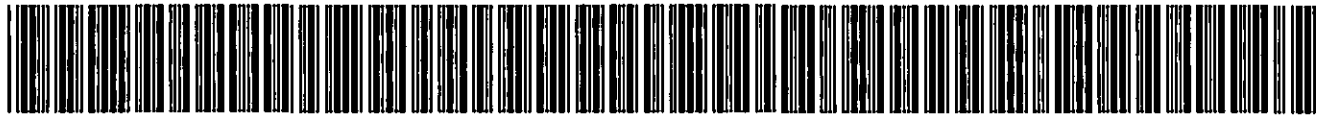


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Daraja

UPDATE

Volume 1 No.1

Spotlight on Civic Education and Elections in Kenya

President Says No To Civic Education

"Kenyans Have Been Voting Since 1963" Kenyans do not need any Civic Education as they have been voting regularly since 1963

This has been repeatedly declared by President Daniel arap Moi and echoed by a number of ministers and the ruling Kenya National Union (KANU) officials.

The president has likened civic educators to commens and women who cheat foreign donors that Kenyans are ignorant so that they may be given money to fund what they the Head of State terms "subversive activities"

In the recent past, many seminars, workshops, theatre activities and even prayer functions have been disrupted by the police and the provincial administration. From Loitokitok, to Nakuru, Busia, Bungoma and Homa Bay, the story has been the same: "civic education functions are illegal meetings" under within the meaning of the Public Order Act

(The letter of the Act actually exempts educational functions)

...And Civic Groups Think Otherwise

Following president's condemnation of civic education in general, and voter education in particular, followed by the dispersal of many educational workshops and seminars by the provincial administration, many organizations of the civil society, have expressed surprise and declared: "If such observations can come from the mouth of the country's chief executive, then we have been targeting a wrong group; the president and senior politicians need civic education more than the ordinary worker and peasant we have been interacting with.

So important is this official stand to civic education groups that it was chosen as the theme of DARAJA's second ordinary General Assembly (Together III) - TO DO OR NOT TO DO CIVIC EDUCATION.

Below are some of the observations made by participants:

"civic education cannot be stopped... as it is necessary for the everyday running of a citizen's life" (Rose Ayugi - Public Law Institute)

"citizens should be able to initiate civic education as they have a lot (of views) to share with each other" (Enid Muthoni - Lela Players)

"If citizens should participate in democratic public affairs, they must do so from a position of knowledge, not ignorance. For example, they need to understand why corruption is bad, or why discriminating against women is bad" (Dr Thomas Hamer - Resident Rep, FES)

"Knowledge is never enough in any society. As things change in society, you require more knowledge to understand the new things coming up." (Dr Hamer)

"Due to huge losses being suffered by NGOs and their funders as a result of disruption of civic education activities, we should make presentations to the government for compensation of taxpayers' money - even if this money comes from taxpayers abroad" (John Munuve - CEO NGO Council)

He Said It!

We can't be neutral when there is contest between freedom and authoritarianism. We cannot be non-partisan when we have to choose between an open society on the one hand and corrupt patronage on the other. Civic groups are committed to the idea of democracy and not to individuals/ parties. Are we supposed to be neutral about the crimes because we are in civic education?

Pheroze Nowrojee - A Nairobi lawyer.

In our quest to help Kenya re-invent itself into a new democratic order, we are not ready to stop at anybody, not even at Moi.

Andiwo obondoh - DARAJA

There is nothing as powerful as unity of purpose. If we do not hang around together we'll be hanged seperately.

Abraham Lincoln - Late US Statesman

Tell Kenyans not to fear, our jails cannot hold a million people.

Mukaru Ng'ang'a - The late KENDA Chairman

She Said It!

Kenyans want to know that when change comes, it will be real change, with new people and new policies that will make a real difference in the way they live.

Charity Ngilu - Opposition presidential candidate.

It is against African culture for a girl to sit on the father's stool.

*Zipporah Kittony - Chair,
Maendeleo ya wanawake Organisation.*

It is sad that women's leadership qualities are only recognised when they are dead.

Moraa Gesichu - Kenya Polytechnic Lecturer.

Democracy Should Be Part of Our Culture

Speech by K. Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary ECA

It is with open arms that I welcome you to Addis Ababa and to our very own United Nations Conference Centre, for this most timely Conference on democracy, Civil Society and Governance in Africa. It is very gratifying to see that so soon after the First Annual African Forum on Governance which ECA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) staged here in July this year, our finest academics, civil society group, and senior civil servants are gathering once again to take up the governance challenge that Africa faces.

There is no question that the world has a right to pass judgement on the generally poor state of Africa's governance. But it is us Africans alone who bear the primary responsibility for improving the situation, with solutions tailored to our peculiar national contexts, faced with the ultimate challenge of eradicating poverty and advancing the socio-economic well-being of the continent's peoples.

The role of civil society in bringing about good governance is an important, not to say critical, dimension to the ongoing debate. We at ECA have recognised that - warts and all - civil society is an actor without whose partici-

pation good governance cannot be achieved. This is why in May this year we convened a regional consultative conference of African NGOs and civil society organisations to lay the foundation for the Governance forum. Subsequently, at United Nations headquarters the same month, I participated in the International Conference on Governance and Sustainable Growth and Equity. As I articulated at the New York Governance Conference, I see six fundamental challenges facing us as we begin to forge a path for Africa in the area of governance and popular participation of civil society.

The FIRST challenge is peace building. Three decades of conflict-- latterly mainly internal in character but also at a certain point state--have devastated a number of African countries, leaving governments, civil society as well as institutions in ruin. We live today with the effects of these conflicts, among them severely damaged infrastructure, weak governmental structure, ethnic tension, landmines, and the proliferation of small arms. All these factors mitigate against lasting peace and stability.

If we accept poverty as the root cause of the social and political

chaos we are witnessing in Africa, then we necessarily accept also that peace is necessary condition of development.

The SECOND challenge is nurturing democracy. The consensus we reached at the governance forum in Addis Ababa was that although democracy is a difficult process requiring vigilance and reinforcement, it is absolutely essential to good governance. The good news is that a number of African leaders have in recent years recognised the importance of non-authoritarian, participatory democratic structures.

The issue now in Africa is not whether to democratise, but how, how soon and in what form. An agenda to bolster democracy was developed in the First Annual African Governance Forum. It includes suggestions for African states to:

Meld successful traditional systems and mechanisms of citizen participation with modern ways.

Strengthen the institutions of democracy

Establish indications of progress towards improving the

Continued on page 5

Resources

The National Council Of Churches Of Kenya

Activities: 1. Education for participatory democracy
2. Production of CE materials
3. Training of trainers
4. Voter education
5. Election Monitoring

Coverage: National

Publications:

a) Books: Responsible Citizenship: Why You should Vote - 100,000 copies (in English, Gikuyu, Kamba, Kiswahili, Luhya, Luo); Multiparty Parliamentary and Local Authority Practice (10,000 copies); Quest for Democracy (10,000 copies); Challenges for Democratic Governance (forthcoming); Democracy In Africa (forthcoming); Our Daily Bread in English and Kiswahili (ca. 1,000,000 copies). b) Posters: "Many Parties One Nation", "Register to Vote for a Good Government, Bad Governments Are Made by People Who Don't Vote"; "Vyama Vingi Vya Jamii Moja"
Contact Person: Samuel Kabwe
Address: Church House, Moi Ave, P.O. Box 45009 Nairobi Tel 338811

Association For Empowerment In Civic Education And Welfare (ACEWE)

Activities:

1. Village workshops
2. Informal learning
3. Civic Education through Chiefs' Barazas
4. Baseline surveys on socio-economic status of target groups.

Coverage: Western Province

Publications:

Papers: "Towards Pragmatic National Civic Education Movement", Participatory Rural Appraisal Learning And Civic Education Dissemination"

Contact Persons: Agnes Sisungu/Barasa Nyukuri
Address: P.O. Box 1 Misikhu, Bungoma

The Youth Human Rights Initiatives (Y-HRI)

Activities:

1. Visiting institutions for civic education
2. Women empowerment campaigns
3. Research.

Coverage: Colleges, Western, Nyanza and Eastern Provinces

Publications:

Seminar papers: "Kenya's Human Rights Record - othing to Smile About", Female Genital Mutilation Oct 95", "The Chief And Rural

Citizens - Friends Or Foes?", Rights Of Accused", "Law On Education", "Role Of parliament In Democracy" **Contact Person:** Henry Onger (Director)
Address: Off Church Road, Ongata Rongai, P.O. Box 78016 Nairobi Tel 334216/340106.

Education For Cultural Change And Economic Advancement (ACCEA)

Activities:

1. Establishment of self-help groups
2. Education for socio-economic advancement
3. Group initiatives for positive change

Coverage: Nyanza Province

Publications:

Books: Cultural books and pamphlets

Contact Person: Maurice Odhiambo

Address: P.O. Box 140 Sawagongo

Women's Network Centre

Activities:

1. Legal Aid
2. Counseling and Guidance
3. Training
4. Health care
5. Study and resource centre

Coverage: Mombasa

Publications: None

Contact Person: Coordinator

Democracy Should Be Part of Our Culture.... from page 3

building blocks of democracy: for example, political liberalisation, transparent systems, the rule of law and human rights and improve democratic structures.

The tasks remains for countries in Africa to further advance their agenda. For many countries, narrow political considerations, personalised power and corruption have undermined the process of democracy and responsive governance. But although I understand that achieving outstanding democracies will be a long-term proposition in some countries, my own view is that the movement should not take forever.

I believe that Africa's civil society should establish an expectation that democracies be universal in Africa. Aside from extreme situations such as the need for emergency action to counter threats to the survival of a state as such, should this goal take more than a decade? I think not.

The THIRD challenge, and something I mentioned at the beginning of my statement, involves the role of civil society. Arguably one of the most crucial issues we face is the question of whether civil society in Africa is equipped to play the key role in bringing about good governance that is expected.

How strong is civil society? Does the concept come out of the West, or does it have a uniquely African character? Can

NGOs, run as they almost invariably are by middle-class elites, truly claim to represent the broad mass of people at various levels of society? Do NGOs represent civil society as a whole, including the marginalised social movements?

Clearly these are loaded questions, and I am sure you will find some of the answers during this conference. What is clear, however, is that civil society is booming in Africa, and already having an impact on democracy and governance. This positive role needs to be strengthened. We at ECA believe we have strategic role to play, which is why in July we opened a Resource Centre for Civil Society.

The Centre strengthen the capacities of African civil society organisations, promote dialogue between them and governments, and facilitate the involvement of civil organisations in conflict resolution, peace-building, and democratisation.

Helping civil society contribute to the maturation of Africa's polity and economy is the continuing aim of the African charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation. The Charter was sponsored by ECA in 1990 and adopted by people's organisation and international agencies as well as by Africa's Heads of State. It views popular participation as both a means and an end, "a fundamental right of the people to fully

and effectively participate in the determination of the decisions which affect their lives at all levels and at all times.

In much of Africa, however, a fundamental transformation of the relationship between the state and civil society is needed if democracies are to ensure and if good governance is to prevail.

Unfortunately, some leaders see civil society organisations as political competitors that need to be controlled rather than fostered. What civil organisations want, however, is legitimisation, recognition, policy dialogues, collaboration in implementing development in appropriate sectors, and political room in which to develop.

The FOURTH challenge is to mainstream women in politics and public administration. In almost all of our countries, the near-exclusion of women from centres of power, whether at the national, community or household level, has entrenched the wide disparities between men and women in economic, social and political spheres. Currently women make up less than 10% of our parliamentarians, and hold an even smaller share of top appointments.

As we come to understand the links between responsive and effective governance and development more fully, we learn that governance that does not represent both sexes is neither participatory nor inclusive and thus cannot move a society for-

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Centre for Governance And Development

At a human rights and democratisation workshop co-organised by the international Commission of jurists- Kenya section, a participant remarked that the workshop was like "bishops preaching to bishops" since the attendance list just reminded you of the last human rights/democratisation workshop you attended.

The workshop was at the safari Park Hotel, Kasarani in September 1993. The other co-organiser of the workshop was the International Centre for Human Rights Development (ICHRD) based in Canada.

Four years down the line, it is apparent that this workshop was different. Its report, *The Hard Road to Uhuru*, identified major stumbling blocks to Kenya's democratisation process. Among these were: the weak civil society, nascent political parties, and weak institutions of governance which were not able to adequately respond to the challenges of transition from autocracy to democracy.

It was this identification of an urgent need to have a comprehensive and long-term programme and democratic development which would transform which would promote transition from the culture of fear, apathy and dictatorship into that of freedom and democracy that led to the establishment of the Centre for Governance and

Development

(CGD) as an autonomous programme of ICJ-Kenya.

The Centre was established with three clear objectives, namely

- institutionalising democratic culture and laying a firm basis for social and economic transformation;

- offering additional forum and opportunity to participate in the process of social change; and

- promoting and harnessing efforts of various pressure/pro-democracy groups in the country with a view to creating a strong civil society.

The CGD works in partnership with other organizations and has three major projects.

First is the Strengthening Of Parliament project which strives to empower legislators and transform parliament into a powerful institution for democratic governance. Under this project is research for expanded information base for MP's and the popular Bills Digest, which critically analyses legal, social and economic implications of bills to be tabled in parliament with a view to building capacity of parliamentarians for parliamentary debates. *Bunge* publication examines the workings of the National assembly and provides a link between parliamentarians and their

constituents as well as promoting clear understanding of their respective roles in the democratisation process. The project is headed by Hon Kiraitu Murungi, the MP for South Imenti.

The gender and Governance project aims at increasing political visibility of women by making sure that their voices are heard at all levels of society from family to national institutions. The project strives to dismantle gender barriers and institutional practices that prevent social, political and economic empowerment of women and promote changes to ensure greater equity, representation and equality between girls and boys and men and women in Kenya. The head of This project is Ms Rose Waruhiu.

Dialogue, the monthly newspaper, is the Centre's flagship and third project. It is a forum for disseminating news and views on human rights, democratisation process and development initiatives locally, regionally and internationally.

CGD Board of Directors comprise Rose Waruhiu (Chair), Kiraitu Murungi, Grace Githu, Murtaza Jaffer, Maina Kiai, Davinder Lamba, Connie Ngondi, Rev Timothy Njoya, Maria Nzomo, while Miriam Kahiga is the acting Executive Director

**Democracy Should Be
Part of Our Culture.... from
page 5**

ward. At the First African Forum on Governance, participants agreed that the absence of women's voices and perspectives has contributed to an impoverished debate, and, often, distorted policies.

The FIFTH challenge is to improve the capacity of Africa's institutions and people for better governance and participation. The many country reports presented at the First African Governance Forum indicates that to sustain good governance, the whole gamut of institutions of governance must be improved, including the legislature, the judiciary, the political parties, and the human rights commissions

and other monitoring organs within civil society.

But I believe we must also strengthen the capacities of people. As the state of Karala, India, has shown us, strong social services and fully functioning democracy can go hand in hand even among the impoverished. Universal education must prepare people to be voters, to participate in public discussions, and to work together across traditional boundaries.

The SIXTH and final challenge involves the ownership of governance reforms. Basic norms of good governance apply universally, but as I said earlier, specific institutions and systems

cannot be imported wholesale. They must be home grown. To be effective, they must become a "lived" experience rather than a "received" experience. Only in this way will the reform process earn sustained commitment and effective leadership. Moreover, key actors in society have to embrace the reforms, buy into them.

At the First Annual Governance forum, more than a dozen African countries reported on the various ways they are designing, implementing and monitoring governance reforms. For example, the Government of Ethiopia has established a task force on good governance. Ghana recently organised a National Workshop on Governance drawing over 200 leaders from all major sectors. And

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ABANTU for Development Reflection Seminar

Engendering the National Budget

- SPEAKER:** Akinyi Nzioki
Gender and Development Advisor, Royal Netherlands Embassy
- FACILITATOR:** Jacintah Makokha
Gender and Development Programme Officer, Friedrich Ebert Foundation
- DATE:** Thursday, 27 November 1997
- VENUE:** ABANTU for Development Offices, Ngong/Ole Dume Road (Hse No.31), Nairobi
- TIME:** 4.00 p.m - 6.00 p.m.

ABANTU for Development
P.O.Box 56241 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel 254 2 570343 Fax 254 2 570668
E mail: abantu@users.africaonline.co.ke

Recent Activities Of Daraja Members

Sept 3-5: Re-training (voter education) workshop at Katito Nyakach organised by the Centre for Legal Education and Aid Networks (CLEAN)

Sept 5-7: Re-training (voter education) workshop at Rangwe, Homa Bay organised by CLEAN

Sept 6: Voter education workshop in Eldoret organised by RECAP/CLARION

Sept 7-13 Para-legal training (voter education) workshop in Homa Bay organised by CLEAN

Sept 9-11: Poll watchers and Election observers seminar at Lodwar organised by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission

Sept 12: INAD Political meeting at Serena Hotel, Nairobi organised by the Civic Resource and Informa-

tion Centre (CRIC)

Sept 13: Voter education Workshop in Siaya organised by RECAP/CLARION

Sept 13: Voter education workshop in Nyamira organised by RECAP/CLARION

Sept 13-15: PLT (voter education) workshop at Chavakali, Vihiga organised by CLEAN

Sept 15-18: Poll watchers and Election observers seminar in Eldoret organised by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission.

Sept 19-20: Re-training workshop at Embu PLN seminar at Kirinyaga PLN organised by CLEAN

Sept 21-24: Workshop on communications organised by the NGO Council and ELCI

Sept 26-28: Re-training workshop at Laikipia PLN, Kilimambogo organised by CLEAN

Sept 20: INAD Women's workshop at Bondo, Siaya organised by CRIC

Sept 21: Legal Education Address: Mnazi Moja Road, P.O. Box 86202 Mombasa organised by CLEAN

Sept 27: Voter education workshops in Central province (venues to be announced) organised by RECAP/CLARION

Sept 27: INAD Women's meeting at St Mary's Pastoral Centre organised by CRIC

Sept 27: Julius Nyerere Peace Award at Lenana School, organised by the Students' Council for Peace

Democracy Should Be Part of Our Culture.... from page 7

Uganda has a very active media and civil society group that monitors and reports on good governance initiatives.

Leaders in a number of other countries are less sure of how much the public should take part in their governance reforms. Again, the questions are less technical and more about the political art of bringing about, with

tolerable risks, systems that encourage new partnerships. A useful approach to such issues is the kind of a peer-learning among top political leaders utilised by the Global Coalition for Africa, which is tackling issues like corruption in politically practical ways.

We at ECA are encouraged by the experience of the First Gov-

ernance Forum. It is anticipated that before each forum, African NGOs will meet to articulate and input their concerns into the main event, in which they will also actively participate. It has been agreed that the event will take place on an annual basis. We hope to see some of you at the second annual African Governance Forum next year in Accra, Ghana.

Thank you for your kind attention and wish you every success in your deliberations.

Thank you

**NEW
DOCUMENT**

Kenya:

DARAJA UPDATE - (Periodical),

Nov. 1997. Vol. ① #①.

Civic Education Elections in Kenya.

① President Says No To
Talks about the various views of for
civic education in Kenya - various
prospectives

② Democracy Should Be Part of Our Culture.
Speech by K. Y. Amoako, Exec. Sec,
ECA.

⑧