



Commission for Africa

Country Consultation Report

SWAZILAND

SARP**N**

Southern African

Regional Poverty Network



**CANGO
CO-ORDINATING ASSEMBLY FOR
NON- GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATIONS**

**BREAKFAST MEETING
7th DECEMBER 2004,
MOUNTAIN INN,
MBABANE, SWAZILAND.**

CANGO

Co-ordinating Assembly of Non Governmental Organisations

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INTRODUCTION

On the 7th December 2004, the Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO) hosted a consultative breakfast meeting that was designed to collect Swaziland's input into the Africa-wide report to the Commission for Africa (hereinafter "the Commission"). Present at this meeting were leaders of civil society and the private sector. These formed the think tank that was responsible for deliberating on the issues along the six themes identified by the Commission, that is, Growth & Opportunity, Natural Resources, Governance, Peace and Security, Human Development and Culture and Inclusion.

OPENING

The Chief Facilitator, Ms Lomcebo Dlamini, welcomed participants to the meeting, recognising the presence of His Excellency, The British High Commissioner, John Squires and C. Williams, the Social Development Advisor, DFID, Pretoria.

She then requested Mr. Comfort Mabuza to grace the opening of the meeting with a word of prayer, which he duly did.

Ms Dlamini informed participants that the days meeting was part of the Southern African Consultative process that would form part of the African position after a process of consolidation at a similar workshop to be held in Zambia.

In this regard Ms Dlamini pointed out that the challenge facing participants on this day was to discuss all the issues before them in as manner that is broad enough for relevance to the African situation, but not too general so as to exclude Swaziland's concerns. Ms Dlamini pointed out that the Commission for Africa intends to use findings, such as the ones that will be produced on this day, to promote African Union initiatives, like NEPAD.

CANGO DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

Mr Emmanuel Ndlangamandla, the CANGO Director, welcomed participants to the meeting and described the purpose of the meeting in the following words: "You have been invited here to share ideas on how the African Continent could address its socio-economic and political problem, which has led to untold suffering for millions of citizens. According to the consultative document, the Commission for Africa was set up to "support and generate ideas and actions for a strong and prosperous Africa". The Commission consists of 17 Commissioners, 9 of whom are Africans. The Commission is tasked with the responsibility to set out comprehensive, coherent and practical proposals for action by the international community under African leadership".

Other key factors that the Director pointed out are:

- The recognition by the Commission that Africa is the only continent where income per capita has been on the decline resulting in half of the Africans surviving on less than \$1 a day.
- Factors such as weak governance, disease, conflict, climatic changes seriously constrain development in Africa and thus make it extremely difficult for Africa to achieve the so-called Millennium Development Goals by 2015.
- A pervading sense of optimism in spite of all the known challenges exists because of the perception that Africa is changing for the better. For example, the existence of the African Union, which is providing leadership and clear efforts to tackle economic and social problems such as NEPAD.

The Director reiterated the six thematic areas that would guide the day's deliberations and went on to introduce the Chief Facilitator, Ms Lomcebo Dlamini. In closing, the Director urged participants to use the present opportunity to share ideas so that the voice of civil society in Swaziland can serve to inform the Commission's work. He furthered asked for a sincere and dedicated approach from the participants because their input has the potential of impacting positively on the quest to find ways of

harnessing resources for the economic growth and prosperity of the people of Swaziland and the whole of Africa.

HIS EXCELLENCY, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REMARKS

His Excellency introduced the Commission for Africa as an initiative of the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Development. His Excellency pointed that it is the Prime Minister's intention to take maximise his presidency of the G8 and European Union (EU) in the promotion of the African agenda in the west. He said the most important factor here is that the British Prime Minister is in "listening mode" and as such is ready to receive input from Africans that can help him to sell African interests and concerns to the G8 and the EU.

His Excellency expressed his appreciation at the presence of all the participants saying that their mere presence was evidence enough that the issues that have been brought up by the Commission matter to the relevant stakeholders.

DFID-PRETORIA'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR'S REMARKS

Ms C. Williams, DFID-Pretoria's Social Development Advisor reiterated the historical development of the Commission. She pointed out that the underlying consideration in the Commission's Southern Africa Consultation was to give voice to often unheard southern African countries, such as Swaziland, Mozambique, Mauritius and Angola and that is why this consultative process was being held in Swaziland.

She pointed out that the next step in this round of consultative meetings after the Swaziland meeting was the Lusaka, Zambia meeting where the southern Africa position will be consolidated.

By way of encouraging the participants, Ms Williams pointed out that the Commission for Africa is in "listening mode" and is concerned that the Pan-African Agenda be reflected in its final report. She reiterated The British High Commissioner's remarks that it is the intention of the British Prime to take advantage of his presidency of the both the G8 and the EU in 2005 towards garnering western support for the African cause.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS & PLENARY

PRE-ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS SESSION

The Chief Facilitator, Ms Dlamini then invited participants to break up into their pre-assigned groups that were arranged according to the thematic areas, that is, Growth & Opportunity, Natural Resources, Governance, Peace and Security, Human Development and Culture and Inclusion.

Ms Dlamini introduced the Group Facilitators as follows: Ms Do Aphane for Culture and Inclusion, Ms Zodwa Mabuza for Growth & Opportunity, Ms Sthembile Hlatshwayo for Natural Resources, Ms Lomcebo Dlamini for Governance, Mr. Muzi Masuku for Peace and Security and Mr. Emmanuel Ndlangamandla for Human Development.

After all the logistical details were sorted out, participants broke out into their various groups to reconvene after 20mins for the plenary discussions.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND PLENARY

GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY GROUP PRESENTATION

Mr. Dumsani Mahlinza was the Rapporteur for this group.

Opportunities for Growth

The group identified the following as areas presenting opportunities for growth:

- **Tourism:** this area was identified as an opportunity for growth particularly because it facilitates the growth and development of local entrepreneurs.
- **Development of a policy for the export of human capital:** human capital is an asset that needs to be properly harnessed and this will require the development of appropriate policies that would address amongst other things remittances to countries of origin.
- **Diversification on agriculture:** in order to facilitate diversification in agricultural production, it is necessary to develop an appropriate

marketing infrastructure for all crops and not just sugar so that all crops can yield a good return for the country. Supporting action here has to be the reform relevant legislation, reform of the education system so that it produces entrepreneurs and not job seekers and an investment into research & development.

- **Inclusion of locals in development process:** here, if the Swaziland Government can be persuaded to change its attitude towards local investors when it comes to creating an enabling environment for investment the economy of Swaziland would grow and its human development improve. In this regard the tendency of the Swaziland Government to extend support towards foreign investors through the construction of factory shells and total neglect of locals who could be similarly supported was cited as an example of the exclusion of locals from the development process by Government.

Action Plan: the following were identified as measures that could be taken in order to exploit available opportunities:

- **Civic education:** here NGOs were identified as the social partners who would be responsible for educating the public on available investment opportunities and how to access finance.
- **Development of appropriate marketing infrastructure for agricultural crops**
- **Review of financing options available to domestic entrepreneurs**
- **Reform of the financial sector:** this would facilitate the accessibility of the financial sector to domestic entrepreneurs.
- **Development of a comprehensive HRD plan:** this would support the identified growth opportunities.
- **Review of education system:** this would facilitate the assessment of the relevance of the education curriculum to the development process and its review accordingly.

- **Research & development:** there is need for the implementation of the findings of existing research and the execution of new research where necessary.

Factors Responsible for Low Investment

The following were identified:

- **Governance:** the lack of good governance discourages foreign investment into Swaziland.
- **Exclusion:** local people are not afforded the opportunity to participate in the development process.
- **Bad African Image:** the negative view of the international community of Africa and its peoples serves to discourage investment.

Government's Role

- African Governments need to put in place policies that promote growth.

Role of the G8 & EU

- Provide financial assistance
- Motivate the private sector in the west to invest in Africa.
- Cancel all debts owed by African countries.

Factors Underlying Poor Infrastructural Development

- **Corruption**
- **Unclear Land Tenure System:** there is no land policy in Swaziland.
- **General Lack of Resources**

Trade

Relevant factors here were identified as:

- **Restricted Access to the Markets of Developed Countries**
- **High levels of technical barriers in international markets:** for example, standards.

COMMENTS

Participants in reaction to the presentation made the following comments:

- **Indebtedness of African countries to EU and G8:** There were various opinions expressed here with some participants advocating for repayment by African Governments and others arguing for debt release. The latter argued that debts should be cancelled on moral grounds so that present and future generations are not burdened with the consequences of the sins of the past. This, the argument went, would enable African countries to regroup for purposes of development.

In advocating for debt cancellation reference was also made to the involvement of both the G8 & EU membership in “shady deals” with African governments that impact negatively on the development processes.

In conclusion, participants agreed that there is an urgent for debt relief that would have to be accompanied by governance reforms at the local level, this would include both political and fiscal governance.

GOVERNANCE GROUP PRESENTATION

Mr. Sivumelwano Nyembe made the presentation on behalf of the group.

Problems

- **The lack of proper governance structures in Swaziland**
- **Absence of commonly developed and agreed upon national, political values**
- **Exclusion of the Swazi nation from the national decision-making process:** this exclusion was identified as existing even at the regional, continental and international levels.
- **Ineffective Peer Review:** the absence of serious sanctions at this level, for example, under NEPAD, negates the usefulness of such structures in the promotion of good governance at continental level.
- **International support of “bad Governments”:** members of the international community, including G8 and EU membership, tend to extend financial and other support to Governments that have a poor governance record and therefore facilitate the longevity of problematic Governments.

Solutions

- **Development of effective governance structures at levels of national government**
- **Consensual development of sound governance principles**
- **Review of current Peer review mechanisms**
- **Discriminatory and responsible assistance by international partners of African Governments**

COMMENTS

The following comments ensued after the presentation:

British Prime Minister's interest in African issues: a question was put to the floor at the "sudden interest" of the British Prime Minister in Africa generally and Swaziland, specifically. The speaker said this interest is puzzling particularly when current western interests and declining assistance to Africa are considered. Ms Williams offered an explanation, citing the Labour Government's interest in the success of MDGs, foreign policy concerns in so far as security and terrorism are concerned and the interest of the west in African markets, amongst what she described as a "huge range of reasons."

Another speaker suggested that participants should take in stride what may be perceived as "selfish motives" on the British Prime Minister's side as they seek to make the Commission's mission work for Africa.

Gender issues: a concern was raised by the apparent neglect of the gender component in presentations made so far and therefore participants were encouraged to engender both their presentations and discussions forthwith.

Civil society as alternative governments: it was noted that there is a need for the Commission to consider civil society as an alternative governance system where the government of the day was failing its people, for example, in Swaziland and Zimbabwe. In both these countries civil society was said to be suffering the effects of the withdrawal of donor assistance because of bad governance when the "real culprits" simply misappropriated more public assets in order to cushion themselves from the adverse effects of the sanctions. Participants therefore agreed that a recommendation must be made to the Commission that western Governments should channel financial aid directly to civil society during problematic times.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT GROUP PRESENTATION

The Rapporteur for this group was Mr. Emmanuel Ndlangamandla who pointed out that their discussions were guided by the following themes, that is, health, education, innovations, funding, social protection, vulnerable groups, gender and the role of the international community.

Health

Problems:

- **Weak administration**
- **The exodus of professionals**
- **Service delivery**
- **The declining health budgets**

Solutions:

- Improved allocation of funds in order to improve the health care systems, administration and services. Accordingly, the national budgetary allocation for health should be increased from 7% to 15%.
- SADC and AU structures should advocate for funding from the international community in order to complement local government efforts.
- That privatisation should be considered because it does promote the provision of good service and quality to consumers, but care must be given in order to avoid out-pricing of goods and services.
- There is need to increase the capacity of existing health facilities.

Education

1. Problems:

- Absence of appropriate and comprehensive policies
- Deplorable terms and conditions of service
- Poor disciplinary procedures
- Lack of universal access to education
- Problems with the disbursements of government funds to support the education costs of OVCs.

2. Solutions:

- The development of appropriate policies and programmes.
- The provision of technical support by the international community in order to support the development of policies that address critical issues within this sector and also promote the development goals of countries.
- External injection of funds in order to assist the achievement of the universal education for all MDG.
- The effective management of resources in order to address social problems.
- The development and maintenance of infrastructure in rural areas in order to support the education process, for example, building of schools, laboratories, roads, teachers houses, libraries and proper sanitation facilities.
- The provision of resources to expand the vocational training component and the corollary development of market or opportunities for the graduates of this programme.
- Sensitization of civil society on the existence, contents and implications of international agreements signed by their

governments. In addition, the attendance of international meetings by relevant civil society representatives needs to be made a core part of these proceedings.

- Affirmative action of vulnerable groups, such as, the girl child and people with disabilities, must be incorporated into education policies and programmes.

Vulnerable Groups

1. Problems

1. Objectification of vulnerable groups by development players and their sporadic participation in the development process.

2. Solutions

- The inclusion of vulnerable groups in the development of programmes and problem solving that relates to their welfare.
- Incorporation by the international donor community as part of its funding conditions the systematic and patent involvement of vulnerable groups in all the processes of the relevant grant.
- Strengthening of civil society so that it is better equipped to play the role of watch-dog and representative of the marginalised on the international arena.

Gender

1. Problems

- Women tend to experience hardships at every level of society, be it at home or the public arena. For example, at the home-front the women are the producers and the men the consumers

or primary beneficiaries of whatever effort is exerted by the women.

2. Solutions

- The provision of technical support by the international community towards the development of appropriate legislation.
- The promotion of the respect of human rights through civic education in order to combat domestic violence.
- The establishment of special resources to be accessed by women and girls in support of their socio-economic empowerment.

COMMENTS

In response to the presentation participants made the following comments:

- That there is need that in-service training be provided for teachers in order to equip them for emerging issues in their profession, such as, the situation of OVCs who now face the challenge of being a student and also a head of household. In this regard it will be important for the Commission to recommend for the financial support of this capacity building in its final report.
- It might be useful to explore the privatisation of OVC care because in Swaziland, the Government has shown neither passion nor urgency in dealing with the issue of OVCs. In order to enhance this strategy, it was suggested that the national strategy to be developed encompass the HIV/AIDS "3 ones" as suggested in the Commission for Africa Consultation Document.
- There is need for assistance in curriculum development.

- A concern was expressed that there are some diseases that are being overshadowed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic yet they also are a serious threat to development, for example, malaria and cholera. In this regard it was pointed out that there is need for the northern partners, particularly the G8 to resume funding immunisation programmes and support the general strengthening of health-care systems to facilitate the employment a holistic solution to the eradication of all diseases.
- A concern was raised that all the solutions suggested so far were in the long term when the problems that needed solving needed urgent and prompt action. Therefore, the speaker suggested functional training – that will solve the immediate needs for skilled personnel.
- Other short-term solutions were the compensation paid to African governments for the losses incurred in their human capital due to the mass exodus to western states and the corollary obligation on African governments to take proper care of their human capital, for example, through revising the terms and conditions of employment.
- A concern was raised about the issue of privatisation, the speaker raising concerns of repercussions such as, retrenchments, crime and poverty.
- The lack of an effective political system in Swaziland was identified as a hindrance to economic development, for example, because political parties were not part of the system leadership could not rely on manifestos to set an agenda and thus be assisted in achieving clearly spelt out development goals. **(Indicator: that for Swaziland governance is urgent problem and must be solved)**

PEACE & SECURITY GROUP PRESENTATION

Mr. Muzi Masuku, made the presentation on behalf of the group.

Causes of Conflict & Insecurity

- **Conflicts over political space within a country**
- **Skewed Distribution of national resources**
- **Militarization of all uniformed forces:** in Swaziland both the police service and correctional services have been militarized and current moves have been noted whereby the Government is seeking to do the same to the Fire & Emergency Services.
- **Promulgation of Discriminatory and Oppressive Laws:** such as the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland Bill, 2004.

Key Actors in Conflict Prevention

- **SADC:** even though reservations about SADC's capacity and political will to act decisively in conflict situations were expressed.
- **ECOWAS:** because of its successful intervention in conflict situations in West Africa, for example, Liberia.
- **AU**
- **National Governments**
- **Religious Entities**
- **Civil Society:** civil society plays a key role through civic education and resource mobilisation to cover areas neglected by the national government.

SADC & AU's Role

- The role of these institutions is to define principles for governance, elections, peace and security, etc.
- (It was noted that though both these organs have policies and structures in place, there was a seeming reluctance to implement where necessary. It was therefore recommended that civil society should be incorporated into processes here so that it plays a catalytic role).
- (The development of an early warning mechanism was recommended for both the SDAC and AU in order to facilitate input by civil society in a bid to avert potential conflicts).
- (The perceived complicity of international organisations in conflict or potential conflict areas was noted, for example, the support by the Commonwealth of the Swaziland Draft Constitution in spite of the fact that it will be oppressive to the people of Swaziland and engender governance problems. In this regard it was recommended that the international community should act responsibly: denounce bad governance and stop supplying arms to Africa).

COMMENT

- It was noted that there is a need that both the SADC and AU be upheld as peacekeeping institutions.

CULTURE & INCLUSION GROUP PRESENTATION

The group started off by defining the concepts of "culture", "inclusion" and "exclusion".

Culture: was defined as a way of life.