sector, under the guise of encouraging local substitutes maintains a ban on imports of wheat, rice, maize and vegetable oil. Yet after 30 years, this country is still not self-sufficient in food.

The Global Trade Justice Movement argues that tariffs allow nascent local industries to grow, shielded from 'unfair' international competition. But infant industries rarely grow up to become efficient or innovative. *(NV, 10.01.08)*

Trading Environment Assessment

Trade experts are evaluating the business environment in Rwanda, to identify the country's trade needs, priorities and weaknesses. The assessment is being conducted under the guidance and facilitation of the United Nations Agency for International Development (USAID).

The final report from the study will help the country work on strategies of making doing business easy and source assistance from development partners.

Justin Nsengiyumva, former Secretary General, Ministry of Commerce, said "Once trade opportunities, priorities and weaknesses are defined, negotiators at all levels will have their tasks eased, as issues such as transit of goods, customs regulatory and administration among other international trade barriers will be identified".

Assessors are working in compliance with WTO standards and procedures to evaluate the country, while at the same time leaving room for areas of national interest as their trade priorities. *(TNT, 14.03.08)*

EAC-US Trade Negotiations

www.abeonaforum.files.wordpress.com

The EAC is preparing to negotiate a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with the US. TIFA is a trade pact that establishes a framework for expanding trade and resolving outstanding trade disputes between countries.

Kenneth Bagamuhunda, EAC's Director of Customs said that "a TIFA is a consultative mechanism aimed at discussing issues affecting trade and investment between countries".

The EAC as a trade bloc has found it more beneficial to have these bilateral trade agreements (BTAs) with the US than to have individual country agreements.

The EAC believes that a TIFA with the US would on the one hand help attract investors from the US, while on the other it would open up opportunities for the EAC's businessmen and women to trade and invest in the US. *(TNT, 15.01.08)*

Floods Claim More Lives

Flooding caused by heavy seasonal rains claimed three more lives over the weekend in Mozambique where authorities bracing for a fresh surge along the Zambezi river were battling to get supplies to around 2,000 families that had fled their homes.

Flooding in Mozambique is a feature of the summer rainy season. Around 100,000 people have been evacuated from four river valleys to resettlement camps on higher ground in what has become an almost annual ritual since the deadly floods that killed 700 in 2000/2001.

Parts of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia have also been plagued by floods that have submerged villages and inundated thousands of acres of crops. Of the more than 60 deaths, 31 have been in Zimbabwe, six each in Zambia and Malawi and at least 13 in Namibia.

(IRIN, 03.02.08)

Violence Threatens HIV/AIDS

Thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS who have been displaced by Kenya's recent political violence are struggling to access their life-saving antiretroviral drugs. UN agencies estimate that up to 250,000 people have either left or been forced from their homes since the violence broke out following Kenya's contested elections in December 2007.

Many of those living with HIV/AIDS have been forced to discontinue their daily antiretroviral regimen either because they cannot access clinics due to the violence, or because of forced location. In some cases, people fled their homes without the medical documents that show their status and entitle them to treatment.

Advocates and experts worry that not only will the lack of access to drugs have devastating effects on the health of these vulnerable people, but that the conditions within the camps – including reported outbreaks of sexual violence – will result in countless new HIV infections.

(IPS, 08.02.08)

First Electricity, now Water

South Africa is on the brink of a water contamination crisis. The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) has confirmed evidence of contaminated crops and water, and has acted to protect people and livestock.

The Government is no longer able to effectively monitor and manage its vast infrastructure of dams, pipes, pumps and treatment facilities. About 43 percent of dams managed by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) have safety problems and require urgent repair.

An estimated US$2.32 (South African Rand18bn) is necessary to replace old water service infrastructure countrywide, including in the major metro areas. Waste water from mining operations appears to have seeped into the country's groundwater system – a process known as acid mine drainage - raising concerns about future water supply. *(IOL, 03.02.08)*

Mozambique Cuts Fuel Price

Mozambique's Government agreed to cut the price of diesel fuel for private minibus taxis to end a wave of protests over high fuel prices and the rising cost of living.

"The decision to reduce the price takes effect immediately", Transport and Communication Minister Antonio Munguambe said, after announcing the diesel price would fall to 31.0 meticais a litre, from 35.35.

Bus companies and other transport operators had announced steep price increases in response to rising fuel costs, but these were later scrapped. The price of petrol has climbed 46 percent and diesel by nearly 90 percent.

Although Mozambique's economy is expected to grow robustly in 2008 – GDP growth is forecast at seven percent, versus 7.5 percent in 2007 – the bulk of its 20 million people continue to eke out subsistence living and many are mired in poverty. *(IOL, 13.02.08)*

Plastic Spawn Cottage Industry

In Ivory Coast, discarded plastic bags have spawned a growing and lucrative cottage industry. Thousands of men and women dubbed "manan-ferela" – bag washers in the local Malinke language – spend their days collecting and washing the sacks, which are recycled into brand new plastic objects "Made in Ivory Coast".

Used plastic bags and packaging were everywhere; they just needed collecting to be reprocessed into the scarce raw material. This garbage, however, has created an employment niche for Ivorian poor, who account for 45 percent of the population. Once dry, the bags are compressed into balls, weighed and sold to factories.

The bags are then ground into powder used to manufacture objects, notably plastic kitchen utensils or tarpaulins used at parties, funerals or the other many gatherings that punctuate Ivorian life. *(AFP, 30.03.08)*

Dangerous TB strain detected

Two cases of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) have been confirmed in Botswana, which were picked up during a routine survey for multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB).

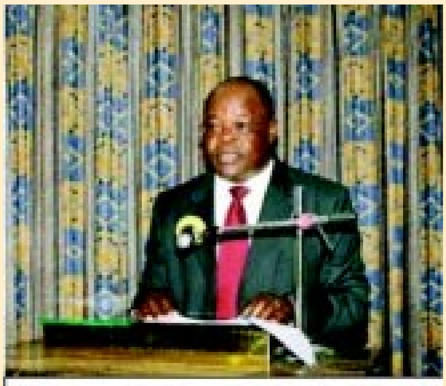
The survey also confirmed 100 cases of MDR-TB. MDR-TB strains cannot be treated by at least two of the main first-line TB drugs, while XDR-TB is resistant to most first and second-line drugs, severely limiting treatment options.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), XDR-TB strains have now been detected in 41 countries, including South Africa and Mozambique. Most Southern African countries lack the laboratory facilities to detect XDR-TB.

Patients usually develop MDR-TB as a result of not completing treatment for an earlier bout of TB; failure to complete the lengthy MDR-TB treatment creates the risk that they will develop XDR-TB.

(IRIN, 21.01.08)

Pre-UNCTAD XII CSO Forum


David S Nalo

On the eve of the forthcoming quadrennial meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XII) to be held in Accra, Ghana on 20-25 April 2008, CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) organised a two-day international conference in Nairobi, on March 13-14, 2008. The conference sought to formulate a set of key messages to be fed into the Civil Society Forum, which will be held during the UNCTAD XII. Towards such objective, the conference discussed the four sub-themes of the UNCTAD XII, which were:

- Enhancing coherence at all levels for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction in global policy making, including the contribution of regional approaches;
- Key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy;
- Enhancing the enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilising resources and harnessing knowledge for development; and
- Strengthening UNCTAD – enhancing its development role, impact, and institutional effectiveness.

A total of 60 participants from 20 countries attended the conference, along with 9 CUTS staff members from its Resource Centres in Nairobi, Lusaka and London as well as from CUTS International, Jaipur. Three media representatives were also present.

The conference was officially opened by David S Nalo, Permanent Secretary at the Kenyan Ministry of Trade and Industry. Stressing the critical role of civil society in the trade policy making process and in promoting inclusive globalisation, Nalo encouraged the participants to widely disseminate the findings of their discussions. He pointed out the success stories of economic liberalisation in the aviation and telecommunications sectors in Kenya before dwelling upon the key challenges developing countries face due to globalisation, including opening up markets for trade in goods and services, enhancing competitiveness, mobilising investment capital and modernising through accessing the latest technologies. He emphasised that Africa needs to fully integrate into the discussions coming up at the UNCTAD XII Conference in Accra in April, including unfair and unbalanced trade rules and further competitiveness and infrastructural development.

Atul Kaushik, Projects Adviser, CUTS International, Jaipur, welcomed the participants and provided a brief introduction to the background of the project "Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction" (TDP). He explained that through research, networking and advocacy activities conducted in 13 partner countries in Africa and Asia, the complex linkages between trade, development and poverty reduction have been analysed at the country level, which includes sectoral case studies in each country.

The main findings of the economic development paths of the respective project countries were recently published in a comprehensive volume, providing a valuable resource to the concerned stakeholders, including policy and decision-makers, government officials, business representatives and CSOs.

The upcoming second volume will provide a sectoral insight into trade-poverty linkages in countries under the project. In view of the main themes of the UNCTAD XII conference to be held in Accra, Ghana during April 20-25, 2008, this civil society forum under the TDP project aims at contributing to identify an inclusive approach to development and globalisation to distribute the benefits of globalisation to all sections of the society.

After the presentation from the group discussions and the adoption of the recommendations, the participants suggested the idea of translating the document into French, Spanish and possibly other local languages to increase the outreach of the recommendations.

For more details on the event, please view:
http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Report-Pre-UNCTAD_XII-Kenya.pdf


Conference Participants in front of the Panafric Hotel, Nairobi

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Zambian Members of Parliament Sensitisation Workshops on the Interim Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and the Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction (TDP)

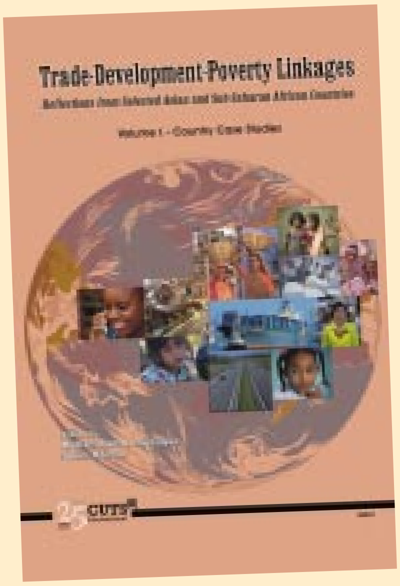
CUTS ARC, Lusaka has developed a capacity building concept paper for Members of Parliament (MPs) on Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction. The objective of the project would be to sensitise MPs on the Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction, so that these issues are related at constituency level and MPs are able to engage and debate around various trade agreements, such as EPAs and WTO. The project will also be used to popularise the findings from the book entitled, 'Trade-Development-Poverty Linkages – Reflections from Selected Asian Sub-Saharan African Countries (Volume I-Country Case Studies)'.

In the light of the above sensitisation workshops on TDP and EPAs would be held in July 2008, which will build capacity of MPs on interim EPAs, and also serve as a forum to debate and contribute in understanding the Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction in Zambia.

PUBLICATION

Trade-Development-Poverty Linkages: Reflections from Selected Asian and Sub-Saharan African Countries

Volume 1 – Country Case Studies



CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) has been implementing the project entitled, 'Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction (TDP)' from January 2005 to December 2008. Since the linkages between international trade, development and poverty reduction have gradually begun to receive increased attention, the

book is the outcome of the research findings based on multi-country approach aims at contributing to the policy debate for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It also examines the individual country experiences in addressing the issues related to development and poverty reduction through trade in pre and post-liberalisation periods.

This volume covers the research work carried out in the least developed countries (LDCs) where the project is being implemented. It contents 14 chapters in all – a case study for each project country and a review chapter. This comprehensive volume ultimately aims at paving the way to share the lessons learnt with relevant stakeholders to influence a policy shift among decisionmakers towards a more development-oriented international trade policy.

The country cases chosen make this volume particularly interesting. It highlights the importance of understanding development experiences on a case by case basis, making use of heterodox approaches, and above all pursuing a carefully planned, flexible, and pro-active policy approach.

Book
Suggested Contribution: Rs.500/US$50

Sources

AFP: Agence France Presse; BD: Business Day; BoPA: Botswana Press Agency; FE: Financial Express; IOL: Independent Online; IPS: Inter Press Service; IRIN: Integrated Regional Information Network; NV: New Vision; TD: This Day; TEAS: The East African Standard; TNT: The News Times; ToZ: Times of Zambia

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