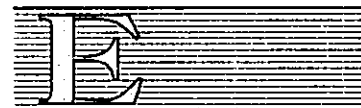


55569
S



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr. : LIMITED

E/ECA/ACW/CWD.II/2001/3B
November 2001

Original: English

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
African Centre for Women

*Meeting of the Committee on Women and
Development*
5-8 November, 2001
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**A BRIEF ON THE
EAC GENDER ACTIVITIES**



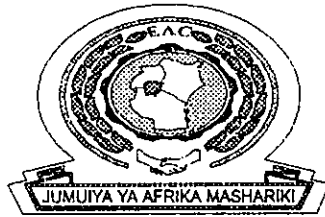
EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT

**A BRIEF ON THE
EAC GENDER ACTIVITIES**

**5-8 NOVEMBER 2001
ADDIS ABABA**

**EAC SECRETARIAT
P O Box 1096
ARUSHA TANZANIA**

10TH October 2001



A BRIEF ON THE EAC GENDER ACTIVITIES

1.0 BACKGROUND

The treaty for establishment of the Community was signed on 30th November 1999 and it entered into force on 7 July 2000, following the completion of the process of its ratification. The entry into force of the Treaty also marked the coming into being of the East African Community which was launched by the three Heads of State of the EAC on 15th January 2001.

One of the objectives of the East African Community enshrined in the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community, is mainstreaming of gender in all its endeavours and the enhancement of the role of women in cultural, social, political, economic and technological development.

Article 121 spells out the role of women in socio-economic development and commits Partner States to taking legislative and other measures to promote women empowerment and effective integration in socio-economic development of the Community.

Furthermore, under article 122, Partner States undertake to increase the participation of women in business at the policy formulation and implementation levels, support women business organisations, women education and training strategies and eliminate laws, regulations and practices which hinder access to finance and credit. Besides, EAC provides a framework for intervention on a wide range of sectors and emphasises multi-level participation of a wide range of stakeholders, both private and public, in the process of regional integration and development. Hence putting the accent on a people-centred and people driven approach to development.

2.0 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF GENDER IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

The role of women in development globally has been high on the agenda for the past three decades. Women issues have been addressed in several international, regional and national forums and instruments in an effort to provide strategies and possible actions to bring women in the main stream of development.

Like other governments globally, governments of the EAC partner states made commitments at the Beijing UN conference on women to address the gender imbalances in the twelve areas of concern in the Global Platform of Action focusing on root causes of women's continued marginalisation, hence the focus on gender and development.

In East Africa, women account for approximately 50% of the population and they constitute 60-70% of the total labour force in agricultural production and participate in all farming processes. EAC, therefore, recognises the significant contribution women have made to the socio-economic transformation and sustainable growth in our region and to this extent, the EAC Development Strategy (1997-2000) puts a high priority on the need to involve the women fully as partners in the regional integrated development process.

The Development Strategy also recognises the fact that considerable ground has been covered, within the respective Partner States, in addressing women's inequitable access to, and control of economic and social resources and benefits accruing from development. Despite these measures, however, deliberate efforts are being made, nationally and regionally, to bridge the gaps, which still exist.

2.2 Process of Establishing a Regional Gender Programme

Right from its inception, EAC has pursued the issue of forming a regional Apex Body for women's organisation in East Africa, which would enable women to contribute effectively to the cause of regional integration. However, not much progress has been realised in this respect as powerful arguments were advanced on both sides, of those who are for and those against, the creation of such an Apex body. The prevalent view was that a single women's

body would deny women and men the chance to articulate development issues together and would further marginalise the women folk from the mainstream of resource allocation and decision making process.

Consequently, in 1998 a team of experts from the East African Partner States was invited to discuss the formulation of a mechanism that would ensure the incorporation of gender dimensions in the EAC framework. The experts concluded that the establishment of an Apex body for the East African Women's Organization would be a tool of marginalisation rather than mainstreaming gender and would not address the root causes of gender imbalances.

○ Recognising all these global, regional and local developments, the experts proposed an alternative mechanism that would ensure mainstreaming of gender in all the operations of the community for sustainable development. On the basis of the recommendations of the experts, the Permanent Tripartite Commission for EAC in January 1999 approved the establishment of a **"Gender and Community Development Committee"** as well as **sub-committees** to facilitate addressing gender/women issues within the EAC framework.

2.3 Gender and Community Development Programme

○ The Gender and Community Development Programme is focused on improving the living conditions of the East African people, particularly in rural and urban areas, through participatory mechanisms, in a gender responsive manner. The Programme takes into consideration that despite the fact that people are the means and the end of development, society has differential endowments of power and resources and privileges which must be addressed in order to achieve sustainable development. Human centred development calls for investment in people (women and men).

The Gender and Community Development programme is envisaged to achieve the following goal and objectives:

(a) Goal

To ensure Gender mainstreaming within the East African Community in order to promote human centred sustainable development

(b) Specific Objectives

- To promote and ensure equal participation of all women and men at all levels
- To build capacity for Gender responsive planning at regional and national levels
- To set benchmarks (standards) for the gender mainstreaming at all levels
- To collect, analyse and disseminate gender disaggregated data and information
- To endeavour to achieve gender balance in EAC and at the national levels through affirmative action
- To facilitate the formulation and harmonisation of the EAC Gender policy
- To identify common gender concerns to be addressed at the regional and National levels
- To promote the process of engendering the budget at the Regional and national levels

The Committee is expected to develop programmes taking into account the framework of the African and Global Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women, and to promote priority issues as already identified and agreed upon. Out of the twelve critical areas of concern, six areas that are in line with the Partner States' Plan of Action for the advancement of women were singled out as priority areas. These include:

- Women in decision making
- Economic empowerment
- Legal rights of women
- Education, Training and Employment
- Health
- The Girl Child

In addressing the above, EAC is to take into account the following issues:

- Integration of a critical mass of women in decision making in key positions within EAC
- Vulnerability of children and particularly the girl child
- Inclusion of different categories of women e.g the poor, elderly, people with disabilities, youth and the children
- Promotion of gender relationships that are mutually empowering

2.4 STRATEGIES

A number of strategies were proposed to address the above issues:

2.4.1 Decision-making

- i) Capacity building
- ii) Advocacy
- iii) Lobbying techniques
- iv) Gender disaggregated data

2.4.2 Economic Empowerment

- i) Training
- ii) Provision of credit
- iii) Study exchange programmes to learn and share the best practices
- iv) Trade fairs
- v) Formulation of rural economic associations
- vi) Search for markets
- vii) Information dissemination
- viii) Production of newsletters and brochures

2.4.3 Legal Rights

- i) Law reforms
- ii) Para-legal education
- iii) Sensitization and education
- iv) Legal aid

2.4.4 Education, Training and Employment

- i) Capacity building
- ii) Advocacy
- iii) Affirmative action

2.4.5 Health

- i) Dissemination of information on gender issues
- ii) Health care service delivery
- iii) Community based health care
- iv) Women's reproductive health
- v) Programmes to mitigate the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDs

2.4.6 Girl Child

- i) Education for all
- ii) Legal rights
- iii) Health care services
- iv) Participation

2.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES

To effectively implement the above strategies EAC will work closely with the Partner States to implement the relevant policies with a view to :

- i) Harmonise gender policies for the three partner states
- ii) Advocate for gender balance through affirmative action
- iii) Build capacity for gender responsive policies for planning and programming
- iv) Conduct research to identify gaps
- v) Advocate and network at the regional and national level
- vi) Consider gender relation to culture
- vii) Formulate appropriate micro and macro financing mechanism
- viii) Promote skills development for both men and women
- ix) Identify, develop, promote and disseminate appropriate technologies and higher education in science and technology
- x) Share best practices on gender mainstreaming

To this end, a study to draw up a Regional framework for mainstreaming gender and community development programmes was approved by the Council of Ministers on 20th April, 2000. The frame work is intended to guide the preparation and implementation of development activities at different levels and sectors in a community and gender responsive way. The study is expected to be to be carried out as soon as funding is secured.

3.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE STUDY

3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (a) To draw up a framework of a Regional Gender and Community Development Programme
- (b) To formulate strategies for the implementation of the Programme

3.2 TASKS

- i) Develop a framework or guidelines for Gender mainstreaming Gender within the East African Co-operation.
- ii) Develop a framework or guideline for mainstreaming gender in the Regional Gender and Community Development Programme
- iii) Develop a clear understanding of the following Community and Gender concepts and terminologies such as:
 - Gender
 - Gender Equity, Equality and Women's Empowerment
 - Community Development
 - Poverty alleviation
 - Sustainable development
- iv) Propose mechanism for formulation of Gender responsive programmes in the identified common areas concern

Gender

- Women in Decision Making
- Economic Empowerment
- Legal Rights of Women
- Education, Training and Employment
- Health
- The Girl Child
- HIV/AIDS

Community Development

- Capacity Building
 - Research and Documentation
 - Advocacy
- v) Develop indicators for monitoring implementation of the Gender and Community Development Programme respectively.
- vi) Provide guidelines and appropriate strategies for networking, collaboration, and advocacy in the Gender and Community Development Program.
- vii) Identify and recommend possible sources of funding for the Gender and Community Development Programme
- viii) Provide guidelines on harmonizing the Gender and Community Development Policies in the Member States.