



AFRICAN FORUM AND NETWORK  
ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT

# Special Edition Newsletter AFRODEBT 18

## AfCoDD IV

Africa's Debt Crisis:  
Pan-African Feminist  
Perspectives and Alternatives

— Africa Rule Maker —



4<sup>th</sup> Edition of the African Conference  
on Debt and Development



[www.afrodad.org/afcodd](http://www.afrodad.org/afcodd)



AfCoDD IV Group photo

The fourth edition of the African Conference on Debt and Development (AfCoDD IV) themed “Africa’s Debt Crisis: Pan-African Feminist Perspectives and Alternatives” took place in Maputo, Mozambique from 28 to 30 August. Discussions during the three-day conference focused on challenges that deepen the systemic inequalities faced by African nations, exacerbated by overlapping crises—ranging from COVID-19 and geopolitical conflicts to climate change and challenges intrinsic to national contexts.

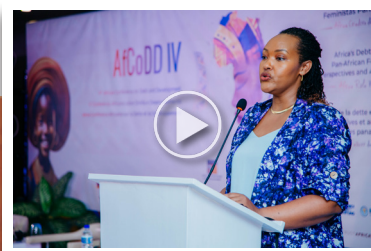
The current global financial architecture, which prioritises profits over lives, is inadequate to meet the needs of populations. The rising debt burden, coupled with restrictive lending conditions imposed by private lenders, has severely limited the ability of African governments to invest in public services, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality.

Moreover, multilateral austerity measures, public spending cuts, and regressive taxation impose a disproportionate burden on women, who account for nearly 90% of informal employment in Africa. These women face unfair wages, exploitation, and the absence of basic labour rights such as pensions and maternity leave. Despite representing the majority in the public sector and serving as the backbone of economies and communities, they continue to be marginalised.

In this context, the debt crisis in Africa is not merely an economic issue; it is a profound feminist concern that exposes the intersectionality of debt and gender. Therefore, the conference deliberately chose to approach this crisis through a feminist lens, seeking alternatives that challenge the structural inequalities embedded in the current economic and financial system.

*Dinah Musindarwezo*

*Prof. Attiya, Crystal, Barbara & Prof. Adriano*



Africa's Debt Crisis and Pan African Feminist Perspectives - AfCoDD IV Keynote Address



AfCoDD IV Opening Remarks





AFRODAD's executive director (Jason R. Braganza - third from right) with directors and representatives of AFRODAD's African national partner organisations - ( Representation from left - Mozambique, Tunisia, Nigeria, Malawi, Cameroon, Kenya, Benin, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe),



## Key Recommendations

- Invest in female leadership and ensure that women's stories and contributions are recognised and preserved.
- African women must continue to have space and resources to tell their stories.
- Increasing women's representation in political and economic decision-making, particularly in negotiations on debt and development policies. Recognise that representation alone is insufficient; prioritise the inclusion of women with feminist values in leadership positions.
- Promote inclusive electoral systems by encouraging political parties to demonstrate a meaningful commitment to female representation and elevating this responsibility to voters who should demand female candidates from their parties.
- Reform tax and fiscal systems to create fairer and more equitable policies that address gender inequalities and promote social justice.
- Promote economies of care by developing economic frameworks that address structural inequalities and ensure equitable access to resources, opportunities, and benefits for women. This involves dismantling patriarchal and neocolonial structures that perpetuate gender-based discrimination.
- African women must continue to have space and resources to tell their stories.
- Advocate for debt cancellation and restructuring that considers the social and gender impacts of debt repayment, ensuring that African nations can invest in health, education, and social protection systems.
- African governments should form a unified front in international negotiations, demanding fairer terms in debt and financial agreements that prioritize the well-being of their citizens, particularly women and girls. By working together, African nations can leverage their collective power and resources to challenge the dominance of the Global North and create more equitable and sustainable economic relationships.
- Urge the adoption of policies that dismantle patriarchal and neocolonial structures, ensuring that economic decisions are made with the full participation of women and marginalised groups. This involves challenging the dominant economic paradigm that prioritises profit over people and the planet and advocating for alternative models that prioritise social and environmental justice.
- Support the establishment of robust regional institutions that can lead Africa's financial independence and ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness in all economic policies.
- African countries are not less powerful than developed nations; they possess the resources necessary for continued growth. Africa holds significant potential and must assert its role as a rule-maker in the global economy.





During the conference, the following short-term actions were identified:



Gather disaggregated data and conduct targeted gender-specific research to understand the factors that drive or hinder women's progress. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of current laws and identifying cultural barriers that may not allow advancement.



Launch a campaign aimed at abolishing laws and cultural practices that sustain gender inequality and disadvantage women. Addressing harmful cultural norms is critical to fostering an environment where women can thrive.



To ensure coherent global engagement, there must be a clear and well-defined transformative agenda for local, national, and regional levels. This agenda should incorporate a strong economic foundation and a feminist vision. It is essential to move beyond aspirational goals and articulate a concrete pathway for implementation.



Establish a Working Group to propose and implement a measurable action plan, allowing for the evaluation of progress at each annual forum based on the findings from this event and supported by existing research. This initiative aims to ensure the implementation of concrete measures between each annual forum.

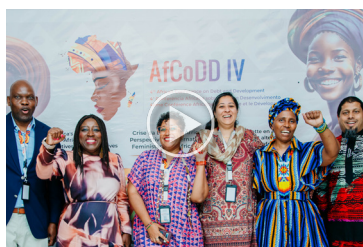
Photos of women at AfCoDD IV - 28th to 30th August 2024





A plenary session at AfCoDD IV

## Media Coverage



AfCoDD IV Sessions Videos



Stop the Bleeding: Campagne contre les flux financiers illicites & les enjeux de la dette en Afrique



The Debt Crisis in Africa: Causes, Impacts and Solutions



Human Rights Implications of Debt: A Life Cycle Approach



Debt, Human Rights, and State Responsibility: An In-Depth Analysis



Rethinking Debt Solutions for Africa: Why the G20 Common Framework and the DSSI falls short



### Podcast



Public debt and Inclusive Development: *Challenges and Solutions for Women in Africa* (Voices from AfCoDD IV)



[Link](#)



### News Articles & Media Reach



[Link](#)

AfCoDD IV achieved a total reach of over 467 million, representing the unique individuals who engaged with its media content. This metric, obtained through Meltwater.

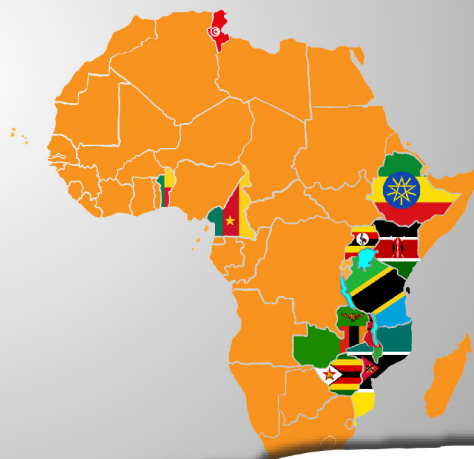
# National Advocacy Conferences Ahead of AfCoDD IV

In the build-up towards AfCoDD IV and together with national partners, national advocacy meetings were held in 11 countries:

[Benin](#) | [Cameroon](#) | [Ethiopia](#) | [Kenya](#)  
[Malawi](#) | [Mozambique](#) | [Tanzania](#) | [Tunisia](#)  
[Uganda](#) | [Zambia](#) | [Zimbabwe](#)

Outcome statements

[Kenya](#) | [Mozambique](#) | [Zambia](#) | [Zimbabwe](#)



## Voices of the Indebted - Docuseries that sheds light on the human impact of public debt.

Voices of the Indebted - Uganda



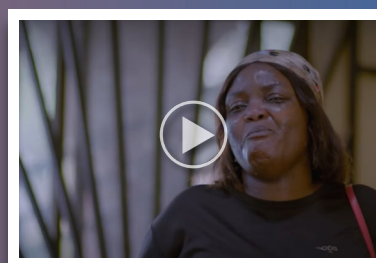
This documentary takes you to Uganda, where the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated economic challenges and highlighted systemic issues within the healthcare and financial sectors. It highlights the struggles faced by Ugandans during the Covid-19 lockdown. From the Kamuli district to the nation's capital, we witness the hardships of those living hand-to-mouth, the inadequacies of healthcare facilities, and the ripple effects of a surging public debt.

People's Tribunal - Malawi



The documentary / People's tribunal takes you to Malawi, where citizens grapple with the harsh realities of economic mismanagement and government neglect. Highlighting the poignant stories of ordinary Malawians whose lives are upended by the government's prioritisation of debt servicing over essential public services. From crumbling schools and inadequate healthcare to the struggles of farmers, the voices of the marginalised is captured.

Debt Palaver Movie - Nigeria



A powerful film that explores the devastating impact of public debt on a nation's citizens and its governance. The movie takes you to Nigeria, where economic mismanagement and government neglect have left the populace grappling with severe hardships. The movie is a classic exemplification of how ordinary Africans are struggling under the weight of public debt and inadequate public services.





**AFRICAN FORUM AND NETWORK  
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