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Scaling up Parliamentary Efforts for Children and AIDS

Cape Town, South Africa, 26-27 May 2005



In cooperation with UNICEF, the North South Centre and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, AWEPA organised a regional seminar on "Scaling up Parliamentary Efforts for Children and AIDS"¹ that brought together 120 participants, including MPs from the 5 SACU countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia and South Africa); UNICEF representatives and resource persons from the countries concerned; European Parliamentarians from 12 different countries, and other stakeholders. This seminar was a follow up to the Parliamentary Consultation on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), which was held in September 2004. That Consultation resulted in the Cape Town Declaration², which contained guidelines on how can parliamentarians make a unique contribution to scaling up efforts on behalf of orphans and vulnerable children.

¹ Similar regional seminars will be organised in Malawi on 7-8 September 2005, in Kenya on 10-12 November 2005 and is planned to take place in Mozambique in March 2006

² See extract on page 7

Prior to this conference in September last year, sixteen African countries presented drafts of their National Plans of Actions (NPAs) for OVC. These NPAs were the result of the rapid assessment, analysis and action planning process (RAAAP) for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children in Sub-Saharan Africa, initiated by UNAIDS, the World Food Programme (WFP), USAID and UNICEF. These two documents (the Cape Town Declaration and the National Plans of Action) were the central focal points during the seminar on 26 and 27 May in Cape Town.

Besides a plenary session in which the progress of the effective response on Children and AIDS in the SACU countries was presented and a session about achieving the MDGs in relation to the Cape Town declaration, including a video conference with Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Millennium Project, most of the time was reserved for the working groups. The SACU delegations had to discuss, each in separate working groups, their National Plan of Action. As a result they all presented their own action plan, defining which actions have to be taken by their Parliament to ensure progress in meeting the deliverables of the National Plan of Action. The European participants formed an additional working group and came up with a European Action Plan on the actions relating to European parliaments and their members in the Cape Town Declaration.

The following extracts were taken from some speeches and presentations made during the seminar. The full text of every contribution made is available on the AWEPA website: www.awepa.org, as well as the complete action plans made by the different working groups.

Opening Session

Dr. Jan Nico Scholten, President of AWEPA

The President of AWEPA welcomed the delegations from the 5 SACU countries and the representatives from 12 different European countries. The European participants were present, he explained, to cooperate with our brothers and sisters from Africa. To listen to them, not telling them what to do. "Africa decides on its own future and we as friend of Africa, we support", the President said.

Dr. Scholten quoted from an article written by Ms. Mary Robinson and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, which was published in the Cape Times newspaper in the morning of the 26th of May 2005.

"... Parliamentarians have been empowered with the noble job of protecting their people. They are their community's voice and represent their needs. It is these parliamentarians who must hold governments accountable for the health and safety of children orphaned by AIDS. The time to start solving this humanitarian crisis is now. We have no time to waste"...

Dr. Scholten expressed his hope that the participants will leave Cape Town with a firm will to act. "Politics, he stated, means having the will to act and make the so-called impossible things possible".

Ms. Naisadet Mason, Senior Advisor, UNICEF ESARO

In her presentation Ms. Mason stated that the situation of Children affected by AIDS in the SACU region is nothing less than deplorable, disgusting and intolerable, really inexcusable. She mentioned that 18% of the children in the SACU countries is orphaned by AIDS and the number of OVC continue to rise as we are caught up in our inaction. "To be blunt, we have failed our children miserably and as I said before and will repeat throughout this meeting, this is inexcusable, particularly for us who represent the leadership in our



Ms. Naisadet Mason

countries", she said. "The National Plans of Action on Children affected by AIDS are ready for implementation, but she wondered, where are the resources?" Therefore she stated that the three areas that need critical action and which have to be discussed during the seminar are: mobilizing resources; making a clear allocation plan of these resources and the issue of follow up and accountability. Ms. Mason demanded that leaders must act right now, not next month, not next week, not tomorrow, but immediately and with urgency. "We must provide services to our people, our children now. We have the capability, we have no excuse", she stated. "Children affected by AIDS is a crisis, it is the new Tsunami we must respond to. We have no choice but to act now, she concluded, it is the second wave of the Tsunami".



Dr. Jan Nico Scholten

▶ **Mr. Adern Nkandela, Project Manager, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund**

The OVC modelling of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) exhibits, Mr. Nkandela explained, great need for Household and Communities to be the primary resource for the care and support of children. Mr. Nkandela pointed out that communities are the frontline responsive structures and are a better place for ensuring sustainable partnerships, service delivery and formulation of interventions and responses with regard to the plight of children in Africa. He furthermore stated that the NMCF places emphasis on the strengthening of community structures, as they are the corner stone and the cultural context of care and support for children. The NMCF applauds, Mr. Nkandela concluded, the efforts demonstrated by parliamentarians as depicted in the response to the OVC source. The NMCF takes recognition of the household and the community and promotes concerted efforts to strive towards an enabling environment as well as child friendly legal frame works.

Hon. Peter Schieder, MP, Austria, Representative of the North South Centre of the Council of Europe

Mr. Schieder referred in his presentation to the speech he made during the Parliamentary Consultation on OVC in September last year. He repeated parts of his speech and explained to the participants what he promised by then and what he has done in the meantime. Mr. Schieder addressed the issue of Children and AIDS extensively at the Council of Europe and in the Austrian Parliament and its relevant committee. Mr. Schieder again emphasized that although a lot has to be done by Europe, especially when it comes to the access of drugs, the main battle in Africa's struggle against HIV and AIDS can only be fought, and won, in Africa. Doing so will require a change in attitudes from individuals and communities. "There is, he pointed out, a need for greater awareness, better organisation and closer cooperation at all levels, from the family circle, to the villages, towns, countries and regions-and the entire African continent".

Dr. Mosè Tjitendero, Member of the AWEPA Eminent Advisory Board

On behalf of the members of AWEPA Eminent Advisory Board, Dr. Tjitendero expressed his deepest gratitude and appreciation to UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), the sponsor of this seminar.

He stated that the issues that brought the people at this seminar are very clearly defined. "We meet here to come up with options for the implementation of programmes and projects to eradicate poverty, to reduce HIV/AIDS and to promote a social and



Dr. Mosè Tjitendero

economic environment that supports families, agencies and organisations championing the rights of the OVC". Besides, Dr. Tjitendero emphasized that the Cape Town Declaration recognised Parliamentary leadership as not only relevant but as necessary. The key role for National Parliaments is to ensure that orphans and vulnerable children receive attention necessary for the change. An important role is also given to Regional Parliaments, such as SADC Parliamentary Forum (PF). Dr. Tjitendero concluded by saying that there is no more time for talk, it is time for action.

Session I: Role of Parliamentarians to promote an effective response on Children and AIDS

Dr. Khauhelo Raditapole, MP, Chairperson HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee, Lesotho

In her speech Dr. Raditapole pointed out three open questions relating to the problem of orphans: do we understand and comprehend the problem or do we just think we do?; do we strive to understand what being an orphan is?; and do we involve orphans and vulnerable children while developing our National Action Plan for them? As regards to the role parliamentarians have to play in the social protection of orphans and vulnerable children, Dr. Raditapole has the following three actions in mind: to make an effort to understand the problem, its complexity, magnitude and fragility; to go beyond just understanding but putting our own children in the shoes of these orphans and vulnerable children; and to learn and listen with empathy to these children. Dr. Raditapole expressed her wish to leave then a challenging question to the participants, a question for which she had, by the way, no answer herself: within the power structures and hierarchies in our countries, where are the issues of orphans and vulnerable children placed and coordinated? Are they high and visible enough? This is in her opinion the challenge we face as parliamentarians and as leaders. "Our children, she stated, are not only the present but the future of our nations. We cannot afford to gamble with their development. We must create an environment which will allow them to be kids".

Hon. Vulindlela David Msibi, MP, Swaziland

In his presentation Hon. Msibi pointed out the key actions, which are mentioned in the National Action Plan of Swaziland. These actions are related to: right to food; right to protection; right to education; access to basic services; and coordination. For each of these key actions he mentioned the objective and the actions for the year 2005, ▶



Hon. Molefhabangwe, Hon. Msibi, Ms. de Beer, Hon. Björling (Chair), Hon. Kaiyamo and Dr. Raditapole

tive concerned. For example, on the subject of 'right to food' the objective is that individuals and households are able to produce or acquire sufficient appropriate food to meet short and long term nutritional needs. Actions concerns, among others, training on alternative food crop and ensure children receive food from WFP.

Hon. Msibi concluded by stating that support is needed, for example for funding the action plans, enhancing livelihood support and supporting the capacity of agencies, weak ministries and communities.

Ms. Johanna de Beer, Deputy Director, Department of Social Development, South Africa

Ms. de Beer started by giving an analysis of the situation of children in South Africa. 18,5 million children are living in South Africa, which corresponds to 45% of the population. There are 1,5 million orphans and vulnerable children. She pointed out five key priority actions, as mentioned in the South African National Plan of Action: establishment of a representative body, comprising government and civil society; strengthen existing processes towards policy and legislative framework; strengthen

capacity; create mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation; and strengthen partnerships with Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) providing psychosocial support to children. Ms. de Beer indicated the following contributions for parliamentarians: secure funds for provincial and district coordination; awareness raising to protect the rights of OVC; ensure basis services reaching OVC; and assist with registration of OVC at local level.

Hon. Elia Kaiyamo, MP, Namibia

Hon. Kaiyamo first also gave an overview of the situation in Namibia. Namibia has a population of 1,8 million people. There are 718,000 children under the age of 15, of which 97,000 are orphans (who lost one or both parents).

Since parliamentarians are the core of political decision makers, they should, Hon. Kaiyamo stated, be at the forefront of mobilising political will in favour of care to these vulnerable children and orphans. He added that parliamentarians should use their vantage position to increase the commitment of political office bearers. The protection of orphans from the lost of their inheritance is seen as

can and should make a difference.

Namibia has allocated 10 million Namibian Dollars (=± 1,28 million) to set up an OVC Trust Fund. This money was allocated to assist the most needy orphans, to keep them in schools and to provide them with the necessary means to live in a stable environment. Hon. Kaiyamo pointed out the achievements reached in Namibia since the AWEPA conference in September 2004. Among others, a third National Conference was held in February 2005; a National Plan of Action for 2006-2010 has been drafted; and a database for the registration of Orphans and other Vulnerable Children was started. What still remains to be done. Hon. Kaiyamo added, is to facilitate contacts between parliamentarians and the electorate.

Hon. Robert Molefhabangwe, MP, Chairperson of HIV/AIDS Committee, Botswana

Hon. Molefhabangwe mentioned that the HIV prevalence in Botswana is 37,4% in the age group of 15-49 year. He added that from the 15 million HIV/AIDS orphans in the world, 47.964 are living in Botswana (with a population of 1,8 million). Hon. Molefhabangwe continued his speech by pointing out

what happened since September 2004 in Botswana related to the actions mentioned for National parliaments and parliamentarians in the Cape Town Declaration. A parliamentary action concerns for example 'development of media skills aiming at elimination of discrimination and stigma'. In Botswana the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS will, with effect from July 2005, resolve to publicise the awareness message through both local radio and television in which it will speak out often about OVC and other HIV/AIDS related topics. Every parliamentarian will be given an opportunity to pass a message on specific issues associated with HIV/AIDS including OVC. Besides, one of the actions mentioned for National Parliaments is 'access to HIV/AIDS treatment for mothers and children'. Botswana offers free ARV treatment to all eligible people and it also has a PMTCT (Prevention Mother To Child Transmission) program.

In spite of these two positive examples, Hon. Molehabangwe stated that there are still some pockets of lack of political will and commitment among parliamentarians in Botswana that tend to slow down and delay the progress. "Problems of HIV/AIDS, he concluded, affects us all, it must therefore be the responsibility of all citizens of our region to take part with legislators playing a leading role and setting examples that can be copied by the entire citizenry".

Session II: The Role of Parliament in Achieving the MDGs in relation to the Cape Town Declaration

Mr. Rikard Elfving, Policy Advisor, UNDP Regional Service Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa

Mr. Elfving started his presentation by pointing out the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)³ and emphasized that all goals concern children. HIV/AIDS, he stated, strikes the heart of development and has quickly become the biggest obstacle to

achieve the Millennium Goals. HIV/AIDS pose numerous challenges to achieve the MDGs. For instance, it kills people in their most productive years; it erodes government capacities to provide essential services; and it deepens gender inequalities. The HIV/AIDS pandemic seriously affects most of the African countries in terms of economic growth, political and social stability as well as threatens the very existence of countries. The Parliamentary institution as a whole and the members of Parliament have, Mr. Elfving stated, a key role to play in insuring the executive branch of government has the political commitment to mitigate the disastrous effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Furthermore, parliamentarians need to press community leaders and religious leaders to join efforts at national, regional and worldwide level to establish a comprehensive strategy limiting the spread of HIV/AIDS. "It is not business as usual", Mr. Elfving said, "we all need to show leadership, responsibility and accountability in order to secure that HIV/AIDS is brought to the centre of development".

The role of the UN in helping countries achieve the MDGs consists of, for instance, a UN-Reform and Common Country Assessment for a joint response to HIV/AIDS; a joint programming on the 'Triple Threat' (Food security, Governance and HIV/AIDS) and to establish UN Country Teams to enhance a coordinated and harmonised response towards the MDGs.

Mr. Elfving then explained about the UNDP Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI). SACI is a framework promoting responses to a number of critical human capacity challenges, which mainly result from the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Mr. Elfving stated that SACI would only be a successful undertaking if leaders of the region, including those who sit in Parliaments, support its work. Therefore, SACI looks forward to establish close working relations with parliamentary organisations. SACI itself could assist parliaments and parliamentarians in fulfilling their role to advocate and take initiatives for the preven-

tion, management and treatment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This can be done in cooperation with AWEPA and IPU. The Cape Town Declaration provides, in the opinion of Mr. Elfving, an excellent window of opportunity for joint action. A partnership between AWEPA, UNICEF and UNDP to meet the existing capacity needed for achieving the MDGs, is desirable, Mr. Elfving concluded.

Ms. Ritva Reinikka, Country Director for Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, World Bank

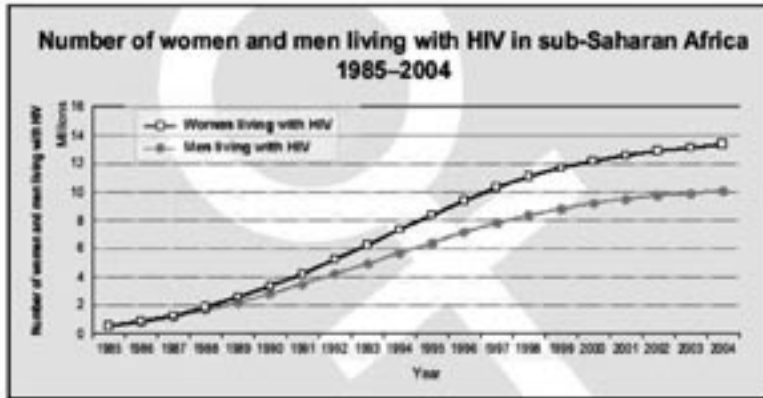
Ms. Reinikka also started with the eight Millennium goals. She showed with some graphics what the estimated impact is of HIV/AIDS on annual economic growth rates in the countries involved. These varies in the countries concerned from -0,5% to -1,5%. Furthermore, she showed the progress in achieving the health related MDGs: child mortality, maternal mortality and the HIV/AIDS prevalence. Regarding the prevalence, she emphasized that the number of women living with HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa is growing faster than the number of men living with HIV (see graphic on page 6).

Ms. Reinikka said that the causes of this feminisation of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic concerns the multiple vulnerabilities of women relating to different factors, namely biological (immaturity of the female reproductive tract), cultural (child minders, care givers, bread winners), social (cross-generational sex, power inequalities, violence) and economic (transactional sex, lack of access to education, training, paid employment).

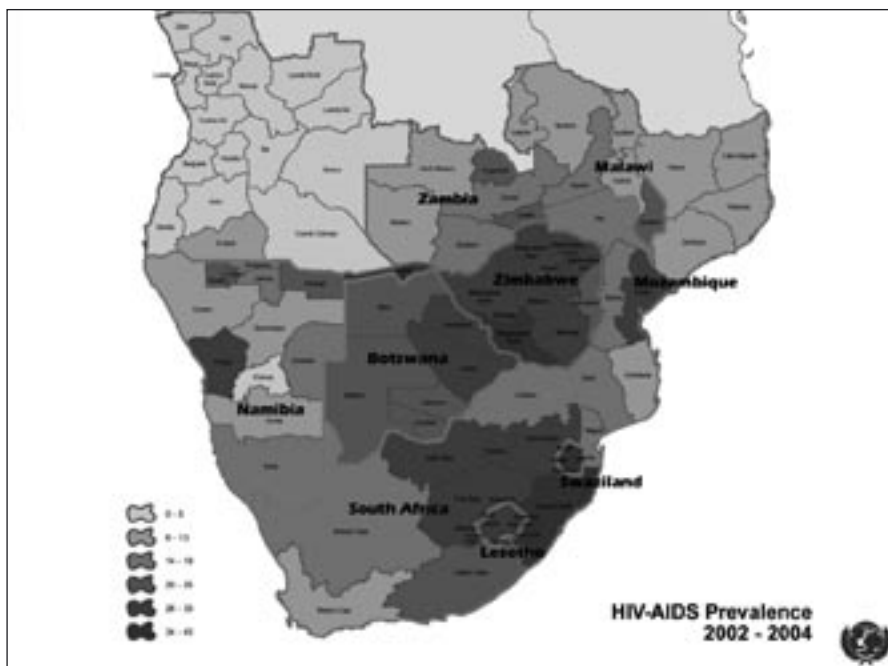
The mission of the World Bank is to fight poverty and to help improve the living standards of people throughout the developing world, "Our dream is a world without poverty". The World Bank is doing this for instance by giving loans and credits, policy advice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing service to low and middle income countries. They also support OVC in Southern Africa by assisting in monitoring and evaluation processes.

³ Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development (<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>).

Achieving the MDGs The Feminization of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic



Source: Women and HIV/AIDS – An Extract from the AIDS Epidemic Update, December 2004 – UNAIDS



Rates of orphaning in sub-Saharan Africa are highest in central and southern Africa



This map does not reflect a position by UNICEF, UNAIDS or USAID on the legal status of any country or territory or the delineation of any frontiers.

Source: UNICEF/UNAIDS/USAID Children on the Brink 2004



Dr. Douglas Webb, Policy Advisor on Children and AIDS, UNICEF ESARO

Dr. Douglas Webb first showed two slides highlighting the high HIV/AIDS prevalence in Southern Africa and demonstrating that the rates of orphaning in Sub-Saharan Africa are highest in central and Southern Africa (see graphics on the left).

While there is a strong need, the public support for orphaned and vulnerable children globally is estimated to be very low. Fortunately the policy and planning efforts are expanding. The current challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa, Douglas Webb stated, are the weak ministries with mandate for Children and AIDS. He asked the participants if this is accepted, how this can be changed and what the role is of all party groups in lobbying the issue?

The National Plans of Action (NPAs) for Orphans and Children made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS address the challenges of providing children affected by AIDS with: education; health care; food, clothing, psychosocial support and protection. The NPAs identify the roles of state and civil society actors and are budgeted for an average of \$25 million a year. Mr. Webb questioned how these plans could be funded.

Dr. Webb continued his presentation by pointing out the key actions for National Parliaments. He stated that the UN could support these processes of actions. The role of UNICEF is, among others, to support the implementation of the NPAs in regard to capacity, resources and partnerships. He mentioned the example of Malawi that has raised \$30 million to implement the NPA. In addition, UNICEF is monitoring the implementation of the Cape Town Declaration and provides technical support to the parliamentary committees. The focus of UNICEF is, Mr. Webb explained, on the "4 Ps": HIV prevention, prevention of mother to child transmission, paediatric treatment, and protection of affected children, aiming to have no more orphans, no more children infected and to give all affected children care and protection. To reach this aim, he stated, political commitment and structures in the South are a prerequisite.

UNICEF's medium term goal is to mainstream the NPAs within



Dr. Douglas Webb

macro-development processes, such as poverty reduction strategies, sector wide plans, social welfare and education. Dr. Webb concluded by stating that children and AIDS have been made UNICEF's core business, with a focus on accountability, social responsibilities and not tolerating hypocrisy.

Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs, Special Advisor to UN Secretary General and Director of the Millennium Project

Professor Jeffrey Sachs wanted to share with the participants of the seminar one basic idea regarding the complicated topic of the National Plans of Actions (NPAs) for Orphans and Vulnerable Children: "the question of financing".

Professor Sachs stated that the crucial issue of the National Plans of Action is, something parliamentarians already know, especially in the African context, that it is extraordinary difficult to turn plans into action because of the financial challenge.

Clearly, the most important thing in his view to get these National Plans of Action on the way is to have a proper budget. Besides, it is important to win the support of cabinet, the finance minister and the government for incorporating the NPAs into the country's overall budgetary processes. The tricky issue of orphans and vulnerable children in general is, Professor Sachs explained, that many of the interventions that are required are cross-sectoral.

Parliamentary Action Plan for Members of Parliaments and National Parliaments as mentioned in the Cape Town Declaration

"For Members of Parliament:

- Participate in awareness raising meetings on the basic facts of the situation of children and HIV/AIDS, and develop skills on how to advocate more effectively for legal and policy frameworks to better address the OVC crisis
- Secure resources for strengthening constituency outreach efforts and sharpening skills on issues related to OVC, including for promotion of more information sharing and collaboration between communities and their elected representatives
- Develop media relations skills and use them to speak out often about OVC issues, aiming particularly to reduce stigma and discrimination
- Set an example by publicly championing OVC rights within the political party, and by either personally adopting a child or supporting a child-headed household or OVC-supporting agency or organisation
- Call for public oversight hearings that require every ministry to account for its actions to address the OVC crisis

For National Parliaments:

- Review and amend as necessary all legislation relevant to national AIDS policies in order to ensure that the rights of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS are protected. More specifically to:
 - Provision of free primary school education for all children, and removing other barriers to school attendance such as provision of female hygiene products and other basic needs;
 - Securing the recognition of community schools and ensuring provision of related financial and technical support for their development;
 - Promotion of gender-sensitive school policies, including the waiver of uniforms for girls, who are at greater risk than boys of leaving school, and reversing policies that expel pregnant girls from school;
 - Facilitation of support for and endorsement of (non-institutional) community-based care

for orphans and children without guardians or care givers;

- Supporting decentralization processes that involve devolution to local governments and inclusive 'engagement', via good governance practices, stimulation of community participation and consensus building;
- Supporting the development of female economic empowerment programmes (credit and other micro-finance programs) and female literacy programmes, while removing barriers to access to such programmes;
- Placing a strong emphasis on children's rights and the empowerment of young people to express their concerns and to have a voice in programme planning;
- Introducing initiatives for food security programmes and targeted health insurance;
- Ensuring safe and effective interventions that increase access to HIV/AIDS treatments for mothers and children are given high priority.

■ Establish a specific portfolio committee to deal with OVC issues in every parliament

- Initiate or strengthen the monitoring of national HIV/AIDS and OVC programmes to ensure that funding reaches intended beneficiaries at the grassroots level
- Hold annual public hearings and town hall meetings on OVC issues, as part of an overall public outreach and information sharing among government, parliament, civil society, and the private sector
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for OVC assistance programmes at national and sub-national levels
- Seek ways to integrate the implementation of national plans of action for OVC into national level macro-planning processes, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and bilateral budgetary support agreements"

(Extract from Cape Town Declaration, September 2004)

Professor Sachs continued by saying that it is obvious that the budget based on domestic resources alone, cannot accommodate the overall plan and this is the truth of every aspect of health care, education and infrastructure in Africa right now. "The goals that we have are beyond the financial means of the national governments. And this is the essence of the trap of debt and the trap of poverty that most of the countries are suffering from", he added. In his opinion it is the job of the financial and planning ministers and of their partners, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the bilateral donors, not to cut the size of the plans but to find the international financing component, so that the NPAs can be implemented. In his opinion the governments should be advised to scale up the size of the interventions of the critical sectors, such as health and education, to meet not only the needs of orphans and vulnerable children, but the MDG in general and to scale up dramatically the level of international development finance. Professor Sach's belief is that the IMF and the World Bank need to become the advocates of African countries vis-a-vis the donors, in a much more aggressive way than they have done so far. Rather than telling African countries here is your budget limit, the IMF and the World Bank have to go back to the donor countries and explaining what these countries need, namely a substantial increase in the size of budgets in order to meet the National Plans of Actions. In relation to the health sector the professor called for guaranteed free access to anti-retroviral drugs to all people living with HIV and AIDS, whether in Africa or Europe.

Professor Sachs then pointed out where the increased funds can come from. He explained it could come from at least three places. First, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria should be a major funder for these National Plans of Actions, and that means submitting larger projects than they are submitting so far. Second, debt cancellation should be an important source of closing the financial gap. Since the creditors are too slow in actually extending debt cancellation, the professor's view is that African countries should simply

stop paying the debt. They should use these saved resources in a very transparent manner to invest in the urgent national needs.

The third area is the bilateral and multilateral official development assistance. Professor Sachs spoke about the announcement which was given in the European Union that Europe as a whole will be increasing its development aid to 0.5% of the European GNP by 2010 and 0.7% of the European GNP by 2015. He urged African parliaments and African finance ministers to act aggressively in the face of that announcement to start working with the European partners for a significant, planned, dramatic scaling up of the development aid. Another challenge is, he said, to get the United States, Canada, Japan, to sign on to this 0.7% timetable by 2015.

The main point as parliament to stress, is, Professor Sachs concluded, to turn the National Action Plans into financing plans and to turn the financial plans into reality by mobilising the increased resources. Besides, it is important to get the finance ministers and planning ministers on side, so that they don't see it as a threat to the budget balance, but rather as a challenge to raise the added resources. The IMF and the World Bank have their own specific job to do, the Professor added, which is to partner with the countries to find those added revenues, because the rich world has committed to provide them.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Jan Nico Scholten, President of AWEPA

Dr. Scholten explained that this regional seminar is important, because dialogue and information sharing is needed before you can conclude and before you can act. The ultimate goal is indeed, he added, to act.

"No more orphans! it has been said at this seminar", Dr. Scholten stated, "we are confronted with a real and direct struggle for survival. This struggle needs urgent action in Africa and Europe. The orphans and children in Africa don't know, but they have a friend, everybody of us. We will act in their interest. Children need attention, care and

love, unconditional. In that spirit follow up steps will be taken".

He continued his speech by going back to the roots of AWEPA, which is the fight against Apartheid. "Together with many we fought against Apartheid unconditionally. It was a long and hard struggle, but at the end the victory was there. This is a long and hard struggle again, but the struggle must be won in the straight interest of the children of Africa, also in our (European) interest. When we would accept a situation where millions of people are dying and where a whole continent is under threat and we just would pass along, we are guilty. But we will not pass along. In Europe we will act, as our brothers and sisters in Africa will do", Dr. Scholten concluded.

Dr. Douglas Webb, Policy Advisor on Children and AIDS, UNICEF ESARO

Dr. Douglas Webb emphasized the importance of the work that has been done during the seminar. "While the focus remains on governance, the onus is on parliamentarians", Mr. Webb stated, "the issue of accountability is vital to define and uphold".

Dr. Webb mentioned that through this regional seminar the Cape Town Declaration is now more meaningful, moved from rhetoric to action, which is a vital development. The working groups namely articulated action plans at country level, and donors are interested in supporting these action plans. He thanked the European MPs for their contribution and he looked forward to follow up on their commitments. At regional level, he explained, the UN agencies are starting to work together around issues of governance and capacity building within the framework of the poverty reduction strategies and NEPAD's peer review mechanism. Scaling up the parliamentary efforts for children and AIDS is a difficult process, Dr. Webb concluded, as a range of political stakeholders are involved and a foundation has to be built for the longer term. UNICEF and AWEPA will be 'critical' partners in this process and will continue to support and monitor it. ■

Action Plans

Outcomes⁴ of the working groups:
SACU Parliaments

BOTSWANA

NPA ACTION REQUIRED	CHALLENGES AFFECTING PROGRESS	ACTION BY PARLIAMENT	IMPACT SOUGHT	PARLIAMENT STRUCTURE
Policy & Legal reviews	Outdated child related policies and laws	Table motions for accelerated reviews of all child related legislature	Increased knowledge, awareness and application of relevant laws and policies	Committee on HIV/AIDS, Law Reform Committee
Development and implementation of NPA	Role of Parliament in issues and programmes for children not clear	Develop Parliamentary plan of action for OVC	Systematic and sustainable interventions by MPs, which are results oriented	Committee on HIV/AIDS
Support to Government and Civil Society	Insufficient resources for OVC activities and services	Mobilise resources	More resources available for OVC programme service delivery	Finance Committee Committee on HIV/AIDS

LESOTHO

NPA ACTION REQUIRED	CHALLENGES AFFECTING PROGRESS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY PARLIAMENT	IMPACT SOUGHT BY ACTION	WHAT STRUCTURE IN PARLIAMENT IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHO WILL ENSURE THAT THE STRUCTURE TAKES THE ACTION?	BY WHEN WILL THE ACTION BE TAKEN?
Establishment of the National OVC Coordination Body	Need for more in-depth knowledge of issues and how to operate effectively within the Committee	Tabling a motion in Parliament	To get a coordinating body in place	HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee	Chairperson	End June 2005
Integrating OVC registration into vital registration system	Incorporation of this new component into the vital registration system	Talk to Minister and Principal Secretary, Local Government	Incorporation of this component in vital registration system	HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee	Chairperson	To be followed up on return to country after this meeting
ARV treatment for children	No programme specifically targeting children and infants	Discuss with Minister, Health and table motion in Parliament	To initiate a programme for children and infants	HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee	Chairperson	Table motion now, to raise after winter break

NAMIBIA

NPA ACTION REQUIRED	CHALLENGES AFFECTING PROGRESS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY PARLIAMENT	IMPACT SOUGHT BY ACTION	WHAT STRUCTURE IN PARLIAMENT IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHO WILL ENSURE THAT THE STRUCTURE TAKES THE ACTION?	BY WHEN WILL THE ACTION BE TAKEN?
Outstanding bills to be tabled.	New Ministers	Assess stage of Bills/Lobby key ministers on tabling the Bills	Will speed up tabling/ Will provide protective environment for OVC.	Human Resource Committee	Honourable Kaiyamo + UNICEF	30 Nov 2005
Amendment of Education act Exemption of OVC Education	There is a loop hole in the act	Propose amendment to the Ministry	To ensure access to education for OVC	Human Resource Committee	Honourable Kaiyamo	31 Oct 2005
Awareness raising on OVC plight and entitlements	Lack of information/ No contact with communities	Using the media to raise awareness and to inform	Target group will be more informed	Human Resource Committee	Honourable Kaiyamo	3 Sept 2005

SOUTH AFRICA

NPA ACTION REQUIRED	CHALLENGES AFFECTING PROGRESS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY PARLIAMENT	IMPACT SOUGHT BY ACTION	WHAT STRUCTURE IN PARLIAMENT IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHO WILL ENSURE THAT THE STRUCTURE TAKES THE ACTION?	BY WHEN WILL THE ACTION BE TAKEN?
Coordination	Relationship between NACCA, PACCA and DACCA ⁵ and portfolio committees and clusters	Onto agenda of Speakers forum to ensure this information regarding NACCA, PACCA and DACCA gets to legislatures	Comprehensive services and minimal duplication	Speakers forum/ Chairperson's forum	Speaker from Limpopo will brief others and Speakers for each province will ensure that information gets disseminated in each province	Within 12 months
Coordination	Communication with Speakers in each province	Delegates representing Speakers at this seminar	Good feedback	Speaker and the people they delegated this responsibility to	Delegates who attended AWEPA seminar	June 2005
Resource allocation	Improve capacity in provinces to ensure Provincial budgets are spent and ensure that OVC needs included	Portfolio committee will oversee departmental expenditure	OVC programmes resourced	All parliamentarians	All parliamentarians	By end of this financial year (march 06) 2006 – 2007 financial year

SWAZILAND

NPA ACTION REQUIRED	CHALLENGES AFFECTING PROGRESS	IMPACT SOUGHT BY ACTION	WHAT STRUCTURE IN PARLIAMENTS IS RESPONSIBLE?	WHO WILL ENSURE THAT THE STRUCTURE TAKES ACTION?	BY WHEN?
Table the OVC NPA in Parliament	Limited follow up after the previous AWEPA meeting	Members will have a better understanding of the contents of the NPA and their responsibilities	Health and Social Welfare with support from the members who have attended the AWEPA meetings	UNICEF	July 2005
Form Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Children	Lack of such a committee makes it difficult to focus on children's issues, they are cross cutting, currently mainstreamed in other programmes and are eventually not given due attention	Children issues will gain more prominence in government and Parliament	House of Assembly	The ten MPs who attended the AWEPA Meeting	August 2005
Lobbying for increased allocation of adequate funding in each Ministry to programme for children in all the relevant ministries ⁶ .	It is not clear what proportion of funding that is allocated to children's programmes across the relevant ministries	Ministries will be more accountable to meeting the millennium development goals and national commitments on children	House of Assembly	The Finance Portfolio supported by the 10 MPs	September 2005

4 The complete Action Plans are available on the AWEPA website: www.awepa.org

5 NACCA= National Action Committee for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS, PACCA= Provincial Action Committee for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS.

DACCA= District Action Committee for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS

6 Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Education, Health and Social Welfare, Agriculture, Justice, Deputy Prime Minister's Office

Outcomes of the working groups: Europe

Participants: MPs from Finland, Sweden, Spain, Lithuania, Belgium and Denmark. Furthermore representatives from UNICEF, Council of Europe North-South Centre, Dr. Mosè Tjitendero (former Speaker of the Namibian Parliament) and representatives from AWEPA.

The discussion led to the following conclusions:

1. We should hold European countries and EU accountable for a concrete plan of action to reach 0,7% of GDP in ODA latest 2015. Within the ODA budget a larger amount of money should be reserved for the fight against HIV/AIDS and dealing with OVC (e.g. only 4% of SIDA's budget goes to the fight against HIV/AIDS). Furthermore we should promote a holistic approach to the fight against HIV/AIDS and the problem of OVC by mainstreaming into other ODA activities and programmes.
2. We should advocate deep cancellation and creation of a Moratorium

but not without conditions. The money saved should be invested in a very transparent way in, for example, healthcare and education in order to fight HIV/AIDS and help OVC.

3. We should mobilise resources enabling African countries to provide ARV-treatment. A special priority should be given to pregnant women and orphaned and vulnerable children.

Then we discussed a more concrete follow up of the Cape Town Declaration, which led to the following conclusions:

For the international Donor Community:

1. We should add the 0,7% of GDP in ODA-target and a timetable for reaching that target.
2. We should add the need for a plan of implementation of MDGs in sub-Saharan Africa.
3. We should add the need for mobilising resources for ARV-treatment.

For the European Parliaments and their members:

1. We should add the importance of a dialogue with civil society incl. churches communities (especially the Catholic Church) in Europe about OVC and the tools to fight HIV/AIDS.
2. We should work for a fair European Union trade regime towards developing countries in Africa and recognise the impact of fair trade not only on poverty reduction, but also the fight against HIV/AIDS and OVC.

Finally, we recommend the European participants to send the Cape Town Declaration to their respective governments/the European Union and ask them to give a special priority to Orphaned and Vulnerable Children by AIDS in Africa at the upcoming UN special session on the Millennium Development Declaration and Goals in September 2005.

European working group





Crèche for HIV/AIDS affected children, Lizo Nobanda Institute, Khayelitsha

European action on Children and AIDS

Belgium: No proper AIDS policy, no debt relief

Three Belgian Parliamentarians, Mr. Jan Roegiers, Mr. Jan Loones, both members of AWEPA and Ms. Magda de Meyer, Vice-Chair of the Belgian AWEPA section have launched the idea to link the debt relief recently promised by the G8 with a proper AIDS policy. They came up with this view after they came back from two international conferences on AIDS in South Africa, among them the Regional Seminar on Children and AIDS in Cape Town.

Developing countries that refuse to have a proper aids policy, do not have the right to debt relief, the parliamentarians said. In sub-Saharan African countries, including South Africa, there is still no adequate AIDS policy in place. People are told that you have more chance to get infected when you use a condom and that you can avoid AIDS by eating in a healthy way, Mr. Roegiers explained.

He pointed out that the current conditions for debt relief are good governance, proper spending of

financial means and the fight against corruption. The three Belgian parliamentarians argue in favour of adding an additional condition, namely that the country concerned should have a coherent HIV/AIDS policy.

*Newspaper 'De Morgen',
16 June 2005*

Sweden: More help needed for the children

After Hon. Ewa Björling, a Member of the Swedish Parliament and member of AWEPA, came back from the regional seminar in Cape Town, she wrote an article for the Financial Times urging for more help for the children.

HIV represents the greatest single threat to child development in sub-Saharan Africa, Ms. Björling stated. She explained that the problem today is the lack of economic or human resources for programmes to help AIDS orphans in particular where its most needed, at the local level. Such resources include social care, information, prevention, treatment and medicines and support for the children and families concerned. But this is not enough. Much more is

needed, Ms. Björling stated. Respect for and protection of children's right are one important aspect. Another is the right of women and children to own and inherit land. Today, women and children are left powerless and without legal protection when the man in the family dies (usually from AIDS), she explained.

Besides, a change of attitude is also required. In the EU all the top policymakers must be convinced of the importance of giving precedence to children at risk. At present, the international focus on Africa is greater than for many years. It is our duty, she emphasized, to ensure the debate does not flag and to assure the developing countries have enough resources to help these orphaned children.

Ms. Björling urged that a larger measure than today of the EU's aid must be devoted to stopping the spread of HIV. Within this budget framework, more resources must also be allocated to orphaned children. Unless this is done, the commitment to eradicate poverty will lose its long-term dimension, she concluded.

*Ewa Björling, MP, in: Financial times,
11 June 2005*