



**Macro-Economic Policies Training Workshop
Ibis Hotel, Maputo, Mozambique
20 - 25 May 2007**

Background

Stemming from a Budget Monitoring Training held in Swaziland (June 2006) for Economic Justice desk officers from NCCs in the region and partners, the Economic Justice Network and participants became more conscious of the fact that as project officers they require more in-depth training with regards to macro-economic policies. In her opening speech, the former General Secretary of Council of Swaziland Churches, Mrs. M. Mbelu, requested the church officers to take up a more proactive role in the context of engaging with their governments in the budget process of their respective countries. Extending this further, there is indeed need for the church to take up such matters and join the larger civil society in that regard. While in principle this is true, the NCCs have voiced a special concern specifically referring to their lack of proficiency to engage more adeptly on matters whose focus lies predominantly in the economic sphere.

In consultation and collaboration with partners, AFRODAD and NCA as a joint venture, the EJM put forward her concerns around macro-economic training for project officers of FOCCISA NCCs especially. The outcome of this consultative process is the Macro-Economic Policy Training Workshop which follows from training completed in Swaziland - June 2006 using the module compiled by AFRODAD to take forward the process of further capacitating NCCs in enhancing and understanding larger macro economic frameworks in light of their work spaces. This tool developed by AFRODAD has been used for numerous Economic Literacy Trainings and proven extremely useful. Additional to this is that the participants will be able to take with them the module to serve as a reference point and the beginning of their learning process.

Relevance of the training

The churches hold a great mass of followers and have been and continue to be instrumental tools in the areas of social justice as well as a voice that governments take very seriously especially in Southern Africa. It is unfortunate that their input on issues of economic matters is minimal mostly owing to lack of adequate information in order to effectively input at all levels.

The church can be instrumental in assisting the implementation of economic policies or even assisting our governments to reconsider their positions on certain policies affecting humanity as a whole. Where the churches are conversant with the subject matter and largely understand the issues and implications of policies that their governments sign into, the church has made tremendous impact on decisions and actions their governments

subsequently take. The churches involvement in the campaign to cancel debt is one of the clearest examples of how effective the church can be.

Such a type of training is necessary to build capacity for the ends of effective engagement at all levels within their countries and possibly within the region. Thus comprehensive knowledge around macro-economics is essential. Unpacking concepts, demystifying them and introducing the jargon used are critical to playing a more effective role in the arena of macro-economic. More importantly, making the link between the larger policy frameworks and the struggles of the people is pivotal in the planning process for participants in order to effectively engage, and explain situations, further more to know their limits. In many instances, we tend to take on more than we can handle without fully understanding what is in place and how we can go around, use or remove these hindering policies where that may be the case.

Objectives

The general objective of this training is to introduce basic economic concepts essential in understanding economic functions as well as the institutions that drive these processes.

More specifically:

1. to enhance participants understanding of the Economic IMF model and their capacity to make able to challenge it
2. to illustrate the linkages between macro economic policies with equity and poverty reduction strategies
3. to facilitate participants on understanding the relevance of gender issues and their relation to the main macro-economic literacy training modules
4. to seek possible alternatives to neo-liberal policies
5. to contextualize macro-economic policies into of economic justice and gender issues

Methodology of the workshop

The Macro-Economics Training is meant to outline and highlight key and basic element of macro-economics. The module to be used has been developed and put together by a team of African experts and have made this into an abridged yet dynamic module which participants can interact with on their own.

The AFRODAD Economic Literacy Training Manual will be the primary reference point. The methods to be used include module a presentation, group work, plenary session and case studies both as interactive groups and as a plenary. There will also be an interactive day for all participants to engage with each other and map out implementation schedules by way of plan of action.