Tradequity
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Civil Society Side-stepped as Crunch Comes in East Africa EPA Negotiations

Introduction

The negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union (EU) and the Eastern and Southern African (ESA) states has been going on since 2002. These Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) are due to replace the non–reciprocal trade preferences that currently exist between these parties by end-2007, when the WTO waiver on this discriminatory regime ends. The 2000 Cotonou Partnership Agreement directs the parties to ensure that the outcome of these negotiations contributes to development and poverty reduction in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) and their gradual integration into the global economy.

Looming Deadline

With the end-2007 deadline for completing these negotiations looming, ongoing disagreements in the negotiations have failed to be resolved. As the EC-ESA negotiations have proceeded a collective resolve amongst the ESA countries to protect and promote their interests has emerged. This has perhaps best been expressed by ESA demands that EU development assistance be made a binding commitment in the EPA text and demands for maximum flexibility for ESA countries in agreeing to open their markets to the EU. These ESA positions have been strongly resisted by the EC, who have instead proposed that development assistance be referenced in non-binding terms and interpreted WTO laws in relation to market opening for FTAs in quite narrow terms. Such disagreements have contributed to the negotiations proceeding at a slow pace and as of October 2007 there was still deadlock over development assistance.

Threat of Trade Disruption

The question of what will happen to the EU-ESA trade regime if an EPA is not in place by end-2007 has come increasingly into focus.

The EC's response to this question has been unequivocal. It has simply thrown its hands in the air and stated that WTO regulations will require it to apply less generous (than Cotonou) GSP tariff rates on January 01, 2008, unless a WTO-compatible EPA is in place by then.

This threat has caused considerable panic amongst ESA countries, especially non-LDCs such as Kenya, Mauritius and Seychelles, who do not have access to the Everything But Arms (EBA) duty/quota free scheme. The impact of these threats has been to push the ESA group apart as the East African Community (EAC) under pressure from Kenya, and the Indian Ocean Commission under pressure from Mauritius and Seychelles, have made moves towards signing separate agreements with the EC.

The EC-EAC agreement has moved further as a framework agreement proposed to be signed in Uganda on November 27, 2007. This agreement fails to demand EC commitments on development assistance and acquiesces to EC demands for 90 percent market opening, with extended (25 year) transition periods for a very limited range of goods.

Pressure from EC

The terms of the EAC-EC agreement suggest that pressure from the EC has led to a watering down of EAC demands.Reports from East Africa suggest that the go-ahead for these agreements was given at the highest level, with only limited (if any) formal consultation with lower level officials and concerned stakeholders. Many trade officials and civil society representatives have been shocked by the willingness of their governments to throw aside vital concerns on which a strong consensus had emerged during the previous phase of the negotiations. Although the agreement provides a mechanism for the continuation of the EPA negotiations beyond December 31, 2007, it is to proceed on additional areas on which no research has been done to determine the competitiveness of the EAC countries to liberalise their economies.

These issues include liberalisation of services, intellectual property and the "new generation issues'' of investment, competition policy and government procurement. Yet, these are the issues that must be part and parcel of a-'truly' developmental EPAs. In actual term, the EAC has been conned into signing a framework EPAs forcing them into opening their markets to the EU in return for a 'best endeavour' (non-binding) development framework where the matrix of projects they wanted the EC to fund has been thrown out of the main EPA Text.

Democratic Scrutiny

It seems as though for East Africa EPAs can now be added to the long list of policy frameworks that have been externally imposed without sufficient democratic scrutiny. A process which had been characterised as increasingly open and participatory has been undermined by the unwillingness of the EC to truly stand beside its long standing trading partners and defend their interests as the crunch came in the negotiations. Such an outcome must put into question the future of ACP-EU relations and the commitment of the EU to go beyond aid in supporting the development of the world's poorest countries.

IN THIS ISSUE

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Ensuring Benefits from Trade

For many developing countries, trade has been a vital instrument for reducing poverty and raising levels of development. But many other developing countries have yet to derive the same benefits from a global trading system which could provide them with an important route to economic growth. One important reason for this is that many developing countries, not least in Africa, lack the technical and institutional capacity to integrate successfully into the system.

To address this problem, governments around the world are establishing a financial assistance partnership dedicated to build trade capacity in the developing world. Aid for Trade (AfT) is needed to train developing country trade officials so that they can more effectively participate in World Trade Organisation (WTO) activities.

But it is also needed to improve trade-related infrastructure in Africa, to help African countries implement commitments they will take in the Doha Round while providing adjustment assistance necessary to reform trade regimes.

AfT can also assist African exporters in meeting the quality and safety standards mandated by industrial country governments and consumers.

(http://allafrica.com, 24.09.07)

No Socio-economic Development

Report based on a 2005 study, reveals that economic growth in Kenya has not translated into social change and improved livelihoods at the grassroots. Dr Mary Amunyunzi, a Consultant for the World Bank said that insecurity remains a major issue in places like Kisii and Kiambu.

The Report pointed out that the livelihoods systems of the rural areas are hampered by the collapse of the key institutions that has affected the delivery of services to rural areas, inequitable land distribution and HIV/AIDS.

David Waithaka, Executive Director of Kenya Youth Business Trust said that the marginalised have also not benefited from the economic growth and are facing high transport and food cost. He also added that free primary education is a myth in slums because there are few government schools and increased violence as a result of economic hardship.

(BD, 17.08.07)

Women Empowerment

Jacqueline Odiadi, the Executive Director, Development Support Institute (DSI), said that women can set personal economic goals for themselves, have more respect and feel better fulfilled as human beings in the larger society if empowered with skills. She said that women constitute the very bedrock of the family and a woman who earns her keep can by far help bring up the children with all the additional support of the husband and men folk in general.

Sheila Roli Uduaghan, First Lady, Delta State, added that, a major difference between the developed and rich nations of the world and their poor and developing counterparts is the extent and level to which women are empowered. She noted that the United Nations Organisation (UNO) report indicates that developing countries are much likely to bridge the gap if women are empowered and made partners of development in all spheres of national life.

(TD, 12.09.07)

Agro Processing Deliver Growth

The economic challenges facing Tanzania can be minimised if the country transforms its economy into one whose growth is export driven, with agro-processing being given top priority. Structural reforms particularly in the financial sector are seen as necessary inputs in transforming the economy to ensure rapid growth and poverty reduction.

The Bank of Tanzania warned that the economic challenges in the economy are due to the country's poor base of exports, dependency on rain, agriculture, under developed financial markets, low productivity levels and the effect of globalisation with its stiff international competition.

(EA, 23.07.07)

Country-based Policies are Best

"Africa's poorest countries should develop policies to suit their unique circumstances to replace policies imposed on them by their developed country counterparts", former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa said.

Mkapa said that such policies would enable world's poorest countries, classified by the United Nations as the least developed countries (LDCs), to benefit from globalisation because "how governments manage the country's internal affairs determines the extent to which their people benefit from globalisation and are protected from its negative effects".

He cited the world's fastest growing economies in Asia and South America as evidence that LDCs can develop much faster if they pursue their own independent development strategies. Clearly, a one-size-fits-all approach to development is not appropriate.

(EA, 16.07.07)

AfT May Cut Funds to Africa

African Governments are worried that funds from the European Union (EU) to help them increase their countries share of the world trade could be at the expense of development aid. The aid is intended to address the ACP countries' limited trade capacity, a key factor behind why the world's poorest countries account for less than one percent global exports.

Although EU officials said that ACP countries will receive the bulk of the money, some Africans diplomats are not impressed. The diplomats said that the European Commission (EC) promises of aid to trade are to entice ACP countries into signing the EPAs. *(BD, 24.07.07)*

Intra-COMESA Trade Rising

Trade in the Intra Free Trade Area (FTA) has surpassed the total intra-Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) trade which has been growing at the rate of 16 percent compared to the FTAs of 20 percent annually.

The COMESA Secretary General, Erastus Mwencha observed that the economic growth rates and other micro-economic indices of the FTA Member states are generally higher than the average in the COMESA region. The tremendous growth is attributed to the improved liberalised terms of trade and increased cross-border among Member States that led to realisation of US$8bn in 2006.

The fundamental of this growth are commodity prices especially petroleum, copper and other commodities coupled with prudent economic policies that have had positive impact on inflation and interior rates. *(EABW, 09.09.07)*

Farmers against SADC Free Trade

Some farmers in Botswana are against the Southern African Development Community (SADC) free trade which becomes effective in the country in 2008. Farmers who attended the horticulture day in Kasane said free trade would negatively impact on agriculture, as the sector was not well developed to compete regionally.

Alfred Dlamini, Chairman of Botswana Horticultural Council, said that the agriculture sector had not yet set standard of quality crops, adding that Botswana farmers had to be educated on how to produce quality crops.

Motlhabane, Vice Chairman of Ngamiland Horticultural Farmers, said that local farmers could not compete with regional farmers and free trade would allow inferior products to penetrate the Botswana market, adding that the production costs for the local farmers are also high because they relied on generators, as there was no electricity in farms. *(BOPA, 22.08.07)*

COMESA to Ease Trade

Small scale traders may soon be able to do business across the COMESA region if new policies are adopted by the Member states. Erastus Mwencha, COMESA Secretary General, said that although trade within the region had increased in the past years, a significant member of small scale traders still opted to smuggle goods in and out due to policies which seemed to favour large scale producers.

Among the proposals put forward include the decentralisation of officers dealing with exports to the various boarder points and exempts the traders from paying taxes for goods not exceeding Sh35,000.

The small scale traders would not have to pass through clearing agents to get their goods into countries of their choice. The proposals are coming at a time when the trading block is working on a draft law to harmonise customs rules. *(TN, 16.08.07)*

One-Stop Border Post Facility

Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda have resumed a project to share a common inter-state One-Stop-Border Post facility (OSBP) within the East African Community (EAC).

The Hindu Business Line

If achieved, the EAC countries will enjoy reduced work load and duplication at borders which has been slowing free movement of people and goods in the region.

OSBP is a component of the World Bank funded East African Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (EATTFP) that aims to establish sustainable trade and transport facilities in the region.

"The OSBP's primary objective is to undertake and initiate trade facilitation programmes aimed at promoting the development and adoption of common solutions to problems in trade facilitation among states", Mary Baine, the Commissioner General of Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) said.

(allafrica.com, 26.09.07)

NEPAD to Focus on Development

A New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) project is set to mobilise investment funds in the priority sectors of African economies which include infrastructure, finance and agribusiness.

Former NEPAD Chief Executive Officer, Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, explained that Pan African Infrastructure Development Fund (PAIDF) will focus on investments in large-scale African development projects.

The establishment of PAIDF is an initiative of the NEPAD, supported by the South African Government and the Public Investment Corporation (PIC), South Africa's largest investor of pension funds. PAIDF's purpose is to create an investment platform for much needed basic infrastructure and to accelerate growth for sustainable development in Africa. *(BuaNews, 03.07.07)*

AGOA Failed to End Poverty

The trade programme that gives preferential access to the US market for African exports has proved disappointing in several respects, critics charged as a conference reviewing the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) took place in mid-July in Ghana.

Sindiso Ngwenya, Assistant Secretary General of the COMESA, used the same term in suggesting AGOA has done little to advance African agriculture. "Africa's agricultural exports to the US have so far been minuscule, accounting for less than one percent of the total value of exports", Ngwenya said.

US officials attending the two-day AGOA Forum in Ghana acknowledged that AGOA's potential has not been fulfilled in regard to Africa's agricultural sector. But the US is investing substantial resources to help build Africa's agro-exporting capabilities, noted Jendayi Frazer, the top Africa official at the State Department.

(TEA, 01.08.07)

Trade Can Reduce Poverty

Aid alone is not enough. Even if the rich countries fulfill their pledges to increase aid, the total amount will still be inadequate to finance all the health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation that people living on the edge of survival need. Above all, they need economic growth to boost their incomes. And trade is the great dynamo of growth.

A campaign is a must to achieve for developing countries' trade what 'Drop the Debt' and 'Make Poverty History' have done for debt relief and aid. The aim should be to give all low-income countries real trade opportunities with the developed world that is why a campaign is called 'Real Trade'. Compassion and self-interest mean to bring a new energy to getting our aid, trade and development policies right. *(TT, 24.07. 07)*

Carbon Trade in Kenya

With the projections that the annual global volumes of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGE) credits will increase from US$21,6mn in 2006 to US$60bn in 2008 and could eventually reach US$1tr, it is a market that can no longer be ignored.

Indeed, developing countries can boost their foreign currency earnings by selling carbon credits to industrialised nations under the Kyoto Protocol because EU companies that exceed emissions targets must buy credits or pay a penalty.

Kenya ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2005 and is the first African country to engage in carbon trade after the Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen) and Mumias Sugar Company signed carbon trading agreements with overseas partners. *(allafrica.com, 18.07.07)*

Cheap Poultry Hit Ghana

For the last few years, the Ghanaian market has been flooded with cheap imported chicken from the EU and the US. Nonetheless, demand for local poultry has collapsed, threatening the livelihoods of over 1,000 poultry farmers in both small and large-scale poultry farming in Ghana.

In 2002 alone, more than 26,000 tonnes of chicken were imported into the country, mostly from the EU where farmers receive generous subsidies for their products. Ghana imports almost one third of the EU frozen chicken to Africa. Ghana's position was further made hopeless when the poultry industry lost the battle with the Government not to reduce tariff on imported poultry. The tax on imported poultry was reduced from 40 to 20 percent.

The poultry sub-sector might be in danger of collapse. Already, big and small poultry farms in Ghana including Drako Farms, Afariwa Farms among others have cut down output and staff because they can not compete with the cheap imports from EU and US. *(GC, 20.09.07)*

Lose From Import Duties

The Youth Development Officer, George Ankomah Yeboah, during a forum entitled, "A Partnership for Development and not a Free Trade Agreement; Stop the EPAs", organised jointly by the Ghana Trade and Livelihood Coalition and the Resource Link Foundation on EPA and the EU, said that the Government would loose 1.8tr cedis annually from import duties as result of withdrawal of tariffs after joining the EPA of the EU in 2008.

He said that this would affect socio-economic development programmes including health, education and welfare services. "The influx of foreign industries under the EPA would affect the economy since the country could not compete with advanced countries in industries and this could lead to unemployment" he added further. *(GNA, 18.09.07)*

Flower Industry to Wilt

Failure to conclude an EPA with the EU by the end-of-2007 deadline will have serious implications for Kenyan exporters, including those in the booming horticultural industry. Government officials, Kenyan exporters and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are concerned about the pace at which the EPA talks are advancing.

The EU trade commissioner, Peter Mandelson, warned that the preferential tariffs of the Cotonou Agreement will fall away and the generalised system of preferences (GSP) will come into effect if the deadline of December 31, 2007 is missed. Kenya is negotiating with the EU as part of the EAC bloc.

The other Member States – Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi – will not be affected in the same way. They are LDCs and therefore, qualify for preferential treatment of their exports under the EU's Everything-but-Arms (EBA) trade initiative. *(IPS, 19.09.07)*

China-Congo Deal

Mining companies, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other donors were scrambling for clarification of a planned deal between China and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The deal would tie up mineral resources in exchange for US$5bn in infrastructure projects and loans. The IMF and World Bank officials have acknowledged the scale of Congo's infrastructure needs.

The IMF would restart a lending programme – the last one stalled in 2006 because of poor implementation – and Congo would stand to benefit from an 80 percent write-off of its external debt in mid-2008 at the earliest. *(BS, 21.09.07)*

Seeking Deal with EU

Key horticultural sector stakeholders from ESA regions want an early signing of the EPAs with the EU. They fear that trade between the two regions would suffer serious disruption should there be no agreement or an interim arrangement to safeguard the current preferential trade agreement (PTA).

Hasit Shah, Interim Chairman of Horticultural Council of Africa (HCA) said that it is important that an interim arrangement be worked out to ensure there is no disruption of trade in 2008 until a substantive EPA is signed.

He also alleged that the failure to secure a deal could mean exports from the region would be subjected to duty of between eight and 15 percent starting in 2008. He cautioned that until the EPA is fully negotiated there would remain uncertainty within the sector as to the final treatment of its horticulture products after January 01, 2008. *(EAS, 29.08.07)*

Negotiations Deadline

The Gambia Social Forum demanded the extension of the deadline of negotiations of the EPAs between the EU, on the one hand, and the ACP countries, on the other. The Chairperson of the Social Forum, Sirra Ndow said that the deadline for negotiations should be extended beyond December 2007 for an additional three years.

He recommended to Africa's trade ministers as well as those in the Pacific and Caribbean regions not to sign the EPAs in their present form and should ensure that EPAs are aligned with national and regional development priorities and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

He urged the CSOs to monitor the EPA negotiations and conduct independent assessment of the implications of the EPAs on the African economies. He cautioned that the coming into force of the EPAs would result in significant declines in government revenue due to loss of custom duties on EU imports, which will deter social investment in the case of The Gambia by US$ 40.719mn annually.

(Foroyaa Newspaper, 13.09.07)

Collapsing T&C Industry

Following the liberalisation of the global trade in textiles & clothing (T&C) between 1994 and 2005, Malawi has seen an influx of second hand clothing on the local market. The consumers have been happily buying the cheap items on almost every street corner, leaving the country's textile industry steadily collapsing. Many farmers in Malawi are now becoming reluctant to grow cotton and are planning to seek for other profitable farming avenues.

According to the Malawian Investment Promotion Agency, the situation has resulted into a shortfall in the cotton production which cannot meet the ginning capacity that is available in the country hence the largest textile manufacturing company Mapeto White head and sons Malawi Ltd sent its staff on leave due to the scarcity of cotton.

(BD, 18.07.07)

Kenya: Competition for Tea

The tea industry in Kenya is facing unprecedented stiff competition from the global tea market due to oversupply of the commodity. Agriculture Minister Kipruto Kirwa said that cutthroat competition from key producing regions in India and Sri Lanka is posing competition to the local industry.

He said the sector is also faced with diminishing market share in Malawi, Rwanda, Vietnam and Nepal. The Minister said the four countries have revamped their tea sectors and are producing enough for their needs.

Kirwa said that he would appoint a secretariat to oversee the implementation of the recommendations in order to stem falling standards in the tea sector and ensure Kenya's tea is globally competitive. The tea sector earned the country some Sh47bn (US$70bn) in 2006. *(BL, 08.08.07)*

Trade Not Aid

Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, has called on rich countries to support Uganda's efforts to become less dependent on foreign aid by opening up their markets to Ugandan exports.

Currently, Uganda exports commodities such as steel, iron, cement, and coffee primarily to COMESA countries. President Museveni pointed out that Uganda's trade with China and India rose significantly in 2006.

While Ugandan products receive duty-free market access from the EU, many goods are rejected for poor quality or hygiene. *(www.tralac.org, 05.07.07)*

EPA Negotiations Criticsed

The EPA negotiations between the ACP countries and the EU have been heavily criticised for their lack of transparency, consultation, and informed debate.

In the West African region, the regional negotiating structure of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Secretariat is so weak that civil society and governments have expressed serious concerns about its management capabilities. A number of civil society organisations (CSOs) have expressed disappointment with ECOWAS Trade Ministers for not giving clear directions on how to deal with consequences of not being able to reach an EPA by the deadline, which is now generally admitted to be unrealistic.

They cautioned African governments not to buy into the EU's false claims. Civil society stressed that African countries could adopt the Generalised System of Preference plus (GSP+) which will enable African countries to continue to have access to EU market at levels similar to what they enjoy now, and even an improved one.

(GC, 12.09.07)

Water Hyacinth Threat

East African economies are staring at yet another crisis in the face following the resurgence of the noxious water hyacinth weed in Lake Victoria.

The weed is already choking fishing activities and is threatening to paralyse transport operations in an affront that could dent performance of the two key sectors which play integral roles in the development of economies in the Lake Victoria basin.

A survey by the East African Business Week across the lake found that transport business had been greatly hampered and fishing activities substantially reduced after the weed formed a thick carpet on the water surface.

Besides, the economic lifeline of some 24 million East Africans who directly depend on the lake for survival could also be on the line.

(allafrica.com, 28.08.07)

Accelerating Malnutrition

Malnutrition is accelerating among Zimbabwe's children, their access to healthcare is declining, and one in 10 in the capital, Harare, is suffering from kwashiorkor, a condition caused by an acute lack of protein, according to new reports released by the Government.

The 2005-2006 Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS), compiled with the assistance of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), found that 29 percent of children under five were stunted, a condition in which a child is shorter than the average for his or her age because of the cumulative effects of chronic malnourishment.

A previous ZDHS survey, in 1999, found that 27 percent of children under five years old were stunted. About 31 percent of stunted children are found in rural areas, while 24 percent live in urban areas. *(IRIN News, 21.08.07)*

Dangerous Toys in the Market

Consumers should be cautious while purchasing toys from the market. It came to light that some potentially dangerous toys, imported from China, are on the shelves and the Government will soon submit a report on the issue, following its investigations. The toys are believed to contain either lead paint or tiny magnets that children may swallow.

The consumer body has also called on the individuals, who have recently purchased the toys, to seek help from Zambia Consumer Association (ZACA) or other regulatory bodies, such as the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS), so as to help the investigations. The toys have caused huge concerns, even at the international level. The international toy manufacturer, Mattel, has recalled millions of toys that were supplied to the US and other countries.

(ZDM, 30.08.07)

Mushrooming Garages

The increasing number of second hand vehicles in Uganda has seen several informal garages come up to take advantage of mechanical problems associated with used vehicles. These garages are found in almost every corner of the city. Whereas the garages have created jobs and helped several car owners to get back on the road, poor disposal of waste oil and other effluents has put the health and livelihood of thousands of inhabitants at risk.

The Executive Director of National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Dr Aryamanya Mugisha said that some wetlands where a variety of staple food crops are illegally grown in the city have been turned into dumping sites for waste products from factories and garages among others. He says that all crops that are grown in city wetlands are contaminated and therefore dangerous to people's health.

On the issue of garages, Mugisha admits that whereas NEMA has tried to encourage factories and petrol stations to put in place waste management systems, it has not done much for the garages. NEMA will continue creating awareness to change the current situation. *(TM, 12.09.07)*

No End in Sight

The electricity supply in Zambia, by the country's power utility company, Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO), remains unsatisfactory to both commercial entities and domestic consumers. Load-shedding has become a norm in a number of localities throughout the country, especially in low cost residential areas of major cities.

While ZESCO is putting blame on vandalism of its facilities by the public, general opinion indicates that the problems occurred due to the company's inefficiency and concentration on exporting electricity to the neighbouring countries. The power problem has led to the dissolution of the ZESCO and the Energy Regulation Board (ERB). ZACA has welcomed the dissolution of the two citing the failures and called it a necessary oversight and direction in the energy sector. *(ZDM, 14.07.07)*

Fake ARVs Threaten Lives

The high cost antiretroviral (ARV) drugs and inadequate control mechanisms in Zimbabwe are driving a flourishing trade in fake ARVs by unlicensed dealers.

The Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe (MCAZ) recently issued a statement warning the public that the dealers were importing and selling counterfeit ARVs to unsuspecting HIV-positive people who needed the life-prolonging medication.

Undesignated and unhygienic points of sale, such as flea markets and hair salons, were being used as outlets for the fake drugs, raising the fear that patients' health was being compromised and many could develop resistance to genuine medication. *(IRIN News, 27.08.07)*

National Training Workshops

CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment and Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER), in association with CUTS Institute for Regulation and Competition (CIRC) organised a series of three-day long National Training Workshops (NTWs) in seven African countries over the period July-October 2007. These training workshops were organised under the auspices of the project, "Capacity Building on Competition Policy in Select Countries of Eastern and Southern Africa" (7Up3 Project) in partnership with respective country partners.

Clement Onyango at the Malawi training workshop

The need for the workshops was felt over the period of implementation of the 7Up3 project, which revealed a dire need for raising the level of understanding not only of the government representatives, but also other stakeholders (especially civil society and business organisations) to complement the efforts made by the government (line ministry or the competition authority) to operationalise national competition regimes.

The purpose of the training was meant to develop the capacity of stakeholders including the policy makers, regulators, CSOs, academicians, and media in each of the project countries through a participatory process to understand and appreciate the prevailing competition concerns from the national, regional and international perspectives, and enable them to respond appropriately.

Vladimir Chilinya from CUTS ARC, Lusaka participated in the NTWs held in Maputo during July 17-19, 2007 and in Mauritius on August 08-10, 2007 respectively.

Clement Onyango from CUTS ARC, Nairobi participated in the NTWs held in Malawi, during August 29-31, 2007, in Ethiopia on October 10-12, 2007, and in Uganda, during October 03-05, 2007 respectively.

For more details of the workshop, please visit: *http://www.cuts-international.org/NTW/pdf/NTW-Report_jul-oct07.pdf*

Promoting Women's Voice in EPA Negotiations

CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC), Lusaka with the support of African Women's Economic Policy Network (AWEPON) organised a consultative workshop on 'Promoting African Women's Voice in the EPA Negotiations' in Lusaka, on July 24, 2007.

The workshop deliberated upon the ways of making EPAs' gender responsive and ensuring economic rights to Women in Africa. It helped to supplement information got from the various interviews conducted by the research team.

Media Workshop on Trade

CUTS ARC Lusaka, and the Catholic Commission for Justice Development and Peace (CCJDP) organised a 'Media Training Workshop on Trade for Journalists' in Lusaka, on September 28, 2007.

The workshop aimed at building the capacity of journalists to understand trade-related issues. It drew over 30 participants from both the electronic and print media. Participants represented government, private and community media institutions.

Development Benchmarks

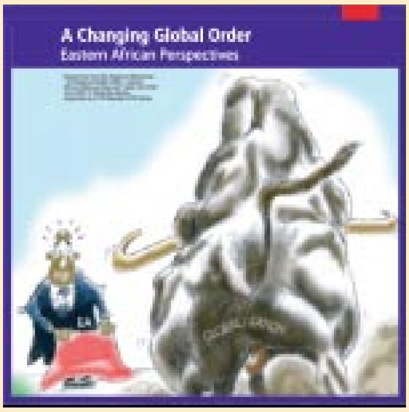
CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC) Nairobi, organised a one-day multi-stakeholder consultation meeting on a 'Pro-Development Benchmarking for the Economic Partnership Agreements' in Narobi, on August 09, 2007.

The meeting was attended by Kenyan policy-makers, governments, CSOs, private sector and academic representatives. The objectives of the consultation were to:

- define and agree on the benchmarks that negotiations must achieve for them to be acceptable to Kenya;
- take an audit of the EPA text with regard to achieving the identified negotiation benchmarks;
- explore how the identified benchmarks could inform the design of regional development benchmarks; and
- explore how development benchmarks can be used to effectively create realistic development points of reference in the context of Kenya, against which the impact of EPAs in delivering development could be assessed.

PUBLICATIONS

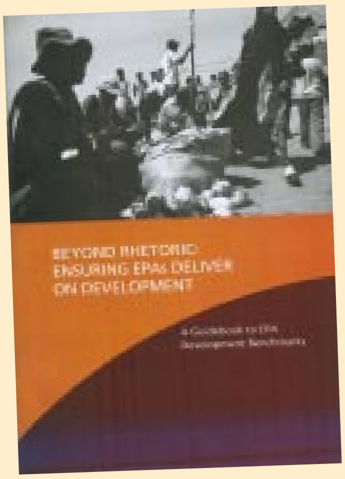
A Changing Global Order: Eastern African Perspective



This book has been developed as result of the workshop entitled 'A Changing Global Order-Eastern Africa's Roles and Interests', held in Navisha, Kenya in June 2007. It aims to enable the stakeholders to carry the Naivasha debate forward their respective organisations and raise awareness and knowledge about the changes and challenges in the global arena.

In the book, short excerpts of those far more comprehensive papers presented at the workshop have been re-arranged around six topical areas. While the contributions of this publication raise many questions, there are hardly any answers, which remain to be developed. And in this process, governments shall no longer be left alone. All actors of society are asked to contribute, in order to give Africa the strong voice it deserves in the global arena.

This Book can be accessed at: *http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BOOK02-07.pdf*



Beyond Rhetoric: Ensuring EPAs Delivers on Development

The negotiations of an EPA between the EU and the ACP States have been going on since 2002 when the negotiations were launched. The talks were envisaged under the Cotonou partnership Agreement signed between the EU and the 77 ACP states. EPAs are expected to replace the non-reciprocal trade arrangements that have existed between these parties since the Lome Conventions.

This book provides a discussion on benchmarks for EPAs. It seeks to move the discussion on EPAs from suppositions and "fears and illusions" to possible realities by proposing standards against which EPAs should be judged and their implementation monitored. This way, the agreements to be entered into between the EU and the ACP states can be judged against their own standards set in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

This book can be accessed at: *http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BOOK03-07.pdf*

Consumer Watch

Consumer Watch e-newsletter is a joint initiative of the Consumer Unity & Trust Society-Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC) and ZACA, published with the objective of enhancing consumer welfare through sensitisation, information dissemination and capacity building of consumers, business entities and government. While addressing consumer concerns, the newsletter focuses on bringing out issues such as violation of consumer rights and measures to be taken by the relevant authorities to protect stakeholders.

CUTS ARC and ZACA will strive to support and lobby the government and stakeholders to ensure resumption of the process to eventually enact a functional Consumer Protection Law in the country and also establish a functional institutional mechanism to implement the law.

Sources

BD: Business Day; BL: The Hindu Business Line; BOPA: Botswana Press Agency; BS: Business Standard; EA: East African; EABW: East African Business Weekly; EAS: East African Standard; GC: Ghanaian Chronicle; GNA: Ghana News Agency; IPS: Inter Press Service; IRIN: Integrated Regional Information Network; TD: This Day; TEA: The East African; TM: The Monitor; TN: The Nation; TT: The Telegraph; ZDM: Zambia Daily Mail.

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