

**EATUC Strategy Development Forum on
Regional Trade union Gender Mainstreaming
21st - 22nd June 2011 at Olive Gardens Hotel, Nairobi**

**GENDER STRATEGIC PAPER: MOVING TOWARDS PROMOTING GENDER
EQUITY AND INFLUENCING OUTCOMES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

‘Gender’ refers to the socially constructed rather than biologically determined roles of men and women as well as the relationships between them in a given society at a specific time and place. These roles and relationships are not fixed, but can and do change.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1997 defined gender mainstreaming as ‘a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated’.

According to a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report on gender mainstreaming, the needs and priorities of half of humankind have yet to make it to the forefront of the development agenda. Of the world’s 1 billion poorest people, three fifths are women and girls. Of the 960 million adults in the world who cannot read, two thirds are women. Seventy percent of the 130 million children who are not enrolled in school are girls. And with notable exceptions, such as Rwanda and the Nordic countries, women are conspicuously absent from parliaments, making up, on average, only 16 percent of parliamentarians worldwide. Women everywhere typically earn less than men, both because they are concentrated in low-paying jobs and because they earn less for the same work. Although women provide about 70 percent of the unpaid time spent caring for family members, that contribution to the global economy remains invisible. Up to half of all adult women have experienced violence at the hands of their intimate partners. Systematic sexual violence against women has characterized almost all recent armed conflicts and is used as a tool of terror and ‘ethnic cleansing’. Moreover, women and girls are frequent victims of rape in refugee camps. In sub-Saharan Africa, 57 percent of those living with HIV are women, and young women aged 15-24 are at least three times more likely to be infected than men of the same age. Half a million women die and at least 9 million more suffer serious injuries or disabilities from preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

Goal Three of the MDG specifically refers to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. EATUC acknowledges the fact that all of the eight MDGs have a gender dimension that cuts across. Some include gender along with other crosscutting issues such as the environment, HIV and AIDS, good governance, and human rights. There is therefore a strong need for gender analysis

and research in planning, design and implementation of all trade union programs and projects. In order to properly mainstream gender in our daily work, we must focus less on providing equal treatment to men and women (since equal treatment does not necessarily result in equal outcomes), and more on taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure equal outcomes. The empowerment of women can only be achieved by taking into account the relationships between men and women.

It is absolutely necessary to work with like-minded partners to mobilize resources, incorporate gender budgeting into our work and develop good performance indicators for monitoring progress of measures to promote gender equality.

EATUC held a two day workshop with the support of LO-FTF that brought together their Gender focal persons from EATUC affiliates; COTU-Kenya, TUCTA Tanzania, ZATUC Zanzibar, NOTU Uganda, COSYBU Burundi and CECTRA from Rwanda. A representative from EAC, Ms Miganda who is the Principal Gender and Community Development Officer, the gender practitioner Dr. Rose Odhiambo Director, Institute of Women, Gender and Development Studies Egerton University was the main resource person. The main objective of the workshop was to discuss on gender issues and the EAC regional integration and chart out the way forward on how to mainstream gender into all policies, programmes and activities at national and regional levels. EATUC commends its affiliates for efforts to mainstream gender within their unions and for increased commitment; however they commented that a lot needed to be done, as the goal of gender equality takes time and resources.

Participants of the workshop made the following Recommendations and Conclusions:

- From the presentations it was clear that the EAC member states are not at the same level in terms of gender mainstreaming. Therefore a need for gender disaggregated data from all the member states.
- There is a need to relook at the aims and objectives of the EAC regarding gender mainstreaming with regional integration as tool of eradicating poverty and sustainable development.
- Gender mainstreaming has been over looked in important documents such the common market protocol hence it forms one of the pertinent issues of the Social and Employment Charter that EATUC has come up with. Therefore there is a need to establish who is driving the gender equality agenda at the EAC.
- There is still a need for affirmative action in the legal framework and right from the strategic plans development with specific budget allocations and implementation framework with who is to execute, timeline and percent target of achievement, both at national and regional level.
- Identify and document the best practices from national and regional organizations to guide EAC in coming up with best practices in gender mainstreaming.
- Since the member states are not at par, it is important to develop a score card as a way of monitoring and reporting progress of gender mainstreaming at national level and regional level.
- There is still a need for campaigns and awareness raising on the role of gender mainstreaming in the regional integration process.
- Wage review to avoid discrimination on equal pay for equal work done despite the gender.

- Capacity building for EATUC, other stakeholders in mainstreaming gender issues in policies, programs, projects and budget.
- Some of the national trade unions need to review their strategic plans to clearly tackle gender mainstreaming issues at national level. Since it is the member countries that go for the negotiations and meetings at the EAC, it is important for EATUC to play a key role in strengthening tripartism and in offering technical advice to national centers.
- Form a network that will facilitate exchange of ideas between National Centers, EATUC and the EAC on matters of gender mainstreaming. This will also go a long way to ensuring feedback from national centers on deliberations at national level working groups on matters of regional integrations to EATUC.

It is in this regard that EATUC decided to hold a workshop to develop 3 year framework of action that will map the future actions of the organization and that of its affiliates. The affiliates who will collaborate with EATUC in implementing its framework of action are: COTU-Kenya, TUCTA Tanzania, ZATUC Zanzibar, NOTU Uganda, COSYBU Burundi and CECTRA from Rwanda.

The main objectives are as follows:

1. To establish an EATUC gender strategy with the aim of strengthening coordination, effectiveness and efficiency within the organization and among EATUC affiliates;
2. Develop an EATUC Gender policy that will guide the organization's work and assist affiliates to do the same;
3. EATUC to follow up on all EAC processes including gender;
4. Strengthen the capacity of EATUC affiliates by putting in place immediate, medium and long-term measures to achieve gender equity and promote gender mainstreaming;
5. Build partnerships with likeminded organizations in the area of gender mainstreaming;
6. Strengthen tripartism at country level and regional level to promote social dialogue.

Strategies of achieving the above Objectives:

- EATUC and its' affiliates represented by their gender focal persons will design a 3 year plan of action, that will mainstream gender into EATUC's daily operations and systematically assist the affiliates to do the same;
- Develop a Gender policy for the organization and help affiliates to do the same so as to harmonize policies in the East African region;

- Build the capacity of EATUC affiliates on gender mainstreaming and in addressing gender equity concerns through training workshops and seminars, targeting leaders, mentors and their mentees, women and men, with an aim of improving the status of all;
- Give technical support in policy design, guidelines of implementing the policy, legislation review, strategic agenda setting, formulation of strategic plans, internal gender audits, training, material development and proposal writing among others. These should be available whenever requested to ensure that specialized gender expertise is accessible to affiliates;
- In collaboration with unions set up social dialogue platforms/or use existing ones to critically look at major constraints that inhibit women from maximizing their contribution towards national development efforts and map a way forward;
- EATUC will follow up on all EAC processes and discussions including gender to ensure that trade union issues and concerns are raised at different forums and are reflected in their conclusions;
- Build/strengthen partnerships with Co-operating partners such as LO-FTF, ILO, LO-Norway among others, in order to explore opportunities to address some of the new and emerging issues of Gender within the trade union movement and in the EA region;
- EATUC Secretariat in collaboration with its affiliates will conduct a gender audit and come up with gender disaggregated data;
- Develop a database that contains information on gender, these include research, policies developed, EAC protocols among others;
- EATUC will mobilize resources to implement its framework of action and support national centers to implement their plans of actions on gender;
- Develop standardized Monitoring and Evaluation tools with indicators to monitor progress made by EATUC and its affiliates in gender equality and mainstreaming;
- Guide affiliates on how to lobby EAC member countries to follow up and implement international, regional and national commitments made e.g. ILO conventions/recommendations, EAC, ILC outcomes, EAC agreements among others relating to gender issues;
- Train gender focal persons to enhance their skills in all aspects of project management and other emerging issues;
- Promoting access to information, awareness and networking among EATUC affiliates through application of ICT e.g. websites and e-learning.

Conclusion

EATUC will ultimately be accountable for achieving regional results; they in turn will hold their affiliates accountable for ensuring appropriate integration of gender issues into trade union operations at country level. Affiliates are also expected to follow up on their country initiatives and make tangible inputs.