

ABANTU – ROWA @: Enhancing Women's Voices in Policy spaces

18th November 2010

Accra Ghana

Ten Years of ABANTU: Perspective from Kenya

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A Presentation by Dr. Dawa during the ABANTU @ 10 Celebrations on 18th Nov 2010, in Accra Ghana

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Introduction

- ▶ Africa is an exceptional continent!
 - The richest – Greatly endowed with natural resources
 - Minerals, Weather, People
 - The poorest – The image of poor starving children.
 - Social Economic indexes :
 - Over 60% of the population live below the poverty line
 - Over 80% of the countries are either in conflict, emerging form conflict or has looming conflict
 - We are 53 countries in total and almost all of us fall in the first 100 most corrupt countries of the world
 - We share the worlds heaviest burden of preventable diseases – D&V, RTI, malaria, HIV/AIDS.
 - The miracle of birth is astonishing, humbling, and wonderful to behold! Yet, in Africa, the Maternal Mortality ratio is 1: 16..... In the dev. World the MMR is 1: 7000
- ▶ This is a Problem! an African Problem!

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About ABANTU for Development

- ▶ 1991 – A group of women in the Diaspora
 - There for different reasons (political, economical, educational, etc)
 - All believed in Africa – especially on the African people, and desired to impact on her development.
 - Thematic areas of Interest – Poverty, Conflict, Governance and Health
 - Development from a Gender Perspective

- ▶ ABANTU means “People” in many African languages (17) and it symbolizes ABANTU’s People Centered Philosophy

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About ABANTU – ROESA

- Established in 1995.
- Office based in Nairobi, Kenya

contacts:

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- ▶ **Our vision** is a world in which African women and men are equal and equitable partners at all levels of economic, political and social development
- ▶ **Our Mission** is to empower African people, particularly women, to participate in decision-making on issues that impact on their lives, at local, national, regional and international levels.
- ▶ **Our slogan:** Women and men working together for Development
- ▶ **Our Identity:** ABANTU is an organization of people who believe that gender disparity is an injustice, contributes to poverty, fosters bad governance and is a major hindrance to sustainable development.
- ▶ Although an independent network, ABANTU forges strategic alliances with others in order to advance her cause.

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▶ Our Programmes:

- Gender and Good Governance;
- Gender and Sustainable Peace
- Gender and Health
- Gender and Wealth Creation;

- Institutional Development of ABANTU
 - Internships
 - Spirit of “lifting others as we climb”
 - Courses:
 - International Certification/Diploma in Teaching and Training by City and Guilds, UK

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Achievements:

Gender and Governance

Kenya – the New constitution:

- Bill of Rights – Basic rights are human rights campaign (Health, Water, Housing, Education, etc)
 - Devolution of Governance & Resources – Rural vs. Urban
 - Women and Political Leadership
-
- Regionally – Solemn Declaration on Gender Parity
 - Engendering AU structures and Process
 - Through the Gender is my agenda campaign network, (GIMAC), keeping the women's voices alive in the AU biannual summits. – irrespective of the theme

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Gender and Sustainable Peace

- Regionally
 - International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)
 - Horn of Africa – IGAD in Djibouti
 - AU – Res 1325
 - Congo – Global walk for women – in solidarity with the rape survivors
- Kenya – Post election violence 2007/8
 - Immediate Practical needs – “stop the violence!” voice
 - Women’s involvement in the peace negotiations and peace sustainability processes

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Gender and Health

- Kenya
 - Linking Gender to vulnerability of HIV infection amongst communities(traditional, rural pastoralists, fishing communities and/or modern urban communities)
 - Mitigating against the effects of HIV/AIDS – the impact of HIV/AIDs on the triple role of women

- Region
 - Recent work on Maternal Mortality

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Gender and Wealth Creation

- Engendering the National Budgets
 - Kenya Network
 - East African Network
- Increasing access to markets
 - Capacity building
 - General business skills
 - Adding value to products
 - Exposure to local, national and International markets
 - Physical Exhibitions
 - Internet business
- Engendering the MDGs
 - The East African Caravan

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The East African Caravan

Purpose – Create momentum

Objectives:

Have a conversation with the People of East Africa

Listen to them ...and their experiences of maternal mortality

Talk with them – share our message

Provide basic services

Haematinincs (blood boosters)

Anti-helminths (de-wormers)

Sanitary pads

Advocacy – Amplify their voices –

Share their stories

Advocacy Petition

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E. A. Caravan in the context of:

- ▶ Who killed Hellen Nabisawa?
 - The 3 causes of maternal mortality
 - The 3 delays
 - The 5 toos

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E. A. Caravan in the context of:

- ▶ The African Women's Decade and CARMMA –
 - Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal mortality in Africa
- ▶ The AU July 2010 summit – in Kampala
 - Re-commitment of the Abuja Declaration –allocation of the 15% National budgets to Health care
- ▶ The MDG Review
 - Allocation of 28 million USD new monies to maternal health

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Conclusion and Recommendation

ABANTU –ROESA has contributed significantly in the internal development processes of the people of Eastern and Southern Africaand has to continue to do so.

ABANTU has the capacity, mandate and even the responsibility to also impact on Africa's external challenges

(eg. the unfair trade policies, the rampage of the continents natural resources, the importation of small arms that continue to fuel our internal conflicts, the massive brain drain that makes it impossible for the continent to retain her professionals, etc, etc etc).....

.....and it is my desire that ABANTU–ROESA and ABANTU –ROWA together with our partners and our networks, strive to consolidate our strengths and strategize to advocate for Africa beyond our borders

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Asante

(Thank you)

