

AFRICAN WOMEN’S STUDIES CENTRE
NEWSLETTER,
JANUARY - JUNE 2013

FOOD SECURITY PROJECT “ZERO TOLERANCE TO HUNGER”

“Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996).

Food insecurity refers to both the inability to secure an adequate diet today (i.e. hunger) and the risk of being unable to do so in the future. People who are already poor are vulnerable to hunger because they lack the resources to meet their basic needs on a daily basis (they face chronic food insecurity).

They are also highly vulnerable to even small shocks that will push them closer to destitution, starvation, even premature mortality. People who are not poor now but face the risk of future poverty are vulnerable to hunger if these risks materialize and they are inadequately protected against them (they face transitory food insecurity).

Vulnerability to food insecurity operates at several levels – national, household and individual – and social protection responses are available at each level. Equally, food insecurity and vulnerability intensify in the absence of social protection.

African Women’s Studies Centre has been exclusively carrying out a research with grants from the Government of Kenya to document information on women’s knowledge, experiences, attitudes, perceptions and practices in relation food security/insecurity in 20 Counties. This project is been carried out in two phases namely; **Documentation of Women’s Experiences** and **Baseline Survey**. Documentation of women’s experiences was implemented in two phases; the first in nine counties namely; Kiambu, Nairobi, Mombasa, Baringo, Bomet, Kajiado, Laikipia, Nakuru and Makueni. On 11th June 2013, a team left for phase II of data collection in the following six Counties; Kisii,

Kirinyaga, Kwale, Bungoma, Kisumu and Elgeyo Marakwet. The outcome of the fieldwork will be developed into a report, which will be forwarded to the Parliamentary Budget Committee. The Baseline survey will be conducted by AWSC in collaboration with the Kenya Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). The survey will be carried out in 20 counties; among them are Taita Taveta, Turkana, Nandi, Trans Nzoia, Migori and Isiolo. A pilot exercise of the baseline survey has been undertaken by AWSC and KNBS in Machakos and Murang'a. The main Baseline Survey is meant to commence on 22nd June 2013.

Worth noting is the fact that all the research assistants in this project are students at the University of Nairobi, hence the Centre's commitment to build capacity of our students.



The Director, African Women's Studies Centre - Prof. Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira poses for a photo before flagging off the team for Documentation of Women's experiences phase II on 11th June 2013.

PRESENTATION OF BUDGET PROPOSALS

Beginning 2012, AWSC has been participating in the national budgetary process. In the financial year 2012/2013, the Centre was able to present budget proposals on food

security. Following this, the parliamentary budgetary committee allocated the Centre 80 million Kenya shillings to access the food security/insecurity situation in Kenya. The Centre also lobbied for an increase in funds in the Agriculture sector from the current 4% to the minimum of 10% of GDP as proposed in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme Partnership Platform (CAADDP) and Maputo Declaration, as well as increasing cash transfers to enhance food security in the 2013/2014 budget year. In June 2013 this proposal was presented to the Budget and Appropriations Committee headed by Rev. Mutava Musyimi at the KICC.

AFRICAN WOMEN'S STUDIES CENTRE LAUNCH

The Centre was officially launched on 31st May 2013. The AWSC Board held its inaugural meeting on that morning and the Vice Chancellor later appointed Dr. Eddah Gachukia as the chair of the Board. Later that afternoon, Narc-Kenya party leader Hon. Martha Karua launched the Centre and the DVC Academic Affairs, Prof. Henry Mutoro launched AWSC's journal. The colourful event took place at the famous lecture hall, Education theatre II. Also present at the launch was Dr. Eddah Gachukia, scholars from various universities, students and women leaders.



Members of the AWSC Board



Free-Traveling Theatre students performing at the Launch



Hon. Martha Karua giving her speech at the Launch. Behind her is a jovial Dr. Margaret Hutchinson

SLUM UPGRADING AND PREVENTION POLICY

The AWSC has since the year 2012 become partners and stakeholders with the Ministry of housing in developing the Slum Upgrading and Prevention Policy. The AWSC team is in charge of the development of socio-economic sector of the policy together with other stakeholders. The team was inaugurated at the Egerton University in Njoro on 30th October - 1st November 2012. The objective was to determine main issues contributing to the current situation on the slum, causative factors and remedial measures including ongoing initiatives. The AWSC team has been able to contribute immensely through the socio-economic thematic group. Prof. Tabitha Kiriti Ng'ang'a was elected the resource person while Dr. Wanjiru Gichuhi was nominated the Convener and Gideon Ruto the Rapporteur for the social-economic thematic group. Several activities have been ongoing since the inauguration and this include; Development of road map to slum upgrading and prevention policy, Desk study, Field visit to various towns to authenticate the issues

on slums as well as several stakeholder workshops and retreats to discuss and present on the draft policy.



Inaugural Workshop of the Slum-Upgrading and Prevention Policy at Egerton University, Njoro on 30th Nov. 2012



African Women's Studies Centre Representatives to the Ministry of Housing Development of Slum-Upgrading and Prevention Policy. From left: Prof: Tabitha Kiriti Ng'ang'a-Resource person, Dr. Wanjiru Gichuhi-Convener, Mr. Gideon Ruto- Rapporteur