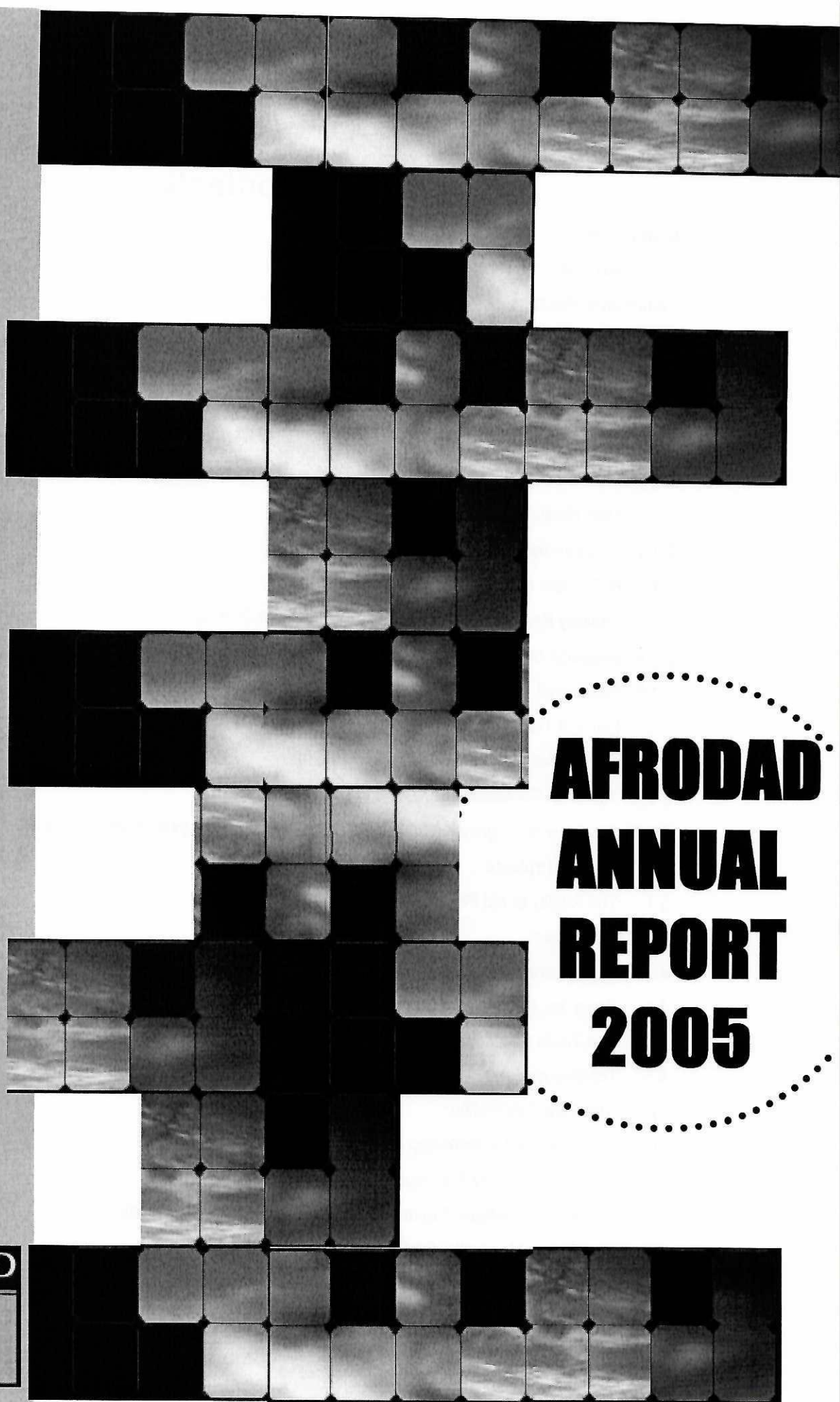
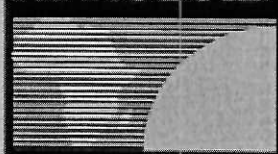




**AFRODAD
ANNUAL
REPORT
2005**

AFRODAD



African Forum and Network
on Debt and Development

Securing policies to redress the African Debt crisis

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5



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1.0 Introduction and Context: Policy Trends on Debt issues

The year 2005 yielded several important milestones for the world of development. It was a year meant to have helped liberate Africa from poverty and indebtedness. The major events of the year included the mobilization of NGO-driven citizens' campaigns (Britain's Make Poverty History and the Johannesburg-based Global Call to Action Against Poverty); Tony Blair's Commission for Africa (February); the G7 Finance Minister's debt relief proposal (June); a tour of Africa by the new World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz (June); the G8 Gleneagles debt and aid commitments (July); the Live 8 consciousness raising concerts (July); the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals review (September); the return to Nigeria of monies looted by Sani Abacha and deposited in Swiss bank accounts (September); the IMF/World Bank Annual Meeting addressing debt and the Third World 'voice' (September); a large debt relief deal for Nigeria (October); and the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Summit (December).

The events above were useful in revealing hypocrisy and power relations that remained impervious to advocacy, solidarity and democratization. Even the World Bank was compelled to confess in 2005 how Africa is drained of what can be termed 'genuine savings' through depletion of minerals and forests. The events also revealed the limits of strategies aimed at persuasion rather than pressure. Africa's development was under the spotlight of global development policies among other things. Tragically, the actual conditions faced by most people on the continent continued to deteriorate.

The subject of debt cancellation for low-income countries was clearly a 'hot' topic amongst academic researchers and policy makers in economics and politics disciplines for the first six months of 2005. The G8 Summit, held in July in Gleneagles, Scotland, seemed the climax of this debate. However, the outcomes of the G8 Summit on Debt, Aid and Trade have been minimal indeed, failing to meet the desired expectations of many economic justice activists and governments in the South. The UN Millennium Campaign points out that many developing countries are saddled with such high levels of debt that paying off just the annual interest, costs more than what is spent on health care and education combined.

Most African foreign debt has become notional; for it is obvious it can never be repaid. Belatedly recognizing the unsustainability of the financing, the World Bank and IMF introduced the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in 1996. Some nine years later, the plan was augmented by the June 2005 G7 Finance Ministers' debt relief concessions for 18 countries that were near or at the HIPC 'Completion Point'. Of these countries, 14 are African: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The other 10 due for relief once they pass the IMF/World Bank Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative hurdles are Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Sierra Leone and São Tomé & Príncipe. There are another eight African countries waiting to enter HIPC: Central African Republic, Comoros, the Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan and Togo.

While the G8 agreement is a step forward and sets an important precedent in terms of granting a 100% cancellation of debt to all severely indebted poor countries, it is also seemingly what civic activists have long advocated for over the years. The deal only represents one eighth of what Africa needs in terms of Debt cancellation, as this means canceling only US\$40 billion out of Africa's burgeoning debt stock of over US\$330 billion. The \$40 billion to be cancelled represents less than 10% of debt cancellation required for poor nations to meet the MDGs in 2015. The plan does not include middle-income countries that are heavily indebted and impoverished. Globally, the 18 countries that qualify immediately represent less than a third of countries (at least 62) that need full cancellation to meet the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which seek to halve extreme poverty by 2015.

3. We carried out research on the MDGs' Goal 8 - on Global partnership - and closely followed Summit preparations and actively participated in civil society meetings around the Millennium +5 Summit, in New York. In so doing we developed some critical analysis of the MDGs in Africa that was of interest to many, including one German University undergraduate programme.
4. During 2005, AFRODAD contributed to mobilization of civil society in Africa, and globally, in putting pressure on governments to set up efforts to achieve the MDGs and to make use of the unique opportunities the year presented. AFRODAD did so by ensuring that its partner organizations received information and participated in key Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) and Make Poverty History mass mobilizations.
5. AFRODAD managed to diversify and increase its funding partners by bringing in the Canadian International Development Agencies (CIDA), the Danish International (MS-Zimbabwe); the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Cordaid, among many others.
6. We also managed to recruit two new programme officers for Lobby and Advocacy as well as Project Management.
7. AFRODAD managed to make strides by incorporating French-speaking NGOs among its partners as well as engaging Francophone Africa in its work, especially in West and Central Africa. Partners such as the Center for the Promotion of Social and Economic Affairs (CEPAES) should see enable AFRODAD engage the Francophone African countries meaningfully.
8. The setting up of an Editorial Board has helped improve the quality of research and analysis of AFRODAD's papers.
9. It must be mentioned that a lot of improvement has been registered in AFRODAD's efforts to make gender and human rights issues central to its work. The organization has been able to engage in a number of research and advocacy activities that sought to link gender and debt issues. One such example has been the GCAP activities. Efforts have also been made to ensure gender parity in both staffing and engaging consultants.

1.3. Challenges

1. Due to staff changes/human resource constraints and delayed fund raising, especially in the first half of 2005 we had to postpone a few of our major annual activities. An important omission was the Civil Society -Parliamentary Dialogue that we rescheduled for February 2006.
2. Although AFRODAD has managed to increase staff and raise considerable funds in the program areas, the institutional funding base has not been growing. With the end of HIVOS' 10 years support to AFRODAD, it has become necessary to seek more funds for institutional support.
3. Although the Non-governmental Organizations' (NGO) Bill was not signed into law in Zimbabwe, NGO operations continue using the old registration system. AFRODAD's attempt to get accredited by the Zimbabwe government as an international regional organization has been put on halt. This means that the organization cannot benefit from tax exemptions for its imports and other legal requirements.
4. Hyperinflation and high costs of operations has continued to impact negatively on many NGOs' work. AFRODAD had to resort to printing and buying most of its office requirements in South Africa. It must be noted, however, that as an organization using hard currency it has become easy for AFRODAD, from time to time, to benefit from exchange rate gains. These are not sustainable though, in the long-term.
5. The negative image and publicity that the country has received, especially after "Operation Restore Order", has also compelled some of the funding partners to question whether AFRODAD was still in a safe operating environment and has any plans to relocate. Despite all these, AFRODAD

2.0 Research & Policy Analysis

AFRODAD has proved itself to be one of the most active pan African regional organizations that uses research-based advocacy in opposing the excesses of the neo-liberal economic system, which many believe is relentlessly and inevitably dragging the world to globalization. A natural corollary of this is our promotion of the social, solidarity-based economy and call for total debt cancellation for all severely indebted poor countries, and a realization of a people-centered development through diverse forms of social and economic development.

AFRODAD Partners

- ANEEJ, Nigeria
- Center for Promotion of Economic and Social Alternatives (CEPAES), Cameroon.
- Jubilee Angola, Angola
- Jubilee Zambia, Zambia
- FODEX, CNONG, DRC.
- Kenya Debt Relief Network (KENDREN), Kenya.
- Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN), Malawi.
- Mozambique Debt Group (MDG), Mozambique
- Economic Justice Network of the Fellowship of National Christian Councils (EJN-FOCCISA), South Africa.
- Network Movement for Justice & Development, (NMJD), Sierra Leone.
- Rwanda Debt Network, Rwanda.
- Tanzania Coalition on Debt and Development (TCDD), Tanzania.
- Uganda Debt Network (UDN), Uganda
- Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD), Zimbabwe

As a pan African regional organization we were able to draw much of 2005 research thematic areas from our annual Joint Programming Meeting held in March 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Joint Programming Meeting was able to draw in our partners in 12 African Countries. The year 2005 has been a momentous period for AFRODAD during which partners discussed and defined key annual research areas, set clear priority advocacy areas and targets through much joint work, collaboration and consultations.

AFRODAD's research and policy analysis work remains that of providing the evidence and analysis on which to base understanding of Debt issues and the appropriate advocacy for policy change. The major research activities are divided into two categories of Field Research and Desk Research.

2.1 Field Research

The AFRODAD 2005 Plans envisaged carrying out four major field studies in line with its four key category areas of: Millennium Development Goals, External and Domestic Debt Analysis; Resource Use and Management as well as Mobilization Towards A Critical Mass on Debt Issues. These were done and published, as was work on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), while that on NEPAD projects was rescheduled due to limited funding. Work on Aid Harmonisation and Governance was rescheduled to 2006 when funding would be available, and was replaced by studies on the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) which were conducted and published.

AFRODAD also participated in the civil society-World Bank and Fund annual meetings discussing the Comparative Policy and Institutional Analysis (CPIA) as a new debt sustainability approach.

AFRODAD managed, during the second part of the year, to collaborate with two German organizations, EED and Sudwind, to convene multi-stakeholder workshops in Kenya and Tanzania to disseminate and validate the results of its research work.

The two workshops were well attended with both members of civil society and government officials who extensively debated the subject of debt sustainability within their countries. The workshops were important as they brought back to the fore issues of debt sustainability at national level and helped strengthen links and information exchange between those in ecumenical, government and civil society circles. The same workshop deliberations will be presented at side events at the Washington Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in late April 2006. AFRODAD partnership with EED has since resulted in EED expressing interest in core funding AFRODAD's activities beginning June 2006.

2.1.3 Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers - MDGs Studies

Although there has been some openness to civil society participation in national policy making issues via the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), the link between these and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals has not been clear and the call for pro-poor policy making has had modest improvements over the years. A review of the Bretton Woods, UN system and national government activity in pro-poor policymaking and ways to integrate poverty reduction more fully into their macro-economic programmes and reporting mechanisms on poverty is very important. The development of an advocacy strategy for both PRSPs and MDGs with the aim of incorporating it into national poverty strategies is key to Africa's Development problems.

AFRODAD's value addition in this project is to create a database of all of this literature (the experiences) of PRSPs and MDGs in terms of coherence and compatibility of international initiatives and local development plans. It is important to critically analyze how severely indebted poor countries, especially those selected, are able to translate global initiatives into practical implementable local development agendas and, more so, deal with the convergences and divergences associated with these various development initiatives. Above all, the macroeconomic framework underpinning all these initiatives needs further interrogation and redress. Thus through these studies, AFRODAD thrives to ensure an ongoing thorough analysis. It is in line with this that in the last quarter of 2005 AFRODAD commissioned country-based research studies in Zambia, Uganda and Ethiopia (while Mali and Senegal were to be commissioned in early 2006) to establish the practical relationship between PRSPs and MDGs as implemented by national governments.

2.1.4 Research on NEPAD

A consensus under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) emerged in the development policy community during the past years about the causes of Africa's economic crisis and the prerequisites of renewed growth. The challenge now is to develop viable development strategies based on this consensus. It is important to identify the choices, priorities, and tradeoffs facing the African Union and its member governments that are committed to overcoming the current crisis, given the range of endowments and capacities found in the region and the current international environment.

During 2005, AFRODAD with the support of the Canadian International Development Agencies (CIDA) commissioned two research papers on Africa's Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in Ghana and Kenya in an effort to resuscitate debate and assess progress being made with regard to NEPAD since its inception. The two research papers have since been published and their contents have been subject of the deliberations of the NEPAD Multi-stakeholder Consultative Meeting held in Harare in November 2005. Efforts to commission research on NEPAD projects has not been successful as it required more funding and time to cover the majority of the NEPAD projects. AFRODAD will, in its 2006-2008 plans, ensure that this work on NEPAD projects is completed.

The Consensus covers trade liberalization, private financial flows, debt, domestic resource mobilization and development assistance (aid). The Millennium Project estimated in January 2005 that achieving all the MDGs would cost US\$ 135 billion of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2006 and US\$ 195 billion ODA by 2015. Given the development needs of Africa and the developing world, Goal 8 was of crucial importance for AFRODAD to give special attention to it in its research and policy analysis work.

The paper's focus is on what governments in rich countries can do to keep their side of the global partnership bargain. On the other hand it also reminds governments in developing countries that they have the primary responsibility to keep their side of the deal. It also underscores the fact that no amount of international cooperation can compensate for the actions of governments that fail to prioritize human development, respect human rights, tackle inequality or root out corruption. But without a renewed commitment to cooperation backed by practical action, the MDGs will be missed—and the Millennium Declaration will go down in history as just one more empty promise.

2.2.4 The Loan Contraction Process and Debt Management

Building on its previous work on the Loan Contraction Process and Debt Management, AFRODAD produced an Occasional Paper for two purposes: (i) was to synthesize and consolidate previous work on the subject (ii) to rekindle and keep the debate alive on the subject matter. The Occasional Paper has since been used as background information in our second Civil Society-Members of Parliament Dialogue held in Windhoek, Namibia.

The Occasional Paper revealed that many a times an African government may overrule their Parliament's objections to a loan, and often Parliaments end up rubberstamping new lending agreements without being properly involved in the decision-making process. It also highlighted the fact that there is urgent and critical need that the process by which debtor countries agree to accept the terms and conditions for loans is open to scrutiny by Parliamentarians and other citizen groups. The paper is part of AFRODAD's work and call upon African governments and donors to address internal ills that continue to exacerbate the debt crisis through careless lending and irresponsible borrowing.

2.2.5 A Review of 2005 as a year of Development

With 2005 dubbed the year of development, it was befitting to have an Occasional Paper that critically analyzed the events of 2005 and their implications on Africa's Development especially matters pertaining to Debt, Aid and Trade. The paper critically analyzed the Africa Commission set up by Tony Blair, the British Premier, the Global Call Against Poverty (GCAP); the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Donor Harmonization; G8 Make Poverty History live concerts; the G8 Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI); the Millennium Declaration Review in September 2005 and the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial meetings.

Also in 2005, a new framework to measure debt sustainability was adopted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) that will impact decisions made on further debt relief and debt management for countries with heavy debt burdens. The framework and its controversial element, the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) is being closely monitored by AFRODAD in collaboration with its partners to determine whether its implementation will improve macroeconomic issues in Africa and will help avert future debt crises and consequently help attain the Millennium Development Goals.

Another meeting of the ROA Management Committee was held later in November in Sao Paulo, Brazil. It was clear from the meetings' deliberations that effective aid has to be delivered in sufficient quantity to support human development take-off, especially to ensure multiple investments in health, education and economic infrastructure needed to break cycles of deprivation and support economic recovery - and the resource needs to be commensurate with the scale of the financing gap. It is also true that effective aid has to be delivered on a predictable, low transaction cost, value for money basis. Above all, effective aid requires "country ownership".

The other key factor is that developing countries have primary responsibility for creating the conditions under which aid can yield optimal results. While there has been progress in increasing the quantity and improving the quality of aid, none of these conditions has yet been met.

3.2 FTA Project

Systemic power imbalance fuels the vicious circle of over-indebtedness, poverty and economic underdevelopment, thus perpetuating the critical living conditions of hundreds of millions of people. It also undermines the sovereignty of poor countries and their populations and violates their dignity and their right to self-determination.

The power imbalance between Debtors and Creditors exhibits the lack of global governance to secure a more balanced and just world. Indeed it can be said from the outset that, understood from this imbalance, the persistence of the current debt crisis suggests that the unpayable debt is illegitimate since it is defined and maintained by a power imbalance that is unjust. Besides that, the current debt crisis is purely a primitive accumulation of wealth on the part of the rich nations that can be challenged by a just global society. In this regard, Debt arbitration is a promising alternative to alter the global financial system, address the inefficiencies of the market and ensure morality and humanity for the good of the majority. One of the prerequisites for arbitration is the existence of divergent views that are not reconcilable. While the Debtors have made undisputed and legitimate claims and demands for debt cancellation, the creditors on the other hand have alleged that debt cancellation is not the action needed to resolve the problem. Currently, decisions about poor countries' debts are made either by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (controlled by rich governments) as part of the HIPC process, or by the Paris Club.

AFRODAD embarked on the FTA project in 2001 in a bid to help find lasting solutions to the debt crisis, since the call for Debt cancellation momentum and Jubilee 2000 movement took a lull after the G8 countries refused to listen to civic calls.

The Ford Foundation agreed, in June 2005, to extend its funding of the FTA project for the next two years. To that end AFRODAD has since re-established its FTA office in Lusaka, Zambia and commissioned two important Occasional Papers on furthering the call for the FTA mechanism. The papers explain in very simple but procedural language, the way the FTA project can be promoted until it gets center-stage at the United Nations by mid-2007. The papers also explain the various initiatives that have taken place in different parts of the world justifying and to some extent explicitly pointing to the need of the FTA process. It has documented important information related to the FTA call including the Montevideo Declaration by Parliamentarians.

AFRODAD continues through informed research and advocacy work to call for debt arbitration. A civil society Debt Commission has since been established in Zambia and three more are to be set up in Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania in the first quarter of 2006. The purpose behind this is to ensure that country case evidence of wrong policy advice by the Bretton Woods Institutions in these countries is properly collected and documented for an FTA Court to be established under the auspices of the United Nations. AFRODAD's organizational position remains that if the current debt crisis is not to be repeated, a truly just, open and impartial arbitration process is needed to determine which debts cannot or should not be paid, taking into account the perspective and needs of debtor countries, as well as creditors.

This further opened links between AFRODAD and other Debt campaigns that became useful for AFRODAD in conveying its messages and participating in the debates leading to civil society input to the G8 and the Commission for Africa.

The launching of the Global Campaign Against Poverty was an important platform for AFRODAD to build alliances and synergies with other civil society organizations working on similar work. Through GCAP, AFRODAD was able to get partners from Cameroon and Sierra Leone to work with both within and outside the framework of the GCAP. The GCAP work in itself was an open expression that citizens can do a lot to influence policy change both at national and global level. It helped send a message to politicians and champions of the neoliberal agenda that civil society should not be taken for granted and that it can hold them accountable to their commitment to the Millennium Declaration.

AFRODAD and the IBON Foundation (Philippines) were able to co-host a workshop on behalf of the Global Reality of Aid Project to launch and disseminate information on the project's 2004-2005 theme on Aid and Governance. This workshop was useful as it formed the basis of civil society intervention at the OECD meetings in February and March 2006 of which civil society input, including AFRODAD's, was very valuable. AFRODAD's effective participation, especially on the subject of mutual accountability and transparency, resulted in it being invited to participate in Action Aid (UK)'s important project on real and phantom aid which was instrumental in influencing decisions at the G8 Meeting in Gleneagles and the United Nations 2005 Millennium Declaration Review in September, New York.

4.3 Development Aid

Aid effectiveness and its impact in Africa is a cross cutting issue in AFRODAD advocacy work. During 2005, AFRODAD worked to promote debate and research on aid, security and conflict in Africa.

(i) The Paris Declaration:

In February and March and in line with the objectives of the ROA project, AFRODAD was invited to participate in the OECD² Conference and its preparatory meetings on Effective Aid and Donor Harmonization in Paris, France. These meetings were key as they resulted in the Paris Declaration on Aid that fed into the G8 meetings and the MDGs Review in September 2005.

AFRODAD, in partnership with other regional network organizations working on debt, including the European Network on Debt and Development (EURODAD) and the IBON Foundation of the Philippines, called upon the donor community to have defined targets of aid delivery as well as committed them to a timetable to reduce aid conditionalities. In line with the civil society call, a joint statement was issued for dissemination to the OECD Finance Ministers Meeting. The civil society concerns were also incorporated in the Paris Declaration.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, adopted on 2 March 2005 by nearly 100 developing and donor countries and international development organizations, with a strong contribution from Africa, sets out the commitments of donor and partner countries to address the challenges of scaling up aid. AFRODAD's participation was important in that it had to push forward some of its publications' recommendations on aid. Furthermore, the issues of mutual review agreed to at the meetings ensured that the scaling-up agenda demands high performance on policy coherence issues, both on the African and the development partner side, with government-wide arrangements that work effectively to resolve inconsistent policies and generate synergies among policies.

More importantly, mutual accountability in aid delivery has a central role to play at a time when the international community is actively discussing the concept of a large increase in aid to Africa. For such an increase in aid to be even feasible, both donor and African systems for managing aid must reach a new level of performance. Unless large aid increases are delivered in a useable and predictable form, African governments will be unable to build the expanded human and institutional capacities needed to successfully absorb them and use this springboard as the basis for higher and sustainable growth and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

(ii) The African Union-UNECA Debt Meeting

Against the background of the above mentioned, the African Union in collaboration with the Economic Commission of Africa jointly convened a civil society meeting to consult non-governmental organizations about how the African Union should intervene in the ongoing debates on debt sustainability and gold sales. AFRODAD, as a continental organization spearheading debt work in the region, was invited to participate in this important occasion held in Harare. The meeting deliberated on Africa's debt problems against the background of the UK and US proposals on debt cancellation. The meeting sought to solicit these stakeholders' views and advice to the African Union on how to deal with the debt issue at its July summit and at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland. Taking advantage of this meeting, AFRODAD was able to put across its position on the FTA mechanism and its recommendations on how to address internal mechanisms that continue to exacerbate the African debt crisis. The meeting also urged the African leaders to take a bold and firm step with the G8 regarding the resolution of the debt question.

(iii) Country Institutional and Policy Assessment (CPIA)

AFRODAD effectively participated at the launch of the IMF/World Bank new debt sustainability framework that was presented and discussed by the World Bank staff and the civil society on April 15, 2005 during the Spring Meetings in Washington. AFRODAD added its voice to other civic groups in condemning the new debt frameworks as limited in scope and content due to their over-reliance on exports in determining policy indicators, the failure to recognize the importance of fulfilling human developments before debt service and the fact that the Bank and the IMF continued to play the role of being both judge and jury in the debt sustainability question.

Civil society organizations at the meeting, including AFRODAD, emphasized the need for a comprehensive coverage of debt including private and domestic, in the Debt Sustainability Analysis. They also called for a CPIA that will be open to outside scrutiny and broad participation other than that of the Bank and the Fund. They also proposed that the proposed thresholds would be treated only as indicative guideposts. Nevertheless, the new policy framework seems to have been overshadowed by the developments around the G8 Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative.

(iv) UNCTAD conference on Debt Sustainability

Following participation in the Maputo, Washington and Addis Abba meetings on Debt Sustainability, AFRODAD was invited by UNCTAD in May in Geneva, Switzerland to take part in a global meeting on Debt. The meeting was key as it constituted the United Nations' consolidation of views regarding debt sustainability and it brought together the government, corporate sector and civil society to put their input into the global question of debt sustainability prior to the G8 meetings.

The UNCTAD meeting was vital to AFRODAD as it used the opportunity to share its research findings as well as distribute its research reports to participants. This has resulted in organizations such as UNCTAD, the Institute of Development Studies, Eldis and Pambazuka requesting to post AFRODAD articles on their website and publications. AFRODAD has also been able, through these meetings, to identify new technical and funding partners as well as solicit the support for its work and publications.

4.5 100% Debt Cancellation Campaigns and the IFIWatchnet Meeting

During the first quarter of 2005, AFRODAD worked to lobby for the total cancellation of Africa's debts by repackaging both the UK and US 100% debt cancellation proposals for poor countries. This led to AFRODAD's participation at the Global IFI Strategy Meeting in Accra, Ghana, in February 2005 that brought together the South/North civil society networks and organisations across the globe working for social justice and a lasting solution to the debt crisis. The meeting reiterated civil society rejection of neoliberal policies (privatisations of services such as public health, education, water supplies), demanded governance which places human rights at the centre of its policies, agreed to support countries that stop servicing debt in order to invest in the welfare of their people.

5. Information And Communications

The main purpose of the Information and Communications Programme has remained that of developing and using communication tools to increase the impact of AFRODAD's mission of policy responses and change.

AFRODAD has ensured that its work reaches its main target group who are the policy makers in national governments and their institutions; the intergovernmental institutions such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC); the regional organizations (African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union) as well as the global level that would include the United Nations processes. The secondary target group, civil society organizations with whom AFRODAD works to influence decision makers and policies, have also been actively engaged.

The Information and Communications Programme has produced and continues to produce and send out huge consignments of AFRODAD publications, now being produced internally, despite the impediments of prohibitive mailing costs. There has been an overwhelming positive response from different quarters on the quality of the publications and to some extent how useful the content has been for different people/organizations. An increased number of organizations have expressed willingness and interest to collaborate with AFRODAD on disseminating publications and materials produced from within. This has been a clear measure of the impact that AFRODAD seeks to have and maintain on the Debt issue.

Books and other relevant publications from research institutes, universities, governments, and regional institutions have been and will continue to be procured and deposited in the AFRODAD Resource Centre which is in the process of being developed as a source of information for in-house as well as outside reference.

5.1 Internet and Website Management

The Information and Communications Programme has continued the quest to harness the use of ICTs to improve on the impact of AFRODAD's work in the region and indeed in the world. It has become imperative to keep a lookout for emerging technologies and trends in the use of ICTs in order to assist existing AFRODAD strategies to be recognized and expand the outreach.

In line with the 2005 Joint Programming Meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya in March 2005, the Information and Communications Programme has embarked on an ambitious programme to transform its website into a comprehensive development information portal for and about the Debt Cancellation Campaign. The aim is to integrate the activities of its 12 Debt networks/partners and become a major vehicle for profiling their work and tracking the Debt Crisis, as well as providing them with support

However, the connectivity speed from Zimbabwe continued to be a hindrance to achieve this goal. Funding is being sought to expand the connectivity capabilities of AFRODAD by seeking to obtain broadband Internet access. This will allow AFRODAD to have full control of this project instead of resorting to outsourcing it. During the first six months of the year, AFRODAD re-launched the web discussion forum following increased hits to the website on the premise that the discussion forum would maintain the traffic flow to the website, and at the same time provide valuable information for use in lobby and advocacy activities. Admittedly, more needs to be done in terms of promoting present-day debates in the discussion forum as outdated topics have tended to attract less participation.

A number of organizations have, during half of the year, requested our permission to post some of our research publications on their websites. These include Eldis, Southern African Poverty Network and the IDS-UK. The Commonwealth Foundation has also requested us to help in moving forward the civil society project on HIPC and we hope to get some financial support to this work by November as a key research institution on African development and Debt issues.

AFRODAD has also used the local media to clarify or highlight our viewpoint on Debt issues through talk shows and interviews. Through good relations with the media some articles have been written around meetings being held or hosted by AFRODAD, most notably in Nairobi, Kenya during the Reality of Aid Authors' Meeting in March as well as during the ROA Regional Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria in June 2005.

5.5 Publications/Reports

The design and layout of all AFRODAD publications and materials has been standardized and made all the more efficient by the acquisition of a larger and faster computer, with all the requisite software. After realizing that by outsourcing this routine task quality and finer details could not be guaranteed, the Information and Communications Programme decided to embark on internalizing all design and layout tasks as it was realized that this would present a large saving on production costs. A cost analysis was also done to see if having the final printing and mailing of publications in South Africa rather than in Zimbabwe, where costs continue to rise regularly and where mailing is inefficient and cannot be guaranteed, would be cost effective.

There has been no turning back from using a reliable printer in South Africa whose costs have been on average just over 30% of what one would pay in Zimbabwe, including courier charges to have the publications delivered to our offices.

The mailing out of publications has now been restricted to key target institutions, with the rest being distributed during large gatherings such as the World Social Forum and other important meetings bringing together government, private sector and civil society activists.

Most of our publications have been requested for further reference by a number of organizations in Canada and in Africa, the Library of Congress Office of Kenya has been a regular beneficiary.

6.3.2 Student Attachments/ Internships

AFRODAD has received numerous applications for student attachments and internship both from Africa and Europe. A number of students who have visited the AFRODAD website or read its publications are keen to have a feel of how the organization works.

Most students are interested in doing further work on Debt sustainability, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Millennium Development Goals. In 2005, due to resource constraints AFRODAD managed to assist two students - one from Zimbabwe and another from Germany.

Our second intern from the National University of Science and Technology joined us in the second half of the year since their academic year allows for a one year attachment from 1 July to end of June the next year. The first intern completed his attachment in June and is back at NUST. We were, on 1 August, joined by an intern from Germany who was doing some research for his Masters Degree dissertation for a month on PRSPs and HIPC. He was very interested in following up on AFRODAD work.

6.4 Joint-programming in Nairobi, Kenya

The AFRODAD Joint Programming Meeting was held in Nairobi, Kenya prior to the board meeting. The joint programming session for 2005 was useful in helping the Forum draw up a road map and its interventionist strategies into the very busy and challenging year for many NGOs working in the policy arena. Through joint programming work, AFRODAD was able to draw synergies and alliances to tackle the important development events of 2005. Areas of joint work at both global and national levels were agreed upon. The meeting even agreed on representatives to key meetings such as the G8 Summit in Scotland and the UN Millennium Declaration Review in New York. The 2005 Joint Programming session helped AFRODAD to secure better cooperation and linkages with its member partners than before.

6.5 Editorial Board

One of the key issues in our 2004-5 Annual Plans and evaluation was to put an Editorial Board to improve and consolidate our AFRODAD leadership in production of quality and critical publications. It is important to note that in 2005 AFRODAD was able to put an editorial board of four people, one lady and three men. We are still in need of a fifth person – preferably a woman. We hope to finalize this within the next first half of 2006. The Editorial Board has been very instrumental in editing the research reports on the PRGF studies that AFRODAD produced in collaboration with the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA).

6.6 Fund Raising Efforts

Strides in trying to secure additional funding apart from our usual traditional core-funders have since been made. Besides receiving funding from the Ford Foundation, HIVOS, Novib, United Church of Canada, Christian Aid, Church of Sweden, Diakonia, Ibon, IFIwatchnet, efforts have, during the course of the year, been made to find alternative funding. In 2005 AFRODAD received program funding from new funding partners - the Danish International (MS-Zimbabwe), Norwegian Church Aid, Canadian International Development Agencies (CIDA) and the Commonwealth Foundation. Institutional funding for 2006 is expected from Boell Foundation and the EED. Cordaid and the Norwegian Church Aid have already approved program funding for 2006 while the Southern Africa Trust (Dfid) and the World Vision are yet to respond to AFRODAD's proposals. Negotiations for a North-South exchange program between AFRODAD and the Norwegian Church Aid are under way.

For the year, 2006-2007, we also hope to get funding from the DFID backed Southern Africa Trust on our work with the civil society and the African Union programmes.

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12. **Rwanda Debt Network,**
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13. **Network Movement for Justice & Development, (NMJD)**
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14. **FODEX, CNONG**
Kinshasa, DRC.

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