

Report on the Fredskorpset (FK) Strategic Meeting at Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
Peace and Gender in the Horn of Africa (PGHA) Thematic Area
11th May, 2009 – 15th May, 2009

The strategic meeting coordinated and organized by Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Head office in Oslo, Norway, brought together coordinator of organizations that will be participating in 2009-2010 round of exchange. The representatives in the meeting, including the participants from the different organizations, were drawn from South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. There were two main thematic areas of discussions: Peace and Gender in the Horn of Africa (PGHA) and Extractive Industries and Ecological Debt.

The organizations represented were:

- a.) Norwegian Church Aid (NCA-Tanzania)- Tanzania
- b.) Norwegian Church Aid (NCA- S/W Africa Division) – Zambia
- c.) Norwegian Church Aid (NCA- Eastern Africa) – Kenya
- d.) Economic Justice Network (FOCCISA) – South Africa
- e.) Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ) – Zambia
- f.) IDASA – South Africa
- g.) African Forum and Network on Debt and Development(AFRODAD) – Zimbabwe
- h.) EOC-DICAC – Ethiopia
- i.) FECCLAHA – Kenya

The aims of the meeting were:

- a.) Deliberate and unpack the two thematic areas of focus to facilitate the participant's work in their host country;
- b.) Create a platform upon which the participant and the supervisors can meet and discuss the work tasks and expectations;
- c.) A platform upon which the different organizations can network and exchange ideas on the two thematic areas.

The PGHA thematic focus consisted of FECCLAHA, EOC-DICAC, NCA-Oslo, and NCA-Eastern Africa. The following were deliberated:

- a.) Understanding Peace
- b.) Understanding Gender
- c.) Existing Strategies: The Tamar Campaign
- d.) Existing Strategies in Gender and Peace Work

In addition to discussing thematic areas, administrative issues related to the exchange programme were deliberated. These include:

- a.) Participant Agreements;
- b.) Code of Conduct;
- c.) Security plans;
- d.) Annual work plans for the participants.

All representatives were given an opportunity to share information about their organizations and their work in the region.

Set-Back within the PGHA Thematic Area:

- ✚ It was brought to our notice that the participant from EOC-DICAC to work in NCA-Norway office will not be joining the round of exchange due to difficulties in obtaining a visa.
- ✚ FECCLAHA coordinator did not get sufficient time to deliberate with the participant from EECMY coming to FECCLAHA, as her visa was also delayed and therefore she joined the discussion later.

- ✚ The FK supervisor of EECMY was unable to attend the meeting as he suddenly fell ill days before he travelled.

Summary Advocacy Points from the PGHA thematic area of focus:

- a.) Adopting gender mainstreaming strategy within the different organizations – For the large organizations, ensuring that aspects of women are included in the different programmes/projects/desks.
- b.) Need for reflection/discussions on Gender & Religion:
 - Challenging the church to take up her prophetic voice in addressing gender in the Churches;
 - Inclusion of gender in theological institutions
 - Development of theological materials to facilitate discussion on gender in churches;
- c.) Deliberating on link between Gender and Peace in the organizations represented;
- d.) Encouraging deliberations on redemptive masculinity as a strategy to get the men involved in addressing GBV.

At the end of the meeting the following were achieved within the PGHA thematic area:

- a.) The participants from participating organizations met with their supervisors and discussed the participant agreements;
- b.) The participants were able to unpack and break down their work tasks so that it is clearer what is expected of them when they go to their host organizations;
- c.) The participants were able to map out joint activities which they will do in Ethiopia (Production of a Gender and Development Theological Reflection Manual);
- d.) The participants were able to draft a work plan for their time in their host country;
- e.) The extractive industries and ecological debt group were challenged to include the gender perspective in their deliberations and activities.

Conclusion:

The meeting was relevant for both the supervisors and the participants as it offered a platform upon which both could meet and clarify on job tasks at the host organization. In addition the participants, guided by the supervisors, were able to unpack the work tasks as listed in the participant agreement. This for them formed a basis upon which they will carry out their tasks upon reaching the host organizations.

From the presentation I made on Tamar Initiative the following gives a list of some suggestions received:

- a.) The need to reach out to theological training institutions and challenge them to consider the gender perspective in their curriculum;
- b.) The need to partner with other organizations especially in addressing the plight of children as regards GBV and penetrating to schools.