

## **7/7/7 The Halfway Point for the Millennium Development Goals**

### **A Civil Society Evaluation of the Global Partnership on Aid, Trade and Debt in Uganda.**

#### **What is UCSD?**

The Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD) is a network of more than 30 active environment and development NGOs dedicated to coordinate advocacy and lobby work around issues and commitments made by world governments towards sustainable development, inspired by the Civil Society Project for preparation of the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.

UCSD's main objective is to increase public participation and civil society's capacity to undertake advocacy with the national government and other stakeholders to influence decisions and actions that are geared towards implementation of resolutions and commitments that Ugandan (alongside other world) leaders made in the Johannesburg Summit. These decisions and commitments must be done at the national, regional and international level.

Through the Uganda MDG/GCAP Coalition, UCSD is glad to be associated with the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) that comprise civil society activists from across the world representing national coalitions, trade unions, faith based organizations, national and international NGOs, human rights organizations, youth groups and women's organizations. GCAP demands for among other things, trade justice, a major increase in the quantity and quality of aid and financing for development; and debt cancellation (more: [www.whiteband.org](http://www.whiteband.org))

#### **It is the midpoint for achieving the Millennium Development Goals!**

July 7, 2007 is the midway point for achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – signed up by Heads of State and Government in New York, 6 to 8 September 2000. Therefore, this is a historic opportunity for civil society to hold their political leaders to account and to challenge them to speed progress towards meeting and exceeding these goals. In the week leading up to 07-07-07 and for some days after, GCAP campaigners in 40 countries are gathering at different events to raise awareness amongst the public of the current state of progress in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals, for which UCSD would like to contribute through its report findings on the progress of MDG 8 in Uganda.

#### **Part of Global Sustainability Watch Network - Civil Society in search of sustainable development**

UCSD is part of the Sustainability Watch; a network of civil society organizations in 15 countries in the global South, whose principle aim is to improve the ability of CSO

networks to engage in advocacy holding their national governments and other stakeholders accountable to their commitments to the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and to ensure that national legislative frameworks are pro-poor. **The 15 SusWatch countries are, in Africa: Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe; in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua; and in Asia: Philippines, Nepal, Indonesia, and Vietnam**

## **Sustainability Watch Report 2006: in search of financing sustainable development in Uganda**

*A one percent increase in developing countries share of world exports could lift 128 million people out of poverty – Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)*

Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development is part of the Sustainability Watch (SusWatch) network<sup>1</sup>, the national networks publish National Sustainability Watch Reports, leading to advocacy at national and international levels. The SusWatch network has adopted the MDG approach using targets and indicators as a tool for civil society to effectively monitor the international, regional and national progress and compliance to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

The first National Sustainability Watch Report (NSWR), published in 2005, focused on *Implementation Barriers to Sustainable Development in Uganda*, a report that has provided opportunities and deepened interest among participating organisations on the MDG process. As an outcome of the NSWR-2005, UCSD found that one of the barriers to sustainable development in Uganda is related to sustainable financing in terms of flows and low levels of savings from trade. This has rendered the various environmental funds (National Environmental Fund, Wildlife Fund, Land Fund, National Tree Fund and the Desertification Fund) non operational. This ‘missing gap’ prompted UCSD to dwell more on MDG 8 (Aid, Trade and Debt) which aims at securing the financial resources for achieving the other 7 MDGs (*please see Box 1 below*).

It is important to note that whereas national progress has been reported on all MDGs, the progress towards achieving MDG 8 for Uganda, has not been reported on. For example, the Uganda Country MDG Report 2003 did not adequately report on MDG 8 due to lack of specific national targets.

As a result, this report made no detailed assessment of MDG 8 was done for the other seven MDGs, despite the theory that MDG 8 will determine, to a large extent, the successful achievement of the first seven MDGs by 2015 in most, if not all, developing countries (UNDP Bureau for Development policy, June 2003).

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<sup>1</sup> For more information please visit: [www.suswatch.org](http://www.suswatch.org)

### **Box 1: MDG 8 (Global partnership for Development)**

There are 7 MDG targets under this Goal, though Uganda has no specific targets for this goal. While the first seven goals are about monitoring the improvements in the quality of lives of the people, this last MDG is critical to the realization of the first 7 MDGs. The targets under this Goal are:

1. Develop further an open rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. This includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally.
2. Address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries. This covers tariff and quota free access for least-developed countries' exports, an enhanced programme of debt relief for Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous Official Development Assistance (ODA) for countries committed to poverty reduction.
3. Address the special needs of landlocked countries.
4. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long run.
5. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for the youth.
6. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.
7. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

MDG 8 covers aspects regarding sources of financing development in Uganda i.e. the need to have a fair and transparent trading system that will help Uganda access international markets, debt relief to allow more resources to stay in the country to fund development activities, and increased ODA assistance by the developed countries.

*Source: Uganda MDG Country Report (UNDP, 2003).*

Prompted by the above, UCSD carried out a study starting by late 2006, and now wishes to present its findings in the National Sustainability Watch Report (NSWR-2006) that puts more emphasis on MDG 8 and its linkage to other goals most especially the goal on *Poverty Reduction* and the Goal on *Environmental Sustainability*. This report is a result of an investigative study that involved CSOs & their constituencies, policy makers at national & local levels, the academia, rural communities and opinion leaders among others. The report was subjected to a validation workshop for UCSD members and partners, which has provided useful inputs and comments that have been incorporated.

As we approach the midpoint for achieving the MDGs we hope that this report will contribute to a reflection and more candid evaluation of progress towards the MDG 8 targets in Uganda by Government and all development actors.

## Key highlights and recommendations from UCSD's NSWR (2006)

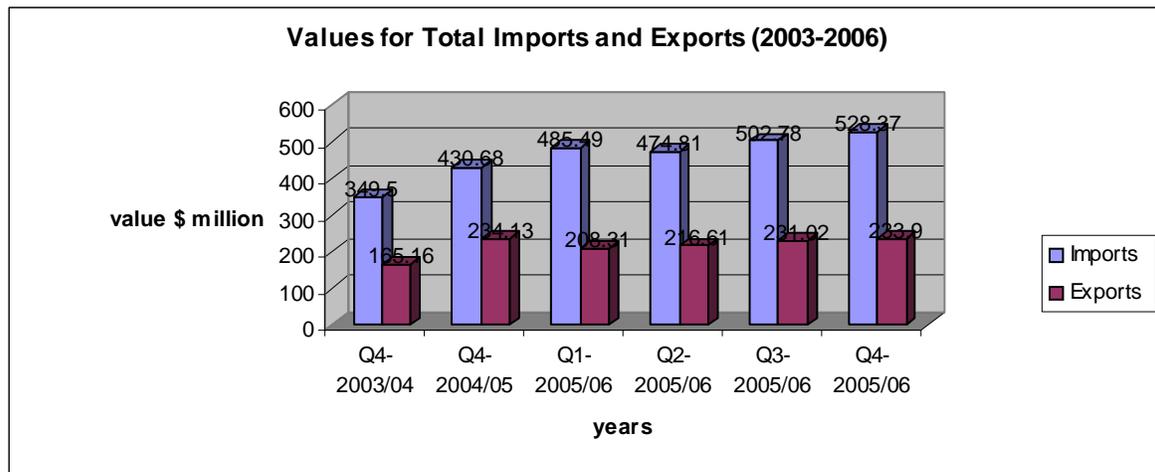
- **Poor Trade performance: Moving beyond production of primary commodities and the need to access foreign markets.**

*In 1960, Africa was a net exporter of food; today the continent imports one-third of its grain – UN Millennium Project*

As Chart 1 indicates, Uganda still experiences a steady upsurge in the value of imports and more or less stagnation in the values of exports, which indicates a long way in terms of attaining the trade target of MDG 8. However, strengthening Uganda's capacity in terms of export earnings is jeopardized by policy inconsistency and by domestic supply side constraints such as poor infrastructure and road networks.

In order to offset the above, Uganda urgently needs to address its domestic constraints that hinder the healthy development of local industries. This would help the Ugandan producers to move beyond the production of mere primary commodities characterized by low, fluctuating, volatile prices towards value added and processed goods.

**Chart 1: Values for Total Imports and Exports (2003-2006)**



*Source: Based on data from Bank of Uganda Quarterly Economic Report September 2006, Vol. 03/2006*

The Ugandan government should move fast towards technological and infrastructure upgrading of all the sectors of the economy, especially through the import of capital goods and equipment, thereby increasing opportunities for value addition and productivity, while attaining internationally accepted standards of quality. This is one way to penetrate foreign markets and reduce on trade imbalances.

*Due to over-liberalization and a lack of appropriate flanking policies, Uganda has not been able to industrialize. Uganda urgently needs increased supply-side capacity to be in a position to respond to market access opportunities. An Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) must, to be meaningful for Uganda, facilitate the removal of Uganda's wide range of supply-side constraints, including inappropriate infrastructures and the limited capacities of Uganda's workforce, its businesses, institutions and production - **Ugandan Non-State Actors on the Progress of the Eastern and Southern Africa EPA Negotiations with the EU, Colline Hotel,***

In order to address its general horizontal supply-side constraints, Uganda should negotiate comprehensive commitments through the WTO for targeted and specific technical and to boost infrastructure development, manufacturing competitiveness, and information and communication technologies for improved access to market information.

*We are also deeply concerned about the fact that past and current trade preferences benefiting Uganda have not triggered an adequate supply-side response of Uganda's productive sector [...]. The Ugandan government must, therefore, put in place the necessary rural and industrial development structures to provide suppliers – particularly the small and vulnerable – with the required support and incentives. We are convinced that this can be achieved through a combination of a reorientation in Uganda's overall economic policy, a reallocation of already available funds, and through additional resources - **Ugandan Non-State Actors on the Progress of the Eastern and Southern Africa EPA Negotiations with the EU, Colline Hotel, Mukono, 8 March 2007***

- **Localize and democratize trade negotiations**

Civil society in Uganda should continue to localize and democratize the global trade negotiations. CSOs should gear-up to engaging the committee that represents the interface of public-private partnership in trade policy formulation in the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI) through the Inter-Institutional Trade Committee (IITC) so as to ensure that trade policy is pro-poor. A pro-poor trade policy can be secured through a three-fold approach: *ensuring flow of information; public consultations; and feedback to the public.* The most affected members of the Ugandan community need to be given the opportunity to express their views on trade.

- **Protect Uganda's natural resource base to sustain economic growth**

*Many of the resources managed by the Environment and Natural Resource sector, such as wildlife, forest reserves, natural water bodies and wetlands, are held by Government in trust for the people of Uganda under article 237 of the 1995 Constitution. It is of particular importance that Government honors this trust and resists any interference by vested interests. [...] Uganda's economic growth and its sustainability will depend on how well the environment and natural resources are managed and used. – **Poverty Eradication Action Plan, 2004/5 – 2007/8***

The government should harness improvement of small-scale agricultural production systems by ensuring an increase in the use of sustainable agriculture techniques and also the protection of surrounding natural habitat. There should be further efforts by government towards the promotion of forest management and protection. Forest handovers to private investors need to be revisited. For instance the case of Butamira Forest Reserve which was allocated to Kakira Sugar Works for sugarcane growing and the recent controversial proposal to degazette parts of Mabira forest, which amounts to violation of the national constitution of Uganda and other natural resource conservation sectoral policies.

The Ugandan Government should strengthen its institutions and governance in order to ensure capacity building in terms of enhancing the resilience of local communities to adapt to the current environmental crisis such as long-term droughts. In addition, the issue of funding for environmental institutions needs to be given priority (UCSD, 2005). Furthermore, government institutions need to improve intradepartmental coordination and ensure improvement in policy governance and gender equality.

▪ **Enabling communities to access food through coherent strategies**

National strategies on the right to adequate food should seek to empower communities and facilitate enabling environments, which clearly requires the involvement of civil society. Empowerment is integral to any strategy that moves away from the benevolence model of food-aid and, instead, emphasizes enabling environments that support people in feeding themselves.

The formulation and implementation of national strategies for food security requires full compliance with the principles of accountability, transparency, people's participation and decentralization. There should be consultations where people's views are considered in the course of action. As a matter of fact, policies like the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) do not yet fully embrace such principles as they are based on top-down implementation approaches.

In order for food security related interventions and policies to contribute towards gender equity, the gender dimensions of agriculture production and profitability should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the women and men. The issues of ownership of productive resources including land rights, and access to micro credit need to be addressed.

*For more information about the National Sustainability Watch Report 2006, please contact:*

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UCSD is a membership CSO network with a mission to contribute to sustainable development through follow up of the Johannesburg summit outcomes and subsequent global declarations in Uganda.

The following organizations have participated in preparation of the forthcoming National Sustainability Watch Report (2006), from which this summary statement has been compiled:

Abantu for Development, Agency for Environment and Wetlands (AEW), Albertine Rift Conservation Society (International Network Secret. for Sustainability Watch Project), Uganda Bahá'í Community, Climate and Development Initiatives, Consumer Education Trust of Uganda (CONSENT), ECOVIC (Uganda Chapter), Environmental NGO Lobby Group (ENGOLOG), Junior Chambers International, Kikandwa Environment Association (KEA), MS Uganda, National Adult Education Association (NAEA), National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), Rural Development and Media Communications (RUDMEC), Students Partnership Worldwide (SPW – Uganda), Uganda Biodiversity Network (UBN), Uganda Environment Education Foundation (UEEF), Uganda Fish Development Association (UFDA), Uganda Gender Resource Centre (UGRC), Youth Watch

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