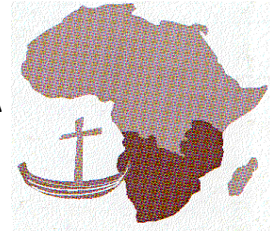


**THE ECONOMIC JUSTICE NETWORK OF FOCCISA**



**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION EJN ACTIVITIES  
(2003-2009)**



**CORAT AFRICA**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Economic Justice Network (EJN) was set up in 1997 by the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA) to assist churches to work together for economic justice. EJN's mission is to strengthen the commitment of the Church in its advocacy work on economic justice and to act as a catalyst for engaging people in the promotion of just economic and social structures. It also seeks to establish mechanisms to raise the experience and concerns of the marginalised and the poor on the agenda of the Church and in society in general. In particular EJN mandate is to contribute to the promotion of economic and social justice in Southern Africa by working with Christian churches in the SADC region in poverty reduction activities focusing on debt, budget monitoring, trade and development, food security and advocacy with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the activities, results and impact of EJN's work on trade, debt and finance, food security and SADC in relation to its primary stakeholders the NCCs of FOCCISA. The evaluation further expected to assess the particular relationship between the EJN Office and the 11 NCCs (FOCCISA) including the ownership question (how involved are the NCCs and Steering Committee) of the programmatic areas. Specifically, the evaluation sought to:

- a) To evaluate the relevance, impact and effectiveness of EJN's work over the last six years.
- b) To evaluate how the four focus areas of EJN is taken up and acted upon by the members NCCs of EJN.
- c) To evaluate EJNs relevance and impact as perceived by other networks or formations in Southern Africa, Africa and internationally including funding partners.
- d) To evaluate whether the role of EJN is relevant and appropriate for FOCCISA or whether it should change?
- e) To propose recommendations to strengthen the work of EJN

## 1. KEY FINDINGS

### 1.1 Key Achievements:

Although EJM program objectives are process and change oriented with real impact taking long to be realized apart from the numeric outputs such as the number of workshops held, the organization has realized significant achievements over the last five years.

- a) As an institution, EJM has grown. It was reported that five years ago, there was no difference of the head from the tail. There were no written policies or guidelines, no constitution, and no conditions of service. There was no strategic plan and the scope of EJM's work was open ended. EJM was more accountable to development partners who appeared to be the real owners of EJM than the NCC while the interaction between EJM and NCC was mainly through workshops.
- b) The EJM approach has also shifted from vertical to horizontal engagement in relation to NCC with attempts to share roles and responsibilities between EJM secretariat and NCCs.
- c) EJM has improved the level of involvement of National Christian Councils on economic justice issues. It has pushed the churches to become active advocates for trade justice, food security, debt cancellation and highlighted issues around ecological debt.
- d) Through networking and lobbying EJM has linked important actors and stakeholders together and made the churches a moral voice to be taken seriously on complex economic justice issues and development in Southern Africa.
- e) EJM has not only become an important and influential voice on behalf of Southern African churches on issues of debt, trade and food security, it has also been able to make the economic justice agenda an important priority for church councils and churches in the Southern Africa region.
- f) EJM has also been an important focal point for North-South exchange and sharing of joint advocacy agendas and a reference point to access regional church constituency. Staff of EJM, in particular the Director, have also contributed with Southern perspectives and knowledge to the lobbying work that Northern partners undertake in relation to their governments and the EU, which has been highly appreciated.
- g) A major achievement has been the partnership EJM has fostered with other civil society platforms. Notably, there is the regional forum comprising EJM, and the regional apex organisations for NGOs and Trade Unions, partnerships that are beginning to have impact on policy making within the SADC region.

## **2. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE OF EJN**

The relevance of EJN draws from the context of its work. The context remains hostile in many respects as highlighted below:

- (a) Essentially EJN continues to operate in a complex, dynamic and ever changing environment, which has direct bearing on its agenda, role and mandate. Over the past decade, the economic situation globally has worsened with rising cases of poverty, unemployment and inequality.
- (b) Within the FOCCISA region, although there is relative political stability with most of the countries professing democracy, they are mostly characterized by weak institutions to consolidate and solidify the culture of democratic governance.
- (c) The neo-liberal forces driven by globalization are also negatively impacting on the economies with all the countries in the region experiencing rising budgetary deficits, debilitating debt and deteriorating terms of trade.
- (d) Common in all FOCCISA countries are issues of bad governance and corruption, under-development, socio-economic injustice, economic inequity, widespread poverty, social exclusion, marginalization and changing environmental and ecological conditions.

In light of the above, the mandate of EJN of contributing to the promotion of economic and social justice in Southern Africa by working with Christian churches in the SADC region remains relevant.

## **3. EJN STRATEGIC IDENTITY AND FOCUS**

The strategic role of EJN is highly appreciated while its statements of vision, mission and objectives are considered relevant. What remains unclear, is the issue of whether EJN is a network or a technical facility/think tank of FOCCISA on economic justice. There is need to harmonise the various perceptions like “EJN is a unique ecumenical mechanism on economic justice in the region”; “EJN is technically a think tank and resource institution of FOCCISA on economic justice”; “EJN is a Churches’ economic forum that should enable churches to interrogate and influence economic policy and development in the region; EJN plays a key complimentary role to other civil society groups and church formations involved in economic justice.

#### **4. EJN STRATEGIC ROLE AND FOCUS**

Expectations of the role of EJN are diverse and need to be harmonised. EJN remains a critical organ of FOCCISA with the primary mandate of profiling and enhancing the potential of FOCCISA as a champion of value based economic development. **It should service**, support and build the capacity of NCCs on economic justice; mobilize and equip NCCs with knowledge and evidence on economic justice and facilitate advocacy and support NCCs and churches to advance the interest and courses of the poor and marginalized communities.

“In general, those interviewed were of the view that EJN can indeed become the all important rallying point and technical resource for individuals, NCCs, international partners, churches, civil society and governments in economic justice in the region”.

#### **5. RELEVANCE OF EJN APPROACH**

The approach, strategies and tools adopted by EJN are largely effective, adaptable and successful especially at the regional and international levels. These include capacity building, advocacy, networking, information dissemination and exchange and research. Through these strategies, EJN has today grown to become widely recognized and visible platform in economic justice in SADC region. It has established linkages and global network of associates in -, governments, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, professional associations, churches and ecumenical organizations, community based groups and civil society in general to champion economic justice agenda in the region. Aspects that require improvement include:

- (a) The programming approach could be more gender sensitive with improved capacity in gender analysis.
- (b) The program management approach could be made more results and rights based. It was suggested that EJN needs to improve its program management by adopting the Logical Framework approach with clear and focused multi level objectives, indicators and detailed strategies/activities.
- (c) Developing a shared strategic program framework linked with the NCCs frameworks. For example not all countries have EJ programs and desks.
- (d) Improvement in monitoring, evaluation, reporting and follow up mechanisms targeting NCCs, churches and policy/decision makers.

#### **6. RELEVANCE OF EJN TO BENEFICIARIES**

All the respondents were unanimous that EJN activities are relevant to the beneficiaries especially in areas of capacity building, research and information exchange, promotion of economic literacy and networking and collaboration amongst the NCCs, and partner

organizations. Nearly all the NCCs agreed that they are now able to articulate issues in the focal areas of EJN's work such as debt, trade, EPAs, advocacy, food security, budget monitoring. Key areas for improvements include:

- (a) The need for more appropriate tools for program targeting of the different levels and categories of beneficiaries.
- (b) Ensuring that the benefits accruing from EJN activities to NCCs are trickling down to the churches and communities. At the same time, even if the benefits trickled down, it was pointed out that EJN has an inadequate system and capacity to document, follow up, monitor and evaluate the impact of its programs on the ground.
- (c) While some members complained that EJN is more identified with CSOs than churches and that most churches are not aware of EJN and its activities it was also pointed out that NCCs on their part need to be more proactive and to involve their member churches more strongly in economic justice issues and activities.

## **7. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM FRAMEWORK**

Although EJN's four programme areas namely debt and finance; food security; trade and development and SADC policy advocacy) appeared not to be founded upon a pre-existing strategic plan, they are nevertheless aligned to the corporate objectives of the organization. Without a strategic plan therefore, EJN develops and implements annual program plans. In recent months though, EJN has started the process of developing a three-year results-orientated strategic plan.

### **7.1 Revisit the Program Implementation Approach**

While as part of its strategy, EJN has pursued some of its programs through NCCs structures, it has largely retained implementation functions with little if any dependence on the resources of the NCCs. If EJN was a network, it should essentially facilitate NCCs to implement program activities at the national level while retaining central implementation functions at the regional level. What appeared to be missing is a set of guidelines in terms and procedures for delegation of implementation functions of any given activity to NCCs.

### **7.2 Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

While EJN M&E framework has been inadequate, the organization has taken concrete steps to strengthen the system. EJN team now holds weekly meetings to check on progress towards the fulfillment of planned activities and outcomes. Forms have been designed to assist with documentation for the meetings, workshops and conferences that the staff members attend



and to keep track on the fulfillment of the objectives that are set out. EJV also started as from 2009 the process of producing quarterly reports. The annual partnership and biannual FOCCISA meetings are key monitoring and accountability mechanisms. EJV further plans to start from February 2010 the process of developing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. The staff especially the programme manager is slated to undergo some MEL training. EJV website remains an important instrument of dissemination and is updated fortnightly. Overall, some of the shortcomings noted in the EJV's monitoring and evaluation system included lack of common regional M&E framework linking regional and NCC level systems and processes; lack of regular and structured follow-up of activities at the NCCs level; and lack of baseline data for impact assessment.

## **8. RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT**

EJV has evolved a life of its own with a functional structure, resource partners and network. This presents a key challenge given the loose and informal existence of FOCCISA of which EJV is one of the institutions. This is due to the following:

- (a) FOCCISA has no corporate strategic framework to guide its organs/networks such as EJV and that it is only existent through its programs without a base and is only active during meetings
- (b) FOCCISA lacks legal capacity to attract and raise funds and depends on the NCC from where the Chairman hails to meet its costs.
- (c) FOCCISA also lacks the legal capacity to hold property and assets on its own accord. It is therefore neither a legal trustee nor custodian of its institution's assets such as those of EJV
- (d) FOCCISA lacks capacity and infrastructure to oversee and supervise EJV

### **8.1 Role of Church leaders in EJV**

Essentially, it is the role of NCCs to reach churches and ultimately the marginalized communities. In this scheme it follows that EJV's main role is to ensure that NCCs are capacitated to engage their members and target communities in economic justice issues. It is also the role of EJV to further and create platforms for the NCC leadership to bring their prophetic voice in economic justice issues. A number of respondents nonetheless raised the issue of the need to involve Church leaders affiliated to NCCs in EJV. Indeed in our view, for strategic purposes, the role of the church leadership should be factored in the affairs of EJV in order to bring the necessary ecumenical and theological value into the work of EJV.

## **8.2 Relationship between EJM and NCCs**

The relationship between EJM and NCCs can be understood at two levels. At one level, NCCs form or constitute EJM as umbrella organisations consisting of a range of Christian denominations including the African indigenous Churches. At another level, NCCs are the primary beneficiaries and partners of the EJM program activities. In relation to the latter, the major role of EJM is to build capacity of National Christian Councils (NCCS) to engage in Economic and Social Justice lobby, campaigning and advocacy (on their own and in relevant national and regional alliances) at the national and regional levels. It is the desire of the NCCs that EJM plays a key role in providing strategic direction, intellectual resources (research and policy), lobby and advocacy on their behalf at regional /SADC/AU level, as well as capacity building to the National Christian councils to engage in lobby and advocacy at national level related to economic and social justice in the region. This is an important role given the fact that the Churches in Southern Africa played a significant historical role in the liberation struggle(s) in South(ern) Africa and are now actively working to find a new role in fighting for economic and social justice.

## **8.3 Funding partners**

While EJM Partners have been faithful, there is currently no formal platform/forum that brings ecumenical partners together with EJM-NCCs at the regional level for purposes of harmonizing and rationalization of funding relationships. There is also an apparent tension of expectations between EJM primary constituency, the NCCs and Partners' expectations and interests. There is therefore need to balance between meeting the Partners interests and championing NCCs expectations and interests.

## **8.4 EJM and SADC**

EJM is a value addition to the SADC Civil society forum. EJM – represents a distinctive constituency at the moral, technical and political levels. EJM plays a role of opening up spaces at the regional levels for the NCC voice to be heard. For example, EJM organized for the chairperson of FOCISA to deliver the opening address at the 5<sup>th</sup> SADC Civil Society Conference in the DRC. This Conference was also attended by two other General Secretaries from NCCs. In addition, three economic justice officers from NCCs participated at the Southern African Peoples Summit in 2009, and took part in the tribunals during that meeting. However, the extent to which EJM's regional agenda and engagement with SADC emanates from and is informed by the NCCs is still not yet clear. To this end, it was suggested that EJM should establish a mechanism for interfacing with SADC Heads of States and other Church formations on economic justice issues in the region. There is therefore a compelling need for FOCCISSA to establish a FOCCISA liaison desk at SADC.

## 9. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 9.1 Strategic Relevance and identity

- (a) EJV needs to review its vision, mission and statement of objectives in order to interrogate whether they are still appropriate and relevant in the context of FOCCISA and NCCs.
- (b) All NCCs need to be inducted on EJV's statement of vision, mission, objectives and core values.
- (c) To make effective use of the organization's niche, EJV needs to carefully review, reorganize and refocus the organization's task and functional structure in relation to its NCCs anchor and regional and international platforms.
- (d) There is need to re-brand EJV as a regional resource organization for churches providing technical services and facilitation on economic justice. It was specifically suggested that EJV be renamed "Economic Justice Institute of FOCCISA" (EJIF).**

### 9.2 Program Framework and activities

- (a) EJV needs to adopt a program development and implementation process that fosters common ownership of programs by NCCs and churches. To this end, there is need to adopt a two prong - bottom up approach to planning whereby the planning process begins with the NCCs and ends with the formulation of a regional EJV plan that includes and reflects the priorities identified by the respective NCCs. We strongly suggest that in formulating EJV strategic plan, this approach should be adopted and in our considered opinion, we believe that it is what will motivate NCCs to engage in the EJV program management process.
- (b) There is need for a clear, shared program structure at national, regional and local levels that is sensitive to the needs and issues at every level.
- (c) EJV needs to clearly define and disseminate its program approach especially in relation to the facilitative and implementation function vis a vis that of NCCs.
- (d) There should be a set of guidelines on terms and procedures for delegation of the implementation function to NCCs.

- (e) There is need to establish monitoring and evaluation system and framework with well-defined performance indicators to enable assessment of the impact of EJM programs and institutional activities.
- (f) EJM should adopt a results-based management and rights-based approach to planning with well-defined program and institutional performance indicators for various levels of the organization structure.
- (g) There is need for a clear program strategy and approach to provide a predictable framework for carrying out EJM debt campaign and food security activities of EJM.
- (h) EJM needs to develop a planning framework and guidelines for EJM and NCCs
- (i) EJM needs to develop subject specific program strategies e.g. economy and ecological justice program strategy encompassing agriculture, extractive industries, climate change and ecological debt.
- (j) Need to build capacity of churches in budget monitoring and tracking in respect of regional bodies, national budgets and devolved funds.
- (k)** There is need for EJM/FOCCISA to establish a desk at the SADC to project an independent and conspicuous profile of FOCCISA at SADC secretariat
- (l) Need to develop gender mainstreaming guidelines for program design and a strategy for involving church based women groups such as women guilds, mother unions etc. in EJM economic justice work
- (m)** EJM should facilitate NCCs to develop country specific Economic Justice plans linked to the regional EJM strategy
- (n) There is need to strengthen and expand the scope of the current programs and to develop subject specific strategic plans e.g. at both regional and country levels
- (o) There is need to develop NCCs economic justice desk establishment and strengthening strategy and guidelines.

### **9.3 EJM and FOCCISA**

- (a) FOCCISA Executive Committee and General Assembly need seriously consider and make a decision as to:

- (b) whether EJN should continue its existence and growth in the context of a loose informal FOCCISA as is the case at present or,
- (c) whether EJN is best placed under a more formal FOCCISA or,
- (d) whether EJN should pursue its vision as an independent body constituted by the NCCs.

To safeguard the supremacy of FOCCISA, we propose the following measures:

- (a) Any of the FOCCISA institutions e.g. EJN should be designated as the official focal point of FOCCISA -global. This should however be accompanied by clear delimitations of authority and functional boundaries to ensure the independence of both FOCCISA and the hosting FOCCISA institution;
- (b) The host FOCCISA institution's legal status should provide legal cover for FOCCISA-global as the suitable form of registration for FOCCISA is explored. One of such options would be to register it as transnational organization in Botswana and have its secretariat in SADC under an MOU;
- (c) Members of FOCCISA should make annual contributions to support FOCCISA institutional activities. The activities must be corporate and cross cutting and must not be a duplication, competitive and substitutive of the FOCCISA institution's activities;
- (d) FOCCISA institutions should designate a proportion of their income to support the FOCCISA -global institutional activities. At present neither the NCCs nor the FOCCISA institutions such as EJN are making any direct contribution to support and sustain FOCCISA. The Chairperson and members of the Executive Committee are therefore forced to use and depend on the resources of their own Councils to support their FOCCISA responsibilities.

#### **9.4 EJN Membership and the General Assembly**

- (a) To enforce ownership of EJA by the members, NCCs should show commitment by making specified contributions to the organizations.
- (b) Members' obligations, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly spelt out.
- (c) The powers and functions of the EJA General Assembly need to be defined and the relationship between EJA's General Assembly and that of FOCCISA need to be clarified.
- (d) The Constitution of EJA needs to be reviewed in relation to that of FOCCISA to address these issues.

## **9.5 The Steering Committee**

- (a) The Constitution need to be reviewed to provide the Steering Committee with the power to co-opt members considering the range of skills and diversity of opinion that may be required by the Committee to be effective and legitimate.
- (b) The size of the Committee should be increased from the current five to between 8 and 12 members. The membership should consist of four representatives elected by the FOCCISA Bi-Annual General Assembly including the Chairperson of the FOCCISA Executive Committee; an expert (s) from particular field (s) of EJN's focus; a Church leader (s); representative (s) from a network or NGO and business sector; and representative (s) from women and youth groups as may deemed appropriate.

## **9.6 Management Processes**

- (a) There is need for a clear institution wide strategy to empower churches of FOCCISA for critical engagement in EJN work
- (b) There is need to review the EJN management, leadership and relations with NCC in the context of FOCCISA.
- (c) Need to develop MOU with specific NCCs based on their specific areas of need and responsibility
- (d) There is an urgent need to evaluate FOCCISA's long term outlook and decide whether it should remain informal or should become formal in the context of SADC.
- (e) There is need to clarify the relationship between EJN – NCCS and their member churches in the context FOCCISA and EJN Constitution.
- (f) There is need to open up the EJN steering committee to bring in other key stakeholders such as Church leaders and persons with special skills not available in the membership
- (g) Need to evolve a united at coordinated approach to resource mobilization. There is potential to receive funds as a consortium of NCCs.
- (h) Although there have been partnership meetings organized every two years mainly focusing on NCCs, there is need to institutionalize this and widen its mandate to also allow EJN funding partners to participate..

- (i) Need to explore local alternative resources and develop an investment plan for surplus incomes.

## **9.7 Sustainability**

- (a) Need to develop EJM multilevel institutional and financial sustainability strategy
- (b)** There is need to develop in a participatory manner medium to long term strategic plan with clear articulation of EJM's short term, medium and long term program and institutional development strategies. This should provide the basis for strategic restructuring and re-organization of EJM towards institutional, program and financial sustainability.
- (c) Need to diversify EJM's resource base by initiating viable income generating activities. A specific mechanism may need to be established to champion EJM's income generation efforts.
- (d) EJM needs to come up with a financial sustainability strategy. A taskforce may need to be constituted to assist in exploring different options for ensuring financial sustainability
- (e) There need to invest resources, time and intelligence on strengthening the NCCs as part of the overall EJM's sustainability strategy.

## **9.8 Way forward**

As EJM searches for ways of entrenching itself as the most respected ecumenical platform and resource on economic justice in southern Africa, it needs to develop a clear medium and long term institutional and program development strategy. The need to invest time and intelligence on strengthening the capacity of NCCs is also imperative as a key strategy for service delivery and sustainability.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Economic Justice Network (EJN) was set up in 1997 by the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA) to assist churches to work together for economic justice. This followed a meeting held in June 1997 between the representatives of NCCs in the region and their northern partners. At the meeting, it was agreed that there was a need to form a network to address economic challenges facing the region. In October 1997, 34 representatives from NCCs in Southern and Eastern Africa met again in Harare, Zimbabwe, to discuss the vision, mission, objectives, structure and ownership of the proposed network. EJN was subsequently launched as an initiative of FOCCISA, with the support and collaboration of Northern partners around advocacy, lobbying and the sharing of information and ideas on economic justice matters. EJN is currently registered with the South African Government as a Non Profit Organization Registration No. 057-177- NPO and Public Benefit Organisation (PBO 930-028-984). The Economic Justice Network through its office based in Cape Town works with twelve National Councils of Churches (NCCs) namely, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Madagascar which joined in July 09.

EJN's mission is to strengthen the commitment of the Church in its advocacy work on economic justice and to act as a catalyst for engaging people in the promotion of just economic and social structures. It also seeks to establish mechanisms to raise the experience and concerns of the marginalised and the poor on the agenda of the Church and in society in general. In particular EJN mandate is to contribute to the promotion of economic and social justice in Southern Africa by working with Christian churches in the SADC region in poverty reduction activities focusing on debt, budget monitoring, trade and development, food security and advocacy with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). EJN's activities mainly target amongst others the WB, IMF, WTO and governments whose policies undermine poor people's access to basic needs.



## **1.2 Terms of Reference**

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the activities, results and impact of EJN's work on trade, debt and finance, food security and SADC in relation to its primary stakeholders the NCCs of FOCCISA. The evaluation further expected to assess the particular relationship between the EJN Office and the 11 NCCs (FOCCISA) including the ownership question (how involved are the NCCs and Steering Committee) of the programmatic areas. Specifically, the evaluation sought to:

- f) To evaluate the relevance, impact and effectiveness of EJN's work over the last six years.
- g) To evaluate how the four focus areas of EJN is taken up and acted upon by the members NCCs of EJN.
- h) To evaluate EJNs relevance and impact as perceived by other networks or formations in Southern Africa, Africa and internationally including funding partners.
- i) To evaluate whether the role of EJN is relevant and appropriate for FOCCISA or whether it should change?
- j) To propose recommendations to strengthen the work of EJN

## **1.3 Methodology**

Primarily, the evaluation used a methodology consisting of desk review of documents mainly the reports; and interviews with the Steering Committee members, NCCs Secretary Generals, staff members and funding partners. The interviews were mainly conducted in Maputo during the EJNs meeting on the role of the Church on Ecological Debt and Climate Change held from 27 – 29 July 2009. The views of the development partners we sought mainly through a questionnaire emailed to them. The findings were presented to the Steering Committee (SC) on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and the comments there-from incorporated in the final report.

## **1.4 Limitations**

Due to resource constraints including time, it was not possible to visit all the NCCs in their countries and the EJM office in Cape Town. It would have been ideal to visit all the member countries instead to also interface with key NCC staff and players at the national level. The key stakeholders in decision making organs such as SADC as well as partner networks such as SEATINI, SADC CNGOS were not contacted in the course of this evaluation. Obtaining their views would have certainly added value to the evaluation process. The NCC affiliate churches and community groups and organizations with whom EJM has worked were not covered by the evaluation due to time and financial resource constrained. This has certainly denied the evaluation the vital community perspectives on EJM programs especially with regard to the question of program impact on the marginalized and the poor.

## **2.0 REVIEW OF EJM'S STRATEGIC RELEVANCE**

### **2.1 Strategic Relevance**

In many respects, the very reasons for establishing EJM 12 years ago are still prevalent, which underlines the strategic relevance of the organization and its programs. Essentially EJM continues to operate in a complex, dynamic and ever changing environment, which has direct bearing on its agenda, role and mandate. Over the past decade, the economic situation globally has worsened with rising cases of poverty, unemployment and inequality. In 1960 the income gap between the richest fifth of the world's population and the poorest was 30:1. By 1990, this had dropped to 60:1, and by 1997, had reached 74:1. For every \$2 Africa receives in aid, it returns nearly \$1 in debt servicing. The servicing of debt by poor developing countries hampers their economic and social development, as governments cut back on spending on vital social services such as health, welfare and education.

Within the FOCCISA region, although there is relative political stability with most of the countries professing democracy, they are mostly characterized by weak institutions to consolidate and solidify the culture of democratic governance. The situation in Zimbabwe however poses the biggest governance challenge with over 2 million displaced to many SADC countries especially in South Africa. As to the state of the economy, although the region has

mixed economies with South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia and Botswana considered Middle Income Earning Countries, the rest are mostly Least Developed Countries (LDCS) and part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). The FOCCISA region also continues to experience high levels of unemployment with Zimbabwe having the worst situation with nearly 80% of population being unemployed. The gap between the rich and the poor is getting worse with the reported high economic growth rates reported in most countries not trickling down to majority of the population. On trade front, Southern Africa's biggest trade partners remain the European countries. Intra trade and inter trade within the SADC region is minimal except for South Africa which remains the biggest trading partner for most of the SADC countries.

The neo-liberal forces driven by globalization are also negatively impacting on the economies with all the countries in the region experiencing rising budgetary deficits, debilitating debt and deteriorating terms of trade. While some argue that 'free' trade will lead to increased economic development, in many instances trade liberalisation has had the opposite effect. It has resulted in increased unemployment and has impacted negatively on working conditions for workers. The globalization has therefore has not only affected the competitiveness of the African counties but also greatly constrained the governments' ability to provide the required livelihoods and social services for their rapidly growing populations. Common in all FOCCISA countries are issues of bad governance and corruption, under-development, socio-economic injustice, economic inequity, widespread poverty, social exclusion, marginalization and changing environmental and ecological conditions.

## **2.2 EJN Strategic identity and Focus EJN**

The strategic role of EJN is highly appreciated while its statements of vision, mission and objectives are considered relevant. The vision and mission statements nevertheless need to be reviewed with a view to making them sharper and precise in bringing out the true strategic identity and focus of the organization in the context of FOCCISA. Furthermore, there is still lack of clarity as to whether EJN is a network or a technical facility/secretariat of FOCCISA on economic justice. To majority of the respondents EJN is still grappling with the issue of its identity. To this end, the following characterization of EJN identity and focus were mentioned in the context of FOCCISA:

- (a) EJM is a unique ecumenical mechanism on economic justice in the region.
- (b) EJM is technically a think tank and resource institution of FOCCISA on economic justice
- (c) EJM is a Churches' economic forum that should enable churches to interrogate and influence economic policy and development in the region.
- (d) EJM plays a key complimentary role to other civil society groups and church formations involved in economic justice
- (e) EJM should be a regional and sub regional platform and interface between FOCCISA and AACCC/ WCC on economic justice, creating a strong ecumenical and Christian voice at both regional and global levels.
- (f) EJM is a voice of the churches and NCCs on economic justice at the regional and global levels

### **2.3 EJM Strategic Role and Focus**

While EJM vision remains relevant, EJM needs to re-position itself in view of the global economic situation and regional economic reconfigurations. To majority of the respondents therefore, EJM should be a critical organ of FOCCISA with the primary mandate to:

- (a) Profile and enhance the potential of FOCCISA as a champion of value based economic development
- (b) Service, support and build the capacity of NCCs on economic justice
- (c) Mobilize and equip NCCs with knowledge and evidence on economic justice.
- (d) Facilitate advocacy and support NCCs and churches to advance the interest and courses of the poor and marginalized communities.

In terms of strategic niche, most of the respondents suggested the following, based on their perceived view of EJM's core and potential competence and comparative advantages:

- (a) Advocacy for appropriate and enabling international, regional and national policies that will guarantee sustainable livelihoods for majority of the population.
- (b) Training and capacity building for NCCs and churches in social and economic justice, policy analysis and advocacy, theological insights and leadership.
- (c) Resource mobilization and building strategic partnership linkages
- (d) Economic literacy and education
- (e) Research, documentation, dissemination and inter change of best practices, lessons learnt and experiences.

- (f) Facilitating a campaign on social and economic justice
- (g) Promoting churches and citizen participation in national, regional and international decision-making systems.
- (h) Resourcing NCCs economic justice initiatives and processes.
- (i) Provision of technical support services to NCCs and other regional and international institutions that may need such services
- (j) Playing an intermediary role by linking NCCs with other social movements and partners elsewhere in the world.

In general, those interviewed were of the view that EJNI can indeed become the all important rallying point and technical resource for individuals, NCCs, international partners, churches, civil society and governments in economic justice in the region.

## **2.4 Relevance of Approach**

The approach, strategies and tools adopted by EJNI are largely effective, adaptable and successful especially at the regional and international levels. These include capacity building, advocacy, networking, information dissemination and exchange and research. Through these strategies, EJNI has today grown to become widely recognized and visible platform in economic justice in SADC region. It has established linkages and global network of associates in UN agencies, governments, bilateral and multilateral development agencies, professional associations, churches and ecumenical organizations, community based groups and civil society in general to champion economic justice agenda in the region.

Despite the appropriateness of strategies, the program approach needs to be adjusted to make it more constituency driven and results oriented. Most NCCs felt that they have not been assisted adequately to adapt key program themes to national situations. While EJNI has held several workshops and conference for capacity building, there has also not been consistency and clear strategy for follow up to ensure impact. The other areas of improvement include:

- (a) The programming approach in respect of gender r can be strengthened. Programmatically though, EJNI for instance now focuses on issues of gender and trade. Its research on Informal Cross Border Trading and the impacts of the financial crisis on SADC also clearly focus on gender aspects.
- (b) The program management approach is not clearly results and rights based. It was suggested that EJNI needs to improve its program management by adopting the

- Logical Framework approach with clear and focused multi level objectives, indicators and detailed strategies/activities.
- (c) There is lack of shared strategic program framework linked with the NCCs frameworks. For example not all countries have EJ programs and desks.
  - (d) There is weak monitoring, evaluation, reporting and follow up mechanisms targeting NCCs, churches and policy/decision makers.

## **2.5 Relevance to beneficiaries**

In its statement of mission and objectives, EJM identifies the following key beneficiaries to its programs and initiatives National Church Councils, the Church/Churches, marginalised and poor communities, the Economic Justice Network and Partner organizations and networks. The EJM primary target are the NCCs that it seeks to capacitate and empower to engage in Economic and Social Justice lobby, campaigning and advocacy both on their own and through relevant national and regional alliances. At the national level it is the NCCs that should reach such secondary target groups as the churches and poor and marginalized communities which are essentially their primary target groups. While it is potentially hazardous for EJM to directly engage and work with the secondary target groups such as churches and communities in the individual countries, it would be necessary to develop a clear, predictable and shared framework for program targeting at various levels of the organization's functional structure. Key areas for improvements therefore include:

- (a) The need for more appropriate tools for program targeting of the different categories of beneficiaries.
- (b) Ensuring that the benefits accruing from EJM activities to NCCs are trickling down to the churches and communities.
- (c) Developing a mechanism to accompany the NCCs in their engagement with member churches and local communities.
- (d) Improving the system and capacity to document, follow up, monitor and evaluate the impact of its programs on the ground

In general all the respondents were unanimous that EJM activities are relevant to its primary beneficiaries, the NCCs, especially in areas of capacity building, research and information exchange, promotion of economic literacy and networking and collaboration. The NCCs also agreed that they are now able to articulate issues in the focal areas of EJM's work such as debt, trade, EPAs, advocacy, food security, budget monitoring. The outstanding challenge is however, how to filter down the benefits of EJM activities at the regional level to the local NCCs primary constituency. Although some members complained that EJM is more identified with CSOs than churches and that most churches are not aware of EJM and its activities, it was also pointed out that NCCs on their part, need to be more proactive in involving their member churches more strongly in economic justice issues and EJM activities.

## 2.6 Recommendations

As to EJM's strategic identity and relevance, it is recommended that:

- (a) EJM needs to review its vision, mission and statement of objectives in order to interrogate whether they are still appropriate and relevant in the context of FOCCISA and NCCs.
- (b) All NCCs need to be inducted on EJM's statement of vision, mission, objectives and core values.
- (c) To make effective use of the organization's niche, EJM needs to carefully review, reorganize and refocus the organization's task and functional structure in relation to its NCCs anchor and regional and international platforms.
- (d) There is need to re-brand EJM as a regional resource organization for churches providing technical services and facilitation on economic justice. It was specifically suggested that EJM be renamed "Economic Justice Institute of FOCCISA" (EJIF).**

### **3.0 ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM FRAMEWORK AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **3.1 Program Framework**

While EJN's four programme areas namely debt and finance; food security; trade and development and SADC policy advocacy are not anchored on a strategic plan, they are nevertheless aligned to the corporate objectives of the organization.

Overall, EJN program goal is to strengthen the capacity of the Christian councils to promote economic and social justice in Southern Africa. EJN program objectives are:

- i. To increase and develop effective advocacy strategies and interventions on a selected number of priority issues affecting trade, debt, SADC, food security the region through joint advocacy, debate in conferences, seminars and workshops.
- ii. To undertake relevant research on particular issues of concern to the EJN that can be used in advocacy activities of the National Christian Councils, EJN and partner organizations.
- iii. To facilitate information gathering, dissemination and exchange within EJN and with partner organizations on the key priority areas (debt, trade and food security).
- iv. To promote economic literacy programs by the Churches at all levels.
- v. To network and collaborate with like-minded groups with similar networks in Southern Africa, African continent and International partners on issues of global concern.

EJN implements its work through workshops and conferences, research, advocacy and networking, information dissemination and exchange. The target group and main beneficiaries of EJN activities are the NCCs which constitute EJN while the ultimate beneficiaries are a large portion of the population of FOCCISA region who are adversely affected by debt, trade liberalisation, bad macroeconomic policies and other socio-economic injustices.



### **3.2 Program Development process**

Without a strategic plan, EJV develops and implements annual program plans. Over the last three years, EJV has attempted to use the logical frame approach to define program activities, objectives, indicators, outputs and assumptions including means of their verification. In terms of process, from January 2008, EJV formed two working committees through which NCCs could work with EJV office in planning and implementing activities according to their professed interest and competence. EJV has also established annual partnership meetings to coordinate review and planning activities for the following year. In recent months, EJV has also started the process of developing a three-year results-orientated strategic plan.

### **3.3 Program Implementation Approach**

As a network, EJV should ideally facilitate NCCs to implement program activities at the national level while retaining central implementation functions at the regional level. The three main purposes of a network are:

- (a) Enhancing the capacity of members for greater effectiveness in their respective chosen areas of focus;
- (b) Forging an effective coalition at defined levels for joint and collaborative action; and
- (c) Facilitating and linking members to work as an orchestra towards realizing the corporate objectives of the network.

While these have been manifest in EJV strategy, the organization appeared to lack a set of guidelines for delegation of implementation functions to the NCCs.

### **3.4 Assessment of Program Activities**

One of the objectives of the evaluation was to assess the activities, results and impact of EJV work on trade, debt and finance, food security and SADC in relation to its primary stakeholders the NCCs in Southern Africa regions. EJV's overall goal is to contribute to the promotion of economic and social justice in Southern Africa by working with Christian churches in the SADC region in poverty reduction activities. Its main activities over the past five years have focused on debt, budget monitoring, trade and development, food security and advocacy with the

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). While initially FOCCISA decided that EJM would focus on three core issues: trade, debt and food security, at an Evaluation and Planning meeting held in 2003, the EJM agreed to broaden its focus to also include SADC Advocacy . This section assesses the EJM program activities over the last six years.

### **3.4.1 Focus on Debt and Finance**

The general aim of the debt campaign was to raise awareness of the causes of foreign debt, illegitimate and ecological debt and develop strategies for intervention in fighting for debt cancellation campaign. The program intervention sought to continue the spirit of the Jubilee in fighting for cancellation of foreign debts as well as the odious and illegitimate debt. EJM has also focused on budget monitoring as key aspect of the work on debt and finance.

**Focus on Budget Monitoring:** A key aspect of the work on debt and finance is budget monitoring. EJM decided to embark on budget monitoring work in order to mobilize and empower Christian councils to be able to intervene and participate fully in areas of fiscal and economic governance including the formulation and monitoring of national budgets in their countries towards equitable distribution and maximum utilization of state resources to improve the welfare of poor people. Specifically, the program aimed to:

- Build capacity of FBOs, Christian Councils and churches to carry out proper and systematic advocacy work on fiscal and economic governance process.
- Carry out budget monitoring work at regional, national and local levels
- obtain more insights into formulation of states' budgets and deal with challenges of access to information pertaining to revenue sources, monitoring of the revenue base and to adherence to budget items at the regional, national and local levels
- Strengthen monitoring mechanism in public expenditure and to make the budgets pro-poor.
- Improve the Churches' and CSOs' involvement at all levels of the budget process including budget approval phase, budget process/monitoring and evaluation of expenditures.

To achieve the above objective, EJN carried out a number of activities including the following:

- (a) Holding a regional budget training workshop in April 2003 in Malawi;
- (b) Holding a country budget workshop in Malawi in August 2005 in conjunction with the Malawi Council of Churches, the Episcopal Conference of Malawi and the Malawi Economic Justice Network to raise awareness on budgeting and budget monitoring processes and advocacy and lobbying for better and prioritised budgeting and budget implementation;
- (c) Setting up of an EJN/Budget Monitoring Desk in Malawi (2006);
- (d) Promoting citizen's participation in local government policy through budget monitoring work launched in Mozambique in July 2006 in conjunction with Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) and Fair Share of the University of the Western Cape (UWC). The main aim of the project is to promote and enhance citizens' engagement in political processes in Mozambique using the Budget Monitoring Tool for conducting budget work starting from the municipality level;
- (e) Carrying out a Budget Training Workshop for 22 Officers from FBOs and Christian Councils from six SADC countries including Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland. This training enabled participating Councils to acquire skills on basic budget monitoring work. Country plans of action were developed to guide the participating Christian councils on developing budget monitoring work in their respective countries;
- (f) Formation of an Economic Justice/Budget Monitoring desk by the Malawi Council of Churches in 2006 with EJN contributing seed funding to the amount of US\$ 10,000 for basic activities;
- (g) Conducting Budget Monitoring needs assessment for FBOs and CSOs in Angola in January 2006 as a basis for capacity building and situating the budget monitoring project in a broader perspective of economic justice and citizen participation in political processes especially at the local government level;
- (h) Production of training manuals including IEC materials and learner guides;
- (i) Training of Officers in Basic needs Basket tools.

Through the budget monitoring activities NCCs and churches developed interests and commitment to work on advocacy on the state budget as a tool for good governance. Higher

levels of awareness have been realized among NCCs and churches on the importance and role of the church in monitoring their national budgets. NCCs staff have also gained essential capacities and skills to engage effectively in budget monitoring work. More importantly, the program contributed to enhancing citizens' engagement in local governance using the budget monitoring tools in the participating countries such as Mozambique and Malawi.

**Aid Effectiveness:** Although Aid Effectiveness did not feature in EJN's 2007-2010 plans, it played a leading role in raising awareness about Aid Effectiveness discourse and promoting effective participation of FOCCISA member churches in the debate at the national, regional and international levels. To guide its activities, EJN developed a road map to prepare the FOCCISA region to participate in Aid Effectiveness activities. The main elements of the road map included research on Aid Effectiveness Implementation in the SADC region; mobilization and awareness raising; capacity building on Aid Effectiveness for FOCCISA officers; Policy Advocacy with government officials and donors in the SADC region; and developing a pastoral letter on Aid Effectiveness. In particular, EJN facilitated and participated in several workshops and conferences on aid effectiveness. These included:

- (a) The Paris and Rome Conferences on Aid effectiveness leading to the production of the Paris Declaration in March 2005.
- (b) The NCA/EJN/AACC Planning meeting- January 21, 2008 in Pretoria to harmonize activities planned by EJN and AACC and to spearhead a pan African church process leading to the Ghana Aid Effectiveness High Level Meeting scheduled for September 2008.
- (c) The APRODEV Family meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, March 6-7 2008 to share plans for the Ghana Aid Effectiveness meeting from Africa and Europe.
- (d) The AACC's Pan African Church conference on Aid effectiveness in May 2008 in Nairobi, Kenya.
- (e) The Aid Effectiveness conference in Ghana (30 August—1 September, 2008).

EJN was further involved in research to assess the effectiveness in the area of agriculture in Mozambique with respect to the Millennium Challenge Account Funds injected in the agriculture sector in the country.

**Ecological Debt:** EJN work on Ecological Debt started in 2005 with the World Council of Churches and the Economic Justice Network organized i a 3-days strategy conference for Christian councils and other partners on 31 October - 3 November 2005. The Conference among other things agreed to carry out a number of activities including raising awareness on the impact of ecological damages; developing strategies of how to link ecological debt to the fight for cancellation of foreign debt for poor countries; strengthening linkages with other organisations, both local and international, fighting for ecological debt, and developing strategies to engage those responsible for ecological damage to make reparations.

EJN hosted a conference on Climate Change in cooperation with the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) and the Association of World Council of Churches Related Development Organisations in Europe (APRODEV). The aim was to create a forum for discussing climate equity principles and to provide the opportunity for Southern African civil society stakeholders to strategise jointly towards influencing African governments and negotiators before the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties meeting in Copenhagen in December 2009, and beyond.

EJN also recently held another workshop on Ecological Debt and Climate Change - the role of the Churches in Southern Africa at Hotel Tivoli Maputo, Mozambique 27-29 July 2009. At this workshop FOCCISA committed to continue awareness-building and theological reflections among member churches and congregations on ecological debt and climate justice; engage with the governments and build partnership with relevant stakeholders within the current climate change negotiations to ensure a fair, equitable and ecologically just deal in Copenhagen; and assess practices and Africa's contribution to climate change and environmental damages. EJN with support of WCC published 100 copies of ecological research on Zambezi River report.

**Finance for Development:** The work on finance for development revolved around EJN's participation at the Finance for Development (FfD) UN Conference that took place in Doha, Qatar, from 02 – 05 December 2008. The Doha conference was a follow up to the Monterrey Conference that discussed how to increase finance for development. EJN also participated at the Civil Society Forum meeting from the 25 – 27 Nov 2008 under the theme "Investing in People Centred Development". EJN further facilitated discussions on the current global financial architecture and the crises that hit the developed and developing world. To this end, EJN invited Deprose Muchena from OSISA to the AACC General Assembly to identify the problems and challenges of the current financial crises and its possible impact on Africa. Participants and church delegates committed themselves to address these issues and the specific role of the church in relation to it.

**Social Impact of the financial crisis in the SADC region:** One of the critical programmes that EJN undertook involved research on the social impact of the financial crisis in the SADC region. The research focused on six countries (Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, and South Africa). The debate on the financial crisis has mainly been about the developed and emerging economies and in some ways ignored the impact on developing countries in general and the SADC in particular. This research is now complete and EJN together with the Church Councils in the case countries has been organising discussions on the research. So far national launches of the reports have been done in South Africa, Malawi, and Mozambique. The research has also fed into the report commissioned by the UN General Report on global financial crisis impacts on poor.

**Odious and illegitimate debt:** In this activity, EJN was to work closely with AFRODAD, EURODAD and the Norwegian Church Aid to spearhead a campaign in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The program did not however, take off because of security concerns and limited funding for the project.

Overall, through workshops, conferences, international networking and advocacy, EJN promoted the role of churches and civil society organization in debt campaigns and increased their understanding of the current economic policies and trends in the region, sharing of experiences and identifying challenges. Activities around Aid Effectiveness significantly raised interest and concerns among churches and CSOs on how to make aid work for the recipient countries in Africa and SADC region in particular.

### **3.4.2 Focus on Trade and Development**

EJN has been following the trade discussions and its impact on Southern Africa since Seattle in 1999. The trade program is by no means EJN's flagship programs. The overall objective of trade program is to raise awareness on international trade agreements which directly impact on trading trends on domestic markets and poverty reduction processes especially in the SADC region. The program also aims to raise awareness on international trade agreements which have direct impact on SADC livelihoods. The program has further sought to generate evidence on status of informal economy and cross border activities in Southern Africa and to strengthen informal trade associations in Southern Africa to advocate for fair trade policies. The key activities include monitoring and assessing negotiations and agreements at the World Trade

Organisation and their impact on poor people especially in the SADC Region. EJN also works on the EU ACP Economic Partnership negotiations and interim agreements. Specifically, EJN has carried several activities over the last five years as highlighted below.

**Trade Justice Campaign:** This activity involved a number of initiatives during the 2004-2005 period. EJN facilitated and participated at the Conference on Trade Justice held in Johannesburg in November 2004. It also facilitated the Global Week of Action for Trade Justice held from 10 – 16 April 2005. Various activities took place in South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. As part of the Global Week's activities, EJN produced a poster on Trade Justice with the message "Together Working for Trade Justice". The poster was distributed to all 11 NCCs and other working partners of EJN. It was also distributed at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the World Trade Organisation in Geneva in April 2005.

**Reality of Trade:** This activity was carried in collaboration with with the Church of Sweden, Diakonia, DanChurch Aid and Norwegian Church Aid. The goal of this joint initiative was to expose parliamentarians from Sweden, Norway and Denmark on the impact of trade liberalisation in different sectors of the economy in Mozambique and Zambia. The activities included seminars with various civil society organisations working for trade justice and field visits to sugar farms and the cashew nut industry in Mozambique and sugar and coffee farms in Zambia.

**Consultative Conference:** EJN participated at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Consultative Conference organised by the South African government that was held on 27 – 28 October 2005 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The conference focused on the main issues before the WTO and civil society input on trade and development, Trade Related Intellectual Property (TRIPs) and HIV/AIDS, General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and Industrial Tariffs or Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA).

**World Trade Organization Activities:** EJN has been monitoring events at WTO level and providing analytical inputs to the processes over the last five years or so. EJN in partnership with MWENGO held awareness raising conferences where issues of access to drugs and promotion of sustainable livelihoods in view of agreements reached in the WTO were discussed and debated on. EJN also appeared on SABC Africa television channel to inform viewers of the developments in the WTO. The key EJN's WTO activities included organizing trade strategy group for South Africa; organizing joint EJN/SARPN Pre Hong Kong Ministerial SADC CSO meeting, November 2005; participation at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference, December 2005; and holding joint EJN/SARPN Post Hong Kong Ministerial Conference, April 2006. At the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference, December 2005 EJN together with ZIMCODD and the Cotton

Farmers Association from Mozambique (FONPA) focused on Cotton Trade issues especially on a campaign to remove all trade distorting subsidies on Cotton Trade. The Post Hong Kong Conference held in Pretoria, 6 – 7 April 2006 sought to review the role of CSOs in Hong Kong; the outcomes of the Hong Kong Ministerial agreements and their impact on poverty reduction policies in the SADC region; and review the effectiveness of CSO strategies used in influencing the WTO negotiations.

**Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) activities:** the aim of these activities was to raise awareness of the impact of the EPAs on the political and economic development in order to build capacity of the civil society to understand objectives and implications of EPAs currently negotiated. An additional objective was to enable them to understand the linkages between EPAs and WTO multilateral trade agreements so as to effectively participate in CSOs' lobbying and advocacy work for wider participation of stakeholders in EPAs negotiations. EJM carried several EPAs focused activities including the following:

**Economic Partnership Agreements Conference in Mozambique:** This conference on EPAs and its Impact on the Economy of Mozambique was organized in conjunction with CCM, Economic Justice Coalition (CJE) and Forum Mulher.

**Cotton Trade Campaign:** This activity was carried out in conjunction with CCM, ABIODES, CJE, FONPA and the Cotton Institute of Mozambique. The cotton trade campaign had its roots in the Christian Aid Fair Trade Campaign in which EJM conducted three research projects on Women and Cotton Trade in Mozambique in 2004; the impact of Trade Liberalization on women in Cape Town; and the impact of Trade Liberalization on the Grain Board in Zambia. Most of activities on cotton were meant to help CCM and ABIODES to build capacity for developing programmes for interventions in Cotton Trade policy matters and for providing technical support in producing IEC materials and writing funding proposals.

**EPA updates with National Christian Councils:** EJM organized training workshops for the National Christian Councils (NCCs) in Botswana, Lesotho and Mozambique. The workshops were held at different dates: Lesotho on 18 September 2008; Mozambique on 30 September 2008; and Botswana on 16 October 2008. The workshop discussions enabled the participants to prepare for the "EPA Week" in terms of messages, media briefing and protest marches.

**Pan African Civil Society EPAs Review meeting:** A major EJM activity was the hosting of a Pan African Civil Society Anti-EPAs Review Meeting in February 2008 in Cape Town. The meeting provided the opportunity to get regional updates on the EPA negotiations, review the interim agreement, examine the implications to regional integration and also look ahead towards the government work programmes. EJM worked very closely with Third World Network/Africa



Trade Network (TWN/ATN), MWENGO, SEATINI, and other international organizations such as Oxfam International to advocate for alternatives to EPAs or STOPPING the EPAs altogether.

**Research on EPAs:** EJN carried out and produced research papers that addressed critical economic justice issues in the SADC region. These included the Impact of EPAS on Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals and the research on the Possible Impacts of EPAs on Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods in the SADC region published in collaboration with SEATINI; and a booklet on Trade and Development Cooperation Agreement, SADC and EU negotiations in the Context of EPAs. These research outputs were instrumental in raising the bar in EJN's lobbying and advocacy work on EPAs and regional integration.

**Advocacy with European Partners and Politicians:** EJN participated at a conference in Sweden celebrating the particular solidarity between the South Africa people and movements and Sweden cultivated during the times of the Anti – Apartheid struggle. During these meetings EJN in partnership with northern partners held advocacy meetings with members of parliament and parliamentary committees of Industry and Trade as well as the Minister of Development from Sweden, Ewa Bjorling. EJN director also visited Finland where he met with the Ambassador on Trade in Finland and staff from the ministry of development who were involved with the EU on EPAs.

In nutshell, through the trade program, EJN has become an important and influential regional and global voice on trade. EJN has also become an important focal point for North-South exchange, dialogue and advocacy on trade. EJN through its extensive network and partnerships has effectively challenged various trade negotiations including EPAS and WTO policies that undermine poor people's access to basic needs. More importantly, EJN through the trade program has raised awareness and built the capacity of Christian Councils and churches to get engage in the complex advocacy on trade from a point of evidence and knowhow. EJN has trained officers from the Christian Councils, civil society groups, members of parliament and ministers, carried out media advocacy, participated in debates on trade matters in international forums and lobbied and engaged government trade negotiators from north and south to debate trade agreements and EPAs. Effectively, EJN has become the epicenter for trade advocacy and campaigns in the SADC region. The activities EJN carried under this project helped to build capacity for Christian councils in the region, who, now can effectively engage in trade debates at the country level and to demonstrate the impact of the international trade agreements on people's livelihoods.

### **3.4.3 Focus on Food Security**

The overall objective of this program aspect was to raise awareness on the causes of perennial food insecurity in the SADC region and build capacity of the Christian councils to engage in food security initiatives. Through this program aspect, EJM intended to contribute to efforts in the SADC region to ensure food security for those affected adversely by hunger crisis and food shortages. Unlike the trade and debt campaign programs, the food security aspect has been inactive.

Apart from organizing a successful Conference on Food security and GMOs in Manzini, Swaziland from 21-22 March 2004, attempts by EJM and SARPN to hold a Regional Food Security Conference under a theme of “Effective Participation of Faith Based Organizations in National and Regional Food Security Processes” before end of 2006 did not take place. Another conference was nonetheless planned for February 2007 in conjunction with the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC).

Over the last two years however, the activities increased with a campaign during the Trade Action Week (October 2007 & 2008) focusing on the Right to Food as part of an international campaign of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance of which EJM is member. Most activities have revolved around participation in workshops, conferences and meetings on food security. By participating in these activities EJM has however been able to push food rights campaign especially during the world food day and food security week campaigns. EJM-NCCs’ Food Security Working Groups Meeting have been organized to plan for food security week activities. Key messages on food security and the right to food have been developed and aired through radio and television in South Africa. EJM Director, Rev. Malcolm Damon also participated upon invitation by Finnish Evangelical Mission Society as a keynote speaker on the Food Crises and its Impact on Africa on 17 October 2008, World Food Day and as part of the activities of members of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance. As a result meetings/conference organized with the SADC Committee on Agriculture and Food Security, EJM has been requested to participate in the SADC Committee on Agriculture and Food Security at the regional level.

Overall, EJN has lacked resources and has not attracted funding to carry out substantive food security work in the region.

### **3.4.5 Focus on Policy Advocacy with SADC**

At its strategic meeting in October 2005, FOCCISA members and partners observed that EJN was not doing sufficient policy lobbying and advocacy work on SADC and other multilateral institutions. From this meeting, in 2006 EJN decided to focus on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) based on a three-year project with funding support from the NCA and Southern African Trust. The objectives of this project were:

- a) To improve the knowledge base of the churches on SADC and the other regional institutions in Africa.
- b) To ensure that that EJN engage with SADC on issues of concern to the Church and civil society.
- c) To improve the monitoring and advocacy role of EJN and the National Christian Councils vis-à-vis SADC.
- d) To provide a platform for interaction between the Church and policymakers.
- e) To develop intervention strategies into policy making processes of SADC and also involvement of NCCS in SADC National Committees
- f) To participate in SADC poverty reduction processes and mobilize NCC to get involved at the local level

The key activities that have been carried out on SADC include:

- (a) **Conducting research on the State of Engagement of National Christian Councils in Public Policy Advocacy Work in the SADC region:** The purpose of this research was to gauge the depth and quality of a level of engagement of NCCs/FBOs in public policy formulation processes. The research was conducted in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Swaziland, Botswana and South Africa. The research results were presented to all 11 NCCs at a conference held in Gaborone (Botswana) from the 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2006.

- (b) **Regional Conference on SADC:** EJN organized a Regional Conference on SADC in Gaborone (Botswana) from the 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006. The main objectives of the conference were to educate and inform participants on the role and operations of SADC; equip participants and the NCCs with advocacy tools and to identify advocacy priorities for EJN and FOCCISA; and liaise with SADC officials and key role-players and to introduce the EJN and the Church leadership to SADC. One of the key outcomes of the Conference was the NCCs decision that EJN focuses on issues of agriculture and food Security and cross border trade and gender.
- (c) **Development of SADC Information Package:** EJN developed an Information Pack to provide information on SADC as an institution, contact information of key officials, members, a calendar of key events or annual meetings and other relevant information.
- (d) **Cross Border and Informal Economy:** This program aspect aimed to generate evidence on status of informal economy and cross border activities in Southern Africa and to strengthen informal trade associations in Southern Africa to advocate for fair trade policies. EJN with support from NCA carried out research in four countries: Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique and Swaziland on state of cross border and informal trade. The research sought to document the challenges, difficulties and bottlenecks that people especially women involved in cross border and informal trade face; and to map out the government policies and attitudes in the same four selected countries.
- (e) **Informal Cross Border Traders workshop in Malawi:** In November 2008, EJN together with Southern African Trust organized a conference for SADC Informal Cross-Border Traders in Malawi. The aim of the meeting was to get to understand the issues of concern to ICBT and see how these can be taken forward. EJN used the Conference to present and share the results of its ICBT research results.
- (f) **SADC Poverty and Development Conference:** EJN together with the Southern African Trust organized this conference to enable CSOs, churches and government officials to discuss matters pertaining to poverty reduction and development in the region in view of the Regional Indicative Strategy Development Programme framework of SADC. EJN Mobilized NCCs to participate in the Poverty and Development Conference in Mauritius in April 2008.
- (g) **Joint strategy meetings EJN, SADC CNGO and SATUCC:** EJN together with the SADC Council of NGO (SADC CNGO) and Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC) held several meetings to strategise on SADC engagement issues including the Poverty and Development Conference, a special conference on Zimbabwe and the SADC NGO Summit.

- (h) **Zimbabwe Consultative Conference:** EJN participated in this conference held in Johannesburg (28–29 July 2008) to “strengthen civil society solidarity action on Zimbabwe through coordination and harmonization of various civil society initiatives taking place at a regional and national level”.
- (i) **4<sup>th</sup> SADC Civil Society Forum:** EJN Participated at this Forum held from 13 – 15 August 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa under the theme: “Regional Integration: From Protocols to Action”.
- (j) **SAPSN People’s Summit:** In August 2008, EJN as part of the Southern Africa People’s Solidarity Network participated in the SAPSN People’s Summit held in Gauteng South Africa to discuss common concerns and present their demands and alternatives to the governments of SADC that were meeting at the same time. Discussions at the Summit focused on democracy and human rights abuses disrupting and destabilizing the region, with particular emphasis on the gross denial of democratic and human rights in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, DRC and Angola.

Overall, it was felt that EJN engagement with SADC is a value addition to the civil society forum. EJN represents a distinctive constituency at the moral, technical and political levels. EJN therefore plays a critical role of opening up spaces at the regional levels for the NCC voice to be heard. For example, EJN organized for the chairperson of FOCISA to deliver the opening address at the 5<sup>th</sup> SADC Civil Society Conference in the DRC. This Conference was also attended by two other General Secretaries from NCCs. In addition, three economic justice officers from NCCs participated at the Southern African Peoples Summit in 2009, and took part in the tribunals during that meeting. However, the extent to which EJN’s regional agenda and engagement with SADC emanates from and is informed by the NCCs is still not yet clear. It was therefore suggested that EJN needs to build a groundswell of opinion from its NCCs constituency to effectively execute its mandate in SADC. In particular, the need for FOCCISA to establish a mechanism for interfacing with SADC Heads of States and other Church formations on economic justice issues in the region was emphasized. To this end, the need to establish a FOCCISA desk at SADC was strongly expressed.

### **3.4.6 Networking and Communication**

One of the objectives of EJN is to build alliances and strategic networks and partnerships in support of its objectives. EJN has done very well in this regard. The Director is often invited to speak in various regional and international forums. EJN has also in the past involved in several collaborative and joint ventures with AACC, WCC, FOCCIWA and FECCLEHA (sister regional councils), NCCs, MWENGO, SEATINI, the Africa Debt and Development (AFRODAD), EURODAD, Third World Network (TWN), Africa Trade Network(ATN), Our World Is Not For Sale (OWINFS), Trade Strategy Group (TSG) (South Africa) Oxfam (UK, USA, Novib), Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Southern Africa People's Solidarity Network, SADC Council of NGO (SADC CNGO), Southern Africa Trust (SAT) and Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC), Alternatives to Neo-liberalism in Southern Africa (ANSA), OSISA and European CSO such as NCA, Diakonia Sweden, DanChurch Aid among others.

As to partnerships EJN participates in the biennial Nordic -FOCCISA partnership meetings. The Nordic Councils of Churches include Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden with whom FOCCISA has had a joint cooperation agreement for many years. The last biennial Nordic-Foccisa meeting took place from 25 – 26 August 2005 in Vasteras, Sweden. The meeting discussed the programs of all the National Councils from both Southern Africa and Scandinavia and decided to strengthen their cooperation on HIV/AIDS and economic justice, especially trade justice. The meeting also took note of the joint cooperation between EJN and Christian Council of Sweden on ecological debt.

EJN has in the past organised a Partnership Conference attended by all the General Secretaries of Foccisa or their delegates and representatives from partner organisations, including Christian Aid (CA), Church of Sweden (CoS), DanChurch Aid, Diakonia (Sweden) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). The objective of the conference was to provide a platform for networking, discussions between EJN and its partners; identify common concerns and issues faced by Churches and ecumenical aid agencies in the light of globalization; and identify complimentary strategies and advocacy activities for the benefit of both North and South. EJN has also successfully realized her networking objectives through organizing and participating in conferences, workshops and seminars. EJN has also been visible participant and contributor to the World Social Forum meetings. EJN has further maintained vibrant contact with key decision making institutions such as SADC, WTO, World Bank and key European governments that it seeks to influence especially on matters of trade and debt.

As to communication, EJN has regularly produced its newsletters, press releases, radio and Television interviews, policy briefs and published and disseminated research results in support advocacy initiatives and influence policy and decision making at various levels. EJN has also put emphasis on publishing updates and reports online to increase accessibility. In this regard the EJN's webpage was pointed to be very good. As result of its strong networking and communication portfolio, EJN enjoys high visibility and is highly regarded by other networks or formations in Southern Africa, Africa and internationally including funding partners. EJN is now considered by partners as an important focal point for North-South exchange and joint advocacy interventions on economic justice matters.

EJN has however been criticized for spending much time travelling, networking with other CSOs and attending international meetings than focusing on the capacity and service needs of its primary constituency, the NCCs and the churches. Because of the high demand for EJN's participation in various regional and international meetings and networking initiatives, the EJN staff are overwhelmed and often make use of representatives from the different NCCs to represent EJN in different forums from time to time, which has also not eased the load and responsibility of the Director and staff.

### **3.4.7 Capacity Building of NCCs**

EJN's general objective was to contribute to the capacity building of National Christian Councils to be able to engage effectively in economic and social justice in the areas of debt, budget monitoring, trade, food security and public policy advocacy work. As alluded to in the assessment of the thematic areas of program focus i.e. debt, trade, budget monitoring, food security and advocacy with SADC, we can conclude that EJN has done fairly well in building the technical capacity of NCCs to engage in economic justice work. Several training sessions and exposure meetings for officers from the NCCs were held while many tailor-made training sessions were held for NCC officers. Due to these training sessions, some officers and general secretaries in the region are now able to articulate economic justice issues much more than they were able to do some five years ago.

Institutionally, EJM undertook two major initiatives to strengthen the institutional capacity of the NCCs to engage in economic justice work and to enable them participate and assist EJM secretariat in planning, designing training and capacity building activities and implementing programs. These initiatives included:

**Formation of Economic Justice Desks:** To strengthen its work at the NCC level and to build the capacity of the NCCs to engage effectively in economic justice work, EJM embarked on a process of assisting some NCCs to establish economic justice desks. To this end EJM assisted Malawi Council of churches to set up economic justice desk in 2006. Since its establishment, the desk has been able to mobilize churches in EPAs activities, issued press statements on budget stalemate in the country; partnered with other NGO in trade work; and conducted research on informal trade in Malawi. EJM also carried out an institutional audit of the Christian Council of Angola in February 2008 in order to assess the feasibility of setting up an Economic Justice Desk at the Council. EJM received requests to establish EJ desks from Zambia and Swaziland. Other NCCS have however complained that the establishment and strengthening of economic justice desks should not be piecemeal and selective but should be done across all the councils. The biggest challenge for the EJM and the Councils however remains the difficulty in raising funds to support establishment and sustenance of the desks once they are set up.

**Formation of EJM-NCC Working Committees:** Following November 2007 partnership meeting held in November 2007 in Gauteng, EJM convened a meeting in January 2008 to look into modalities of creating and operationalizing working committees within the EJM FOCCISA network to spearhead EJM's activities in various programmatic areas. The councils were to join the working committees based on their respective interests, areas of focus and competence. The committees were to be reference groups to assist EJM office in planning, implementing activities but also designing training and capacity building activities. The committees were grouped as follows:

- a) **Economic dimensions** (trade, debt and development) working committee: chaired by Mozambique included Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia.
- b) **Social Dimensions** (food security, gender and HIV/AIDs) working committee: Chaired by Lesotho included Tanzania and South Africa.

It was however, not clear to the evaluation team the extent to which these committees have performed since their establishment.



### 3.4.8 HIV/AIDS and Gender Mainstreaming

EJN recognizes that issues of poverty and economic injustice cannot be effectively addressed if gender is not mainstreamed together with other crosscutting issues such as HIV/AIDS.

**Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS:** In terms of mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in EJN projects and programmes, EJN has made links between HIV/AIDS and access to ARVs especially during the campaign around WTO-IPRs and access to drugs as well as EPAS and access to health should services such as health be privatized in the SADC region. At the secretariat level, EJN has a programme for its staff and the project level EJN also campaigns for the less privileged so that they can access medication at an affordable price or free of charge where necessary. EJN also held a series of meetings towards developing a workplace HIV/AIDS programme with assistance of a consultant contracted by Diakonia. These meetings culminated into EJN Wellness Policy that encompasses elements of health including HIV/AIDS. At the regional level, FOCCISA is in process of setting up a secretariat that will handle matters of HIV/AIDS in the region. The EJN and the Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre (EDICISA) co-hosted a conference on HIV/AIDS, with special support from the Botswana Council of Churches. The conference took place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 20–22 February 2004. The objectives of the conference were to provide common ground for church leaders and the media in the fight against HIV/AIDS; demystify issues of sexuality in the light of HIV/AIDS; and enhance the fight against stigmatisation and discrimination.

**Gender mainstreaming:** EJN appreciates that the church is perhaps one of the biggest culprits in terms of ignoring gender issues. EJN therefore held training workshop on macro-economic policies and gender mainstreaming in Economic justice issues in Maputo in May 2006. EJN also developed a module which was incorporated into the AFRODAD training for church leaders and NCC officers. EJN also strives to ensure gender equity in its workforce.

### **3.5 Program Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

While EJM planning, monitoring and evaluation framework has been inadequate, the organization has taken concrete steps to strengthen the system. EJM team now holds weekly meetings to check on progress towards the fulfillment of planned activities and outcomes. Forms have been designed to assist with documentation for the meetings, workshops and conferences that the staff members attend and to keep track on the fulfillment of the objectives that are set out. From early 2009, EJM started producing quarterly reports. EJM further plans to start from February 2010, the process of developing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. The staff especially the programme manager and other program staff are slated to undergo some MEL training.

As to planning, EJM has adopted an annual planning and review approach, with external facilitation, to formulate its plans for the next financial year. The meetings dubbed annual partnership meetings brings together EJM, NCCs and partners for the purposes of reviewing and planning for the next year. While these meetings are sometimes referred to as “strategic planning”, or “strategic review meetings, they are technically operational review and planning meetings. The meetings have however had the effect of stimulating thinking around EJM work, mandate and engendering participation of NCCs in program decision making processes of the organization. The annual partnership and biannual FOCCISA meetings have also acted as key monitoring and accountability mechanisms. EJM website remains an important instrument of dissemination and is updated fortnightly.

Despite the efforts without an overall corporate strategic planning and M&E framework, it is indeed difficult to have a clear view of EJM say in the next 5, 10 or 20 years against its prevailing and potential internal and external environmental dynamics. It is also difficult for EJM to track, document and share on the impact and best practices of the work the organization is doing.

In a nutshell, some of the shortcomings observed in the EJM’s planning, monitoring and evaluation system include lack of common regional strategic planning and M&E framework linking regional and NCC level systems and processes; lack of regular and structured follow-up of activities at the NCCs level; lack of baseline data for impact assessment; and lack of tools to link workshop objectives to program goals and follow up action plans.

### **3.6 Program Effectiveness and efficiency**

The program was effective to the extent possible given the varying program context in Southern Africa. The activities that were carried out were considered beneficial and well delivered. Most limitations to program implementation were most associated with structure of FOCCISA in relation to EJM, lack of capacity at NCCs level and the program context e.g. the situation in Zimbabwe. The vertical program design also remained a challenge to the overall program effectiveness. As to program efficiency, EJM has over the last five years established effective accountability mechanisms that have ensured efficient and accountable use of program resources at least according to a number of partners interviewed. This was reflected in the timeliness and number of activities carried out and the results reported.

### **3.7 Program achievements and impact**

Although EJM program objectives are process and change oriented with real impact taking long to be realized apart from the numeric outputs such as the number of workshops held, the organization has realized significant achievements over the last five years. EJM not only has visible results in the FOCCISA region as compared to other similar networks in the region but has also made significant impact on especially trade matters at both regional and international levels. Thus looking at the EJM objectives, we can conclude that EJM has to large extent achieved its goals. The planned activities were executed within the constraints of resource availability.

Overall, the following were considered as the key achievements and impacts of the EJM programs over the last five years:

- EJM has improved the level of involvement of National Christian Councils on economic justice issues. It has pushed the churches to become active advocates for fair trade, food security, debt cancellation and highlighted issues around ecological debt.
- Through networking and lobbying EJM has linked important actors and stakeholders together and made the churches a moral voice to be taken seriously on complex economic justice issues and development in Southern Africa.

- EJN has not only become an important and influential voice on behalf of Southern African churches on issues of debt, trade and food security, it has also been able to make the economic justice agenda an important priority for church councils and churches in the Southern Africa region.
- EJN has also been an important focal point for North-South exchange and sharing of joint advocacy agendas and a reference point to access regional church constituency.
- Staff of EJN, in particular the Director, have also contributed with Southern perspectives and knowledge to the lobbying work that Northern partners undertake in relation to their governments and the EU, which has been highly appreciated.
- A major achievement has been the partnership EJN has fostered with other civil society platforms. Notably, there is the regional forum comprising EJN, and the regional apex organisations for NGOs and Trade Unions, partnerships that are beginning to have impact on policy making within the SADC region. They together have influenced Southern African and SADC policies of crucial importance for the development and poverty reduction in the region. As a result, EJN now occupies an important space in civil society in the region.
- Through budget monitoring initiative, EJN has seen an increased participation of people especially in participating counties in monitoring of national and municipal councils budgets
- The EJN has engendered active participation of church leaders in Public Policy Matters especially after training partners in public policy analysis at the end of 2006.
- If there is an area that EJN has made most impact in 2007 in the SADC region and beyond, it is in Trade Justice Campaign. EJN was the epicenter for the Stop EPAS campaign in the SADC region and worked closely with civil society in the rest of the continent and beyond. EJN with support from various development partners was able to build capacity for church leaders in both Southern and Eastern Africa.
- Christian councils in the region can now effectively engage in trade debates at the country level and to demonstrate how the trade agreements affect livelihood

With the changing environment and more openness to hearing other voices in shaping SADC, EJN needs to push for increased recognition in formal policy processes and to leverage this for greater impact on poverty reduction processes. At the same time while most Christian Councils have been impacted in terms of exposure and capacity on issues of trade and debt, the benefits of EJN activities have not cascaded or filtered to member churches levels.

### 3.8 Program Challenges

Despite the significant achievements that EJM has realized over last five years, it experienced a number of challenges in its program work. First EJM lacks a strategic framework to guide agenda and priority setting at different and disaggregated levels of its structure i.e. regional, national/NCC and sub national/church levels. As a result EJM's program visibility beyond the NCCs is minimal. Second, one of the biggest challenges of EJM is how to balance between regional-global focus and NCC/national focus. Most NCCs interviewed felt that EJM spends so much energy and resources at regional and global levels at the expense of its mandate and commitment to build and facilitate the NCCs and the church in advocacy and promoting economic and social justice. Thus, while EJM has been working fairly effectively at a regional level, its impact at the national and sub national levels remain wanting. Third, some Christian Councils were reported to lack political will to engage in the activities of EJM despite the available opportunities for such engagement. Such NCCs would commit themselves to work on resolutions made but would not make efforts to execute their obligations.

Fourth, different NCCs are at different levels of development with different expectations and resource endowments. More importantly, the capacity of the NCCs economic justice desks is varied. There are NCCs with fully developed programmes and highly trained staff and are working reasonably well while a number of the NCCs also have serious resource and capacity limitations to engage. This variation makes it difficult for EJM to effectively and collegiately implement economic justice programmes in all the NCCs.

Fifth inadequate and limited human resource establishment at NCCs remains a key challenge to EJM and the NCCs. Most of the NCCs have limited staff who are spread too thin over many aspects of their work. Other NCCs lack the right personnel to engage in economic justice issues and often send wrong people for training who ultimately do not add value to the capacity and work of the NCCs as intended. This has not only affected the delivery and execution of EJM programs at the NCCs level but also negatively affected the consistency and cumulative effect of the EJM capacity building efforts. For this reason, some NCCs keep sending new people for training thereby compromising the cumulative impact of the capacity building and skills development initiatives. Furthermore due to inadequate funding to Christian councils, staff retention is difficult. Other challenges reported included:

- Divisions within the Churches

- Complicity between the church and oppressive state regimes e.g. Zimbabwe
- Competition between EJM and NCCS for funding from shared ecumenical partners due to lack of clear distinction between regional and NCC level funding priorities
- Dependence on a few ecumenical funding partners by both EJM and NCCs

### **3.9 Recommendations**

- (a) EJM needs to adopt a program development and implementation process that fosters common ownership of programs by NCCs and churches. To this end, there is need to adopt a two prong - bottom up approach to planning whereby the planning process begins with the NCCs and ends with the formulation of a regional EJM plan that includes and reflects the priorities identified by the respective NCCs. We strongly suggest that in formulating EJM strategic plan, this approach should be adopted and in our considered opinion, we believe that it is what will motivate NCCs to engage in the EJM program management process.
- (b) There is need for a clear, shared program structure at national, regional and local levels that is sensitive to the needs and issues at every level.
- (c) EJM needs to clearly define and disseminate its program approach especially in relation to the facilitative and implementation function vis a vis that of NCCs.
- (d) There should be a set of guidelines on terms and procedures for delegation of the implementation function to NCCs.
- (e) There is need to establish monitoring and evaluation system and framework with well-defined performance indicators to enable assessment of the impact of EJM programs and institutional activities.
- (f) EJM should adopt a results-based management and rights-based approach to planning with well-defined program and institutional performance indicators for various levels of the organization structure.
- (g) There is need for a clear program strategy and approach to provide a predictable framework for carrying out EJM debt campaign and food security activities of EJM.
- (h) EJM needs to develop a planning framework and guidelines for EJM and NCCs

- (i) EJN needs to develop subject specific program strategies e.g. economy and ecological justice program strategy encompassing agriculture, extractive industries, climate change and ecological debt.
- (j) Need to build capacity of churches in budget monitoring and tracking in respect of regional bodies, national budgets and devolved funds.
- (k)** There is need for EJA/FOCCISA to establish a desk at the SADC to project an independent and conspicuous profile of FOCCISA at SADC secretariat
- (l) Need to develop gender mainstreaming guidelines for program design and a strategy for involving church based women groups such as women guilds, mother unions etc. in EJA economic justice work
- (m)** EJA should facilitate NCCs to develop country specific Economic Justice plans linked to the regional EJA strategy
- (n) There is need to strengthen and expand the scope of the current programs and to develop subject specific strategic plans e.g. at both regional and country levels
- (o) There is need to develop NCCs economic justice desk establishment and strengthening strategy and guidelines.

## **4.0 INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT**

One of the objectives of this evaluation was to evaluate whether the role of EJM is relevant and appropriate for FOCCISA or whether it should change. This section therefore presents an assessment of EJM's institutional arrangements and management processes.

### **4.1 Institutional Milestones**

EJM was formed in 1997 with support of Northern partners to network the FOCCISA members around the issues of economic justice. To formalize its formation, the NCCs met and agreed in October 1997 in Harare, Zimbabwe on the vision, mission, objectives, structure and ownership of the network. Since its inception in 1997, EJM has achieved several institutional milestones. The first three years of its life (1997-2000), saw EJM embark on a process of establishing its strategic identity and basic organizational systems. With the move of the EJM offices to Cape Town under the directorship of Rev. Malcom Damon in 2001, the organization has grown significantly to become a strong institutional mechanism of FOCCISA, facilitating and working with NCCs and churches to champion economic and social justice issues in the region. From 2001- 2005, EJM invested in setting up the secretariat, strengthening staff establishment, building networks and expanding program focus.

From 2006 to date, EJM has endeavored to strengthen its systems and operations. It was reported that five years ago, there was no difference of the head from the tail. There were no written policies or guidelines, no constitution, and no conditions of service. There was no strategic plan and the scope of EJM's work was open ended. EJM was more accountable to development partners who appeared to be the real owners of EJM than the NCCs while the interaction between EJM and NCCs was mainly through workshops. This situation has markedly changed over the last three years. There have been attempts to redefine the role of EJM vis a vis that of NCCs in term of roles, mandate and constituency. The EJM approach has also shifted from vertical to horizontal engagement in relation to NCCs with attempts to share roles and responsibilities between EJM secretariat and NCCs through the working committees. Efforts to pool resource mobilization and to establish economic justice desks at NCCs have however not worked well due to difficulties in raising funds and lack of buy in by General Secretaries of NCCs.



## 4.2 EJM in the context of FOCCISA

The EJM is variously presented as a network, project or initiative of FOCCISA. Legally, EJM is a body corporate registered in the Republic of South Africa as a Non-profit Organisation (NPO 057-177) and Public Benefit Organisation (PBO 930-028-984). It is an association of 12 NCC members including Madagascar that was admitted into membership in July 2009. The 12 National Christian Councils are also members of FOCCISA. EJM constitution adopted in October 2006 also provides for associate and honorary membership even though there are still no members in these categories. FOCCISA Executive Committee appoints or elects the EJM Steering Committee from among its members.

As an organ of FOCCISA, EJM is generally responsible to the FOCCISA Executive Committee on behalf of the Biannual General Assembly of members, the NCCs. As a registered membership organization nevertheless, EJM should be directly responsible to its “owners”, the NCCs that constitute its membership. As presently established therefore, EJM exercises dual authorities one emanating from FOCCISA of which it is legitimately part and the other from its members, the NCCs that legally constitute the organization.

By law, FOCCISA is not a legal personality with capacity to transact business on its own, to sue and be sued. FOCCISA is therefore a loose informal organization while EJM despite being a creation of FOCCISA is a formal organization with a life of its own, structure, network of funding partners and legal capacity to own and dispose of property, right of perpetual succession and to carry out any business allowed under the law. As a loose informal organization, FOCCISA only exists during meetings and in terms of its claim of such creations as EJM. Technically, has no capacity to govern and direct the affairs of EJM except by way of electing or appointing the Steering Committee of EJM, a responsibility that the EJM constitution leaves to the FOCCISA Biannual General Assembly by virtue of shared core membership.

Because of the FOCCISA informality all the respondents felt that it has not been able to provide leadership, superintend and guide EJM. This they attributed to FOCCISA’s lack of:

- capacity and institutional infrastructure to oversee and supervise EJM;
- corporate framework to guide EJM activities
- legal capacity to attract and administer funds
- legal capacity to hold and dispose of property

In our opinion, the looseness and informality of FOCCISA is potentially detrimental to the growth of EJM as an institution in its own right. As such reconciling the informality of FOCCISA and the formality of EJM remains an area of challenge.

#### **4.2.1 Role of Church leaders in EJM**

Essentially, it is the role of NCCs to reach churches and ultimately the marginalized communities in their areas of jurisdiction. In this scheme it follows that EJM's main role is to ensure that NCCs are capacitated to engage their members and target communities in economic justice issues. It is also the role of EJM to further and create platforms for the NCC leadership to bring their prophetic voice in economic justice issues. A number of respondents nonetheless raised the issue of the need to involve Church leaders affiliated to NCCs in EJM. Indeed in our view, for strategic purposes, the role of the church leadership should be factored in the affairs of EJM in order to bring the necessary ecumenical and theological value into the work of EJM

#### **4.2.2 EJM Membership and the General Assembly**

As a network, the strength and purpose of EJM lies in its membership. The EJM Constitution defines a membership that consists of NCCs of FOCCISA as core or full members; associate members or partners who do not attend FOCCISA General Assembly but network with EJM; and honorary members who are co-opted because of their interest in EJM's vision, mission and work. Associate and Honorary members who have no voting powers can be admitted as either corporate or individual members.

No specific obligations either in terms of subscription or any form of contribution is imposed on the members. The constitution also does not explicitly require the members to participate, cooperate and be involved in the implementation and realisation of EJM objects. Roles and responsibilities of members are also not clear neither are the institutional mechanisms currently defined to follow up on NCCs on the resolutions they may make at meetings.

Although articles 3.7 and 5.1 of the EJM constitution refer to EJM meetings, Annual General Assemblies and special meetings, the powers, functions and procedures of the Annual General Assemblies and special meetings are not stated. No Annual General Assembly of EJM has also ever been held. It should however, be pointed out that there appears to be some underlying assumption that FOCCISA General Assemblies are also EJM's General Assemblies because all the

NCCs are present at the Bi-annual meetings and EJV reports to the meetings on all its activities and finances. This situation however needs to be clarified and corrected especially in the context of FOCCISA norms and the South African legal requirement that organizations such as EJV should hold their AGMs.

Overall, the relationship between EJV and NCCs can be understood at two levels. At one level, NCCs form or constitute EJV as umbrella organisations consisting of a range of Christian denominations including the African indigenous Churches. At another level, NCCs are the primary beneficiaries and partners of the EJV program activities. In relation to the latter, the major role of EJV is to build capacity of National Christian Councils (NCCS) to engage in Economic and Social Justice lobby, campaigning and advocacy (on their own and in relevant national and regional alliances) at the national and regional levels. It is therefore the desire of the NCCs that EJV plays a key role in providing strategic direction, intellectual resources (research and policy), lobby and advocacy on their behalf at regional /SADC/AU level, as well as capacity building to the National Christian councils to engage in lobby and advocacy at national level related to economic and social justice in the region. This is an important role given the fact that the Churches in Southern Africa played a significant historical role in the liberation struggle(s) in South(ern) Africa and are now actively working to find a new role in fighting for economic and social justice.

#### **4.2.3 The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee of the EJV consisting of five members is appointed or elected by the Bi-annual General Assembly of FOCCISA to manage the affairs of EJV. The Steering Committee is charged with the responsibility of policy making, giving direction and overseeing the general management and operations of the network. The FOCCISA Chairperson is an ex officio Chairperson of the EJV Steering Committee. The Chairperson of the Steering Committee serves for one term of two years and is eligible for re-election for one further term only. Constitutionally, the Steering Committee should meet at least twice a year although in practice they meet more often. Good governance practice and norm requires that a governing body should meet at least four times every year. Since inception, the members of Steering Committee appointed by the FOCCISA General Assembly have always been members of the FOCCISA Executive Committee which presents special governance challenges relating matters of separation of powers and checks and balance between the two organs.

As currently, constituted the Steering Committee consists of four General Secretaries and the Executive Director of EJV with no powers of co-option. In our opinion, this limits the range of expertise, skills and experiences that may be required by the Committee to effectively execute

its mandate and technically guide the secretariat. The limited number of members of the Steering Committee also makes it difficult to form sub or ad hoc committees to assist the secretariat in any area of need. It also potentially makes the Steering Committee vulnerable to changes that may take place in the offices of the member Secretary Generals at their Councils.

Although not expressly required by the EJM Constitution, the Steering Committee through its Secretary presents its reports to the Bi-Annual General Assembly of FOCCISA that meets every alternative year. Article 10.8 of the EJM Constitution nevertheless requires a report and audited financial statement to be circulated at the Annual General Meeting of EJM to all members and other interested bodies. It was however, pointed out that these requirements are carried out at the Bi-annual Meeting of FOCCISA.

### **4.3 Management and Administrative Processes**

The EJM office/secretariat or Coordination Office headed by the Executive Director facilitates and executes the decisions and policies of the Steering Committee and FOCCISA Bi-annual General Assembly. The Secretariat ensures:

- Efficient and accountable management and administrative systems and procedures;
- Effective and efficient implementations of plans and activities;
- Effective coordination, networking and communication;
- Effective communication with partners.
- Safeguarding the image and integrity of the organization
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Capacity building of members;
- Organization of governance meetings;
- Technical support to NCCs where necessary;
- Fundraising and resource mobilization; and
- Statutory obligations of the organization are met.

The management team together with various task teams reviews and implements plans, review progress, coordinate project activities and carry out management actions.

***Location of the secretariat:*** Most members interviewed also expressed the desire for the relocation of the EJM secretariat from Cape Town to Johannesburg. They reckoned that Johannesburg is more convenient, cheaper and easy to access for them.

***Guidance and Direction from FOCCISA:*** In terms of support and guidance by the FOCCISA, it was pointed out that currently, EJM receives no such support from FOCCISA Executive Committee due to its lack of resources and institutional infrastructure and the fact that the EJM Steering Committee is also part of the FOCCISA Executive Committee. As one respondent put it, “the current relationship between EJM and FOCCISA is a case of the “tail wagging the dog” instead of the “dog wagging the tail”.

***Human resource management:*** It was noted that EJM has strived over the last five years to improve the working environment and conditions of service for the staff. It has also developed personnel policies and procedures that are compliant with the labour laws of South Africa. According to the records of the Steering Committee meetings, the remunerations offered to EJM staff is fairly reasonable and competitive in the South African context. The management should however be encouraged to continuously enhance the working environment in order to stimulate people to give their best to the organization and members. While there has been marked improvement in the staff establishment from two in 2001 to the current level, there has also marked increase in the program portfolio over the years. Care should therefore be taken to avoid work overload. To this end, there may be need to review the current and planned activities in relation to staff levels and funding available. Team work between program and financial staff in program development and reporting also need to be looked into.

In terms of performance appraisal, a systems audit by CMDS in 2007 noted that EJM had no system for formal performance appraisals of staff members. It noted that staff performance was only monitored through on-going team-based accountability which was not sufficient to ensure continued efficient and effective working of EJM. In this regard, they noted problems with meeting both internal and external deadlines. CMDS therefore strongly recommended urgent establishment of an appropriate system of staff performance appraisal to ensure continuous improvement as well as efficient and effective working of EJM. If this has not been

accomplishment, we reiterate the same. Such a system will also assist EJM in identifying areas of need for capacity building and promote performance accountability.

**Risk analysis and management:** Risk analysis and management form central part of any organization's strategic management. It is the process in which an organization methodically identifies and addresses the risks and threats to its survival and realization of its objectives including sustained benefits. Risk management focus is hence on the identification and treatment of these risks and threats with the aim of adding maximum sustainable value to the organizations operations. Through risk analysis, an organization not only marshals the understanding of the potential upside and downside of all those factors which can affect the organization performance but also increases the organization's probability of success while reducing both the probability of failure and the uncertainty of achieving the organization's objectives. In this way risk analysis and management assists organizations in various ways including:

- a) providing a framework for an organization that enables future activity to take place in a consistent and controlled manner;
- b) improving decision making, planning and prioritization by comprehensive and structured understanding of activities, their volatility and opportunities and threats
- c) contributing to more efficient use/allocation of capital and resources within the organization
- d) reducing volatility in the non-essential areas of focus;
- e) protecting and enhancing assets and organizational image;
- f) developing and supporting people and the organization's knowledge base; and
- g) optimizing operational efficiency.

EJM was however found to lack appropriate systems for risk analysis and management which will need to be established.

**Physical facilities:** EJM at present occupies an office in 2nd Floor, Church House, 1 Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town, 8000 for which it pays Rs 8000.00\_ per month. It would be advisable for the organization to explore possibilities of acquiring its own property as part of cost containment and institutional sustainability strategy. This should be considered as part of the EJM's planned physical relocation from Cape Town to Johannesburg.

## 4.4 Financial management:

### 4.4.1 Compliance with accounting principles

In accordance with the South African Statement of Generally Accepted Accounting Practice for Small and Medium sized Entities, and in the manner required by the Companies Act of South Africa, 1973, “management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these annual financial statements. Such a responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances”

The team observes that management was expected to provide both accounting and secretarial duties. However, the auditors, decided to undertake most of this work and hence their comments “ without qualifying our opinion, we draw your attention to the fact that with the written consent of all steering committee, we have performed certain accounting and secretarial duties”

The team recommends that the Finance and Accounting function at EJM be strengthened by ensuring that the Steering Committee provides an oversight on the finances.

### 4.4.2 Review of Audited Financial Statements

The audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2008 were approved and signed by the auditors on March 12, 2009. The team observed that this is also true for the financial statements for previous years 2005 to 2007. In addition, the financial statements are sufficiently detailed to provide the reader with useful information on the performance and financial wealth of EJM.

The team commends EJM Steering Committee and the management for this timely finalisation of the financial reports

Summary of Income Statement for the three year period. Figures in 000's

	2008	2007	2006	2005
1. Core Funding	1,511	1,446	1,213	1,064
2. Program Funding	2,070	2,747	887	1,439
	<b>3,581</b>	<b>4,193</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>2,503</b>
3. Expenditure	3653	3,795	2,427	1,712
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(72)</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>(327)</b>	<b>791</b>

**Key Observations:**

- (a) The results of the financial statements, show a growth by 50% since 2005 for both core and program funding income. This steady growth is largely due to continuing funding support from main funders
- (b) Core funding levels have been relatively stable while, program funding remains unpredictable
- (c) EJM dependence on annual financing is not healthy given the growing commitment to maintain the running of the various programs
- (d) EJM needs to develop a multi year funding in order to ensure stability of the program work. In order to realise this, management will have to come up with a clear funding strategy given the dwindling donor funding



**Table: Checklist of essential management and administrative processes and actions taken**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>What has been done</b>	<b>What is outstanding</b>	<b>Comments/Remarks</b>
1	Compliance with Labor legislation	Following RSA labour standards	None	No need for special policy
2	Tax compliance	Not required	None	Not required
3	Auditing of accounts	Done	None	2006 Audit
4	Preparation management accounts and financial statements	Done for Monthly Management meetings	In depth analysis of financial reports	None
5	Installation and training on Pastel accounting and payroll software	Purchased and installed	More training for Finance personnel	Training commenced
6	Funder analysis	All proposal have section on potential funders and amounts pledged		Working on variances
7	Monthly financial reporting against budget.	Schedule for monthly finances developed, Management meets to examine financial management	More management meetings	Management will keep on reviewing progress
8	Monthly financial reporting timetable	Implemented, coincides with monthly management meetings		
9	Implementation of an ordering system for goods &	Any purchase above R1000 is accompanied by 3	Making this a policy	Implemented already

	services	quotations		
10	Implement cash flow management system	Monthly cash flow template designed	Incorporation in monthly Management meetings	
11	Change to electronic banking procedure and training of staff	Done, electronic authorization introduced, two people make payments (one authorizes the other pays)	None	Implemented
12	Establish two payment- runs a month.	Payments done on 1 <sup>st</sup> 15 <sup>th</sup> and 25 <sup>th</sup> of the month as a start	Staff to buy in the idea and submit requests on time before scheduled dates	In due course payments runs will be reduced to two per month
13	Label assets with a unique asset number and periodic inventory	In progress: All EJN assets will bear an EJN label	None	Done
14	Risk management system			
15	Insurance for staff members carrying cash	Cash beyond some limit will be insured	Not required	Not required as money is often transferred to workshop venues
16	Check log for back-up of data with Computer Service Provider	Project Officer assigned to check on staff for back up procedures every fortnightly	None	Assistant project officer assigned to do this
17	Management information system	All information in the Office is backed up in the EJN server	None	Officer designated does this
18	Access to fire-proof safe obtained	Safe available in office, files stored	None	Back up CD for EJN information yet to be

				made and stored there too
19	Numbering, filing and control of supporting documents	Finance Department has introduced, all other departments to do this too	Yet to be introduced	Awaiting procurement of additional office to support this: bookshelves etc
20	Buy paid stamp and	Procured and being used	None	Done
21	NCCs to provide acknowledgement of funds received	All funds transferred to NCCS is acknowledged by receipts	none	Acknowledgement receipts developed
22	Amend the expense claim form	Forms amended and updated	None	Forms improved
23	Strengthens petty-cash float system	Administrative secretary trained on petty cash usage, more funds provided only when fully liquidated with back up receipts	none	New rules implemented
24	Separation of duties and independent checking	Director authorizes, finance coordinator and assistant check and make payments	none	On more officer doing this
25	Improve Salary processing	Payroll improved, communication on salaries matters always put in writing to officers concerned	none	implemented

26	Role and functioning of the Steering Committee	Last Steering committee discussed	Sharing of roles yet to be done	Awaiting next seating to complete
27	Prepare a schedule of matters for Attention of Steering Committee(SC)	Management team meets to look into matters to be brought to the SC	none	Agenda developed for SC attention
28	Schedule Steering Committee dates in Advance	SC to meet thrice a year	none	Dates being proposed to all SC members
29	Setting up of an Advisory/Management Committee	SC to approve	Not Yet done	Modalities of implementing this being looked into
30	Organize Partnership Meeting			
31	Working committee meetings			
32	Staff development plan			
33	Executive Management Team	Management team constituted: Executive Director, Programs Manager and Finance Coordinator	Discussions with SC	SC to approve
34	Annual Planning and Review meetings	Implemented: Monthly meetings: Home-Week aimed at improving review of activities	none	Reports ready
35	Establish Evaluation, Monitoring Procedure & Systems	Need to devise a system for M& E	Not done	To be discussed further
36	Reporting system	Getting an approved report format	None	Implemented

37	Staff Performance Appraisals	Discussed at staff level	Appraisal forms being developed	Management team soliciting ideas on how best this should be done
38	Compliance with labour laws	Currently Labour Laws are followed	Yet to be done	Management looking into the procurement of the manual
39	Staff Files and HR Documents per member	Implemented, files kept in the Director's office		Updating is being done of the personnel files
40	Role and functions of Annual General meetings			

#### 4.5 Funding Support and Cooperation

EJN is lucky to have had consistent team of partners who have supported it from inception in 1997 to date. Most of the following partners have supported EJN with funds and technical assistance over the years:

- a) Christian Aid United Kingdom (UK)
- b) Church of Sweden
- c) Church World Service (USA)
- d) Diakonia (Sweden)
- e) Church Development Service (EED, Germany)
- f) ICCO (Netherlands)
- g) Kairos (Canada)
- h) Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
- i) Oxfam (Great Britian)

- j) Oxfam America (USA)
- k) Oxfam Novib (Netherlands)
- l) Southern African Trust (South Africa)
- m) Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA)
- n) World Council of Churches (WCC)
- o) All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)

In general we observed that most of the EJM Partners have been faithful while EJM on its part has been able to sustain these relationships over the years. Nearly all the funding partners interviewed expressed confidence in EJM affirming its strong and demonstrated commitment to driving economic justice agenda in southern Africa.

Despite the strong partnership between EJM and the ecumenical partners, there is however currently no formal platform/forum that brings them together at the regional level for purposes of harmonizing and rationalizing funding relationships vis a vis the NCCs. There is also an apparent tension of expectations between EJM primary constituency, the NCCs and Partners' expectations and interests. It may therefore be advisable for EJM to institutionalize and expand the mandate of the existing partnership meetings organized every two years (but mainly focusing on NCCs) to deliberately involve funding partners as well. This will assist EJM to balance between meeting the Partners interests and championing NCCs expectations and interests based on clear appreciation of program and funding priorities at both regional and NCCs level.

In relation to sustainability of funding, it was clear that due to the global financial crunch, the existing funding sources are dwindling. As a result, few new funding opportunities and call for proposals are emerging while northern governments are changing their foreign aid policies due the global financial crisis. Some of the most faithful funders of EJM are therefore either being forced to adopt new funding priorities and strategies and/or to review their funding levels and relationships. The opportunity however, is that some of these funders are reducing the number of individual funding portfolios in favour of consortium approaches, a shift that should favour regional and membership outfits such as EJM.



## 4.6 Recommendations

While EJM has grown over the years and has become an important regional and international in economic justice, the future of EJM should be seen in context of an organized and formal FOCCISA based on clarity of strategy, roles and responsibilities. It is therefore recommended as follows:

- FOCCISA Executive Committee and General Assembly need to seriously consider and make a decision as to:
  - a) whether EJM should continue its existence and growth in the context of a loose informal FOCCISA as is the case at present or,
  - b) whether EJM is best placed under a more formal FOCCISA or,
  - c) whether EJM should pursue its vision as an independent body constituted by the NCCs.

Most respondents appeared to favour the second option stressing that FOCCISA needs to be institutionally grounded to enable EJM and other such institutions of FOCCISA to grow without undue encumbrance. They however also pointed that if FOCCISA is to be formalized, utmost care must be taken not to create a supreme structure/bureaucratic structure that will hinder the growth and stability of its institutions. At the same time care must be taken to prevent such institutions from challenging or undermining the sovereignty of NCCs and supremacy of FOCCISA.

- To safeguard the supremacy of FOCCISA, we propose the following measures:
  - Any of the FOCCISA institutions e.g. EJM should be designated as the official focal point of FOCCISA -global. This should however be accompanied by clear delimitations of authority and functional boundaries to ensure the independence of both FOCCISA and the hosting FOCCISA institution;
  - The host FOCCISA institution's legal status should provide legal cover for FOCCISA-global as the suitable form of registration for FOCCISA is explored. One of such options would be to register it as transnational organization in Botswana and have its secretariat in SADC under an MOU;



- Members of FOCCISA should make annual contributions to support FOCCISA institutional activities. The activities must be corporate and cross cutting and must not be a duplication, competitive and substitutive of the FOCCISA institution's activities;
  - FOCCISA institutions should designate a proportion of their income to support the FOCCISA -global institutional activities. At present neither the NCCs nor the FOCCISA institutions such as EJM are making any direct contribution to support and sustain FOCCISA. The Chairperson and members of the Executive Committee are therefore forced to use and depend on the resources of their own Councils to support their FOCCISA responsibilities.
- (a) To enforce ownership of EJM by the members, NCCs should show commitment by making specified contributions to the organizations. The health of any membership organization depends first and foremost on the principle of each member consistently seeking to contribute to the association rather than merely receiving. It is necessary to compile profiles of the member-organizations, such that the strengths and distinctiveness that each member brings into the association are tapped as needed.
  - (b) More importantly, members' obligations, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly spelt out. At the same time, the powers and functions of the EJM General Assembly need to be defined and the relationship between EJM's General Assembly and that of FOCCISA need to be clarified. In other words, the Constitution of EJM needs to be reviewed in relation to that of FOCCISA to address these issues.
  - (c) The Constitution need to be reviewed to provide the Steering Committee with the power to co-opt members considering the range of skills and diversity of opinion that may be required by the Committee to be effective and legitimate.
  - (d) The size of the Committee should be increased from the current five to between 8 and 12 members. The membership should consist of four representatives elected by the FOCCISA Bi-Annual General Assembly including the Chairperson of the FOCCISA Executive Committee; an expert (s) from particular field (s) of EJM's focus; a Church leader (s); representative (s) from a network or NGO and business sector; and representative (s) from women and youth groups as may deemed appropriate.
  - (e) There is need for a clear institution wide strategy to empower churches of FOCCISA for critical engagement in EJM work
  - (f) There is need to review the EJM management, leadership and relations with NCC in the context of FOCCISA.

- (g) Need to develop MOU with specific NCCs based on their specific areas of need and responsibility
- (h) There is an urgent need to evaluate FOCCISA's long term outlook and decide whether it should remain informal or should become formal in the context of SADC.
- (i) There is need to clarify the relationship between EJM – NCCS and their member churches in the context FOCCISA and EJM Constitution.
- (j) There is need to open up the EJM steering committee to bring in other key stakeholders such as Church leaders and persons with special skills not available in the membership
- (k) Need to evolve a united at coordinated approach to resource mobilization. There is potential to receive funds as a consortium of NCCs.
- (l) Although there have been partnership meetings organized every two years mainly focusing on NCCs, there is need to institutionalize this and widen its mandate to also allow the funding partners involvement.
- (m) Need to explore local alternative resources and develop an investment plan for surplus incomes.

## **5.0 SUSTAINABILITY**

Very often matters concerning sustainability are linked to the question of whether or not a given institution can continue to exist with or without external support. For purposes of this evaluation, sustainability is looked at in terms of an organization's ability and capacity to accomplish what it is set out to achieve with relative stability over time rather than the mere perpetuation of an organization's existence. In the case of EJM, the mere fact that its vision as stated cannot be realized in the immediate future makes the question of sustainability a major point of concern especially in the context of the worsening social and economic inequalities in the region. For this reason, in our opinion, EJM must find ways of sustaining itself overtime through well coordinated strategic interventions if it is to realize its vision and objectives.

### **5.1 Institutional sustainability**

This refers to the ability of an institution to modify itself, create new forms of existence and adapt to the environment within which it operates as it pursues its short and long term stated objectives. Institutional sustainability is about continuous improvement while ensuring the

long-term health and performance of the organization. Specifically, institutional sustainability is about:

- Clarity of strategic focus
- Results
- Innovation and creativity
- Beneficiary satisfaction
- Service quality
- Effectiveness and efficiency of management systems
- Job, work, and life satisfaction
- Good governance

The assessment of EJN's institutional sustainability reveals a fairly fragile organization operating in the context of a loose and informal parent organization, FOCCISA. Without established and critical institutional support structures from FOCCISA, the organization's strength appears to derive from the dynamism of its Executive Director and the good will of funding partners. For EJN to be institutionally sustainable, it is imperative that FOCCISA-global is reconfigured in terms of structure and functionality. In particular, the following will be important to consider:

*Evolving member friendly and supportive strategies:* One of the threats to sustainability of member based organizations is the failure to focus on the felt needs and priorities of members and other primary constituencies. To address this EJN needs to evolve the capacity to plan around the needs of the members in order to enhance not only its relevance to the members but also to inculcate a broad sense of ownership. This can only happen if members are genuinely involved in planning and other decision-making process of the organization based on an enabling strategic framework.

*Promoting active participation of the FOCCISA Executive Committee and members in the governance and management of EJN:* Both the Executive Committee and members of FOCCISA through either directly or through the General Assembly should be actively involved in

superintending, guiding and directing the affairs of EJM as part of the overall FOCCISA corporate governance strategy. To achieve this, the capacity of FOCCISA Executive and EJM Steering Committees should be enhanced and their roles and responsibilities clearly defined.

*Building and strengthening Effective Management structures, systems, and staff capacity:* A clear structure that provides a framework for people to channel their contributions is imperative to any organization. A review of EJM and FOCCISA organization structure, task flow, roles and responsibilities as well as risk management systems will be necessary to ensure coordinated and orchestrated delivery of services at all levels of the organization. In this regard, all the necessary management systems and policies should be continually reviewed and strengthened to enhance productivity and accountability.

## **5.2 Program Sustainability**

This refers to the ability of the institution to remain focused on its strategic objectives and to ensure their translation into actual short and long term benefits. While the linkages between the EJM stated corporate vision, mission, objectives and the program activities appear consistent, there is however lack of strategic framework to guide both short and long term programming. For program sustainability, EJM needs to evolve a strategic framework upon which both program development, partner negotiations and institutional growth would be guided.

## **5.3 Financial sustainability**

Financial sustainability is the ability of an organization to meet its program and administrative costs with relative confidence and security. Assessment of the current resource base of EJM reveals a high degree of dependence on funding from long standing ecumenical partners such as Christian Aid United Kingdom (UK), Church of Sweden, Church World Service (USA), Diakonia (Sweden) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). Funding from most these partners is however short term and earmarked based on annual funding cycle. Thus although EJM appears for the time being to enjoy some level of good financial health, the medium to long term outlook is however uncertain. So far no serious thought has been given to the question of long term financial health of the organization. Achieving financial sustainability therefore remains a major

challenge to the organization and a concern of the members. To ensure financial sustainability EJM it will be imperative for EJM to:

- Enhance ownership by members, such that each member (institutional and individual) continually seeks to bring resources to the association;
- Sharpen its niche and social marketing capabilities;
- Explore the many possible alternatives of scaling up and broadening the funding partnership base
- generating income through provision of technical services and other possible sources; and
- Negotiating with donors for long term institutional development funding.

## 5.4 Recommendations

- (a) Need to develop EJM multilevel institutional and financial sustainability strategy
- (b)** There is need to develop in a participatory manner medium to long term strategic plan with clear articulation of EJM's short term, medium and long term program and institutional development strategies. This should provide the basis for strategic restructuring and re-organization of EJM towards institutional, program and financial sustainability.
- (c) Need to diversify EJM's resource base by initiating viable income generating activities. A specific mechanism may need to be established to champion EJM's income generation efforts.
- (d) EJM needs to come up with a financial sustainability strategy. A taskforce may need to be constituted to assist in exploring different options for ensuring financial sustainability
- (e) There need to invest resources, time and intelligence on strengthening the NCCs as part of the overall EJM's sustainability strategy.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION AND IMPERATIVES FOR THE FUTURE**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

There is no doubt that EJN has done great works and achieved a lot over the last six years. EJN has implemented very successful and well-appreciated programs, especially in research, advocacy, information sharing, training and capacity building and mobilizing churches, church related organizations and CSOs in areas of debt and finance, trade and development, budget monitoring, food security and SADC. Through its work, EJN has improved the level of involvement of National Christian Councils on economic justice issues. Through networking and lobbying EJN has linked important actors and stakeholders and made the churches a moral and influential voice on complex economic justice issues and development in Southern Africa. Further, EJN has become an important focal point for North-South exchange and dialogue on economic justice and an epicenter for the Stop EPAS campaign in the SADC region. More importantly, Christian councils in the region can now effectively engage in economic justice debates at the country level and are able to demonstrate how the bad international trade and development policies and processes are affecting the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable communities in Africa.

The role and relevance is however far from over given the worsening socio-economic situation in Southern Africa and globally. The level of poverty and the gap between the rich and poor is widening. The relation between the rich nations of the north and poor nations of the South is deteriorating while the global debt and financial crises including deteriorating terms of trade persist. The threats to the environment remain as critical as they were a decade ago. Issues of gender inequality, unemployment and under-employment remain exacerbated by the global financial and economic crisis. Common in all FOCCISA countries are still issues of bad governance, corruption, under-development, social exclusion and marginalization. At EJN level, the organization is yet to realize its full potential due to a number of challenges including the institutional weakness of the parent organization - FOCCISA, lack of long term funding commitments; inadequate membership (NCCs) commitment; and lack of long-term institutional development, program and sustainability strategy among others.

## 6.2 Key Lessons

Overall, some of the key lessons that have emerged from the work of EJN over past years are as follows:

- (a) The relevance of EJN and FOCCISA in SADC region is beyond doubt;
- (b) Exchange of experiences, sharing of information and networking among Economic Justice players is key to sustainable policy change;
- (c) Research and documentation are key to the success and effectiveness of economic justice advocacy initiatives;
- (d) Cultivating mutual trust among network members is key to their success and impact;
- (e) Succession planning and change management is critical for institutional stability and sustainability;
- (f) Building the capacity of the National Christian Councils and establishing the economic justice focal points at the country level is critical for effective economic justice campaign and reaching out to churches and local communities in the region;
- (g) Sustainable economic justice campaigns require a strategic framework to guide activities at different levels;
- (h) Rooting global, regional and national economic justice campaigns in peoples' lives and involving local groups in policy advocacy is key to achieving sustainable impact on the lives of the poor and vulnerable groups;
- (i) Building global, regional and national alliances and partnerships is critical in lobbying, advocacy and influencing international negotiations;
- (j) Ensuring good donor relations and ability to negotiate with donors from a position of mutual respect, accountability and clarity of vision is critical for effective fundraising;
- (k) There is opportunity for EJN to provide both demand and supply driven technical services including research, consultancy, training and policy analysis in support of the economic justice movement in the region and beyond.

### 6.3 Way Forward

There is still much work to do and ground to be covered by EJM to ensure an economically just society. This however, demands well-coordinated strategic approach and a resolve to:

- (a) Scale up the institutional capacity of FOCCISA and EJM to make them more responsive to the needs of their primary constituency at different levels;
- (b) Develop strategic framework for planning, growing, managing, monitoring, evaluating and sustaining EJM interventions in the context of a strong and secure FOCCISA;
- (c) Strengthen regional and national level systems and mechanisms for advocacy and sharing of information, experiences and best practices and for social and technical exchange/interchange on economic justice;
- (d) Establish institutional mechanisms for succession planning and change management within EJM in the context of FOCCISA to ensure institutional stability and sustainability;
- (e) Review EJM constitution in relation to the FOCCISA constitution with a view to rationalizing the overall institutional framework for EJM governance, management and growth;
- (f) Develop resource mobilization and sustainability strategy to ensure financial health of the network; and
- (g) Establish a technical resource and support facility in EJM to provide demand driven services in economic justice.

Thus as EJM searches for ways of entrenching itself as the most respected ecumenical platform and resource on economic justice in southern Africa, it needs to develop a clear medium and long term institutional and program development strategy. Further the need to invest time and intelligence on strengthening the capacity of NCCs remain a key strategy for service delivery and sustainability.



## **APPENDIX 1: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

### **EJN Staff**

1. Rev. Malcom Damon – Director EJN
2. Mr. Makombe – Program Manager
3. Mr. Francis Ng’ambi – Former EJN Program Manager
4. Sofia Svarfvar (Intern)

### **Members (NCCs)**

1. David Modiega - First Chairman – Botswana Council of Churches
2. Rev. Dr. Zwana -GS – ZCC
3. Khangezile Dlamimi – Swaziland Council of Churches
4. Mahao Johane - GS – Lesotho CC
5. Mr. Eddy Makue – GS – SACC
6. Rev. Dinis Matsolo - GS MCC
7. Rev. Suzanne Matole –GS Council of Churches of Zambia
8. Rev. Caanan Phiri – GE – Malawi Council of Churches and Chairman FOCCISA/EJN
9. Irene Charles Mwasaga – CCT

### **Partners**

1. More Blessing Chidaushe– Program Manager, NCA
2. Athena Peralta – Consultant Poverty, Wealth and Ecology Project, WCC
3. Tove – Program Manager, Diakonia Sweden
4. Ashley Green- Grants Manager, South African Trust
5. Carina

**APPENDIX 2: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE – STAFF AND NCC**

**ENJ AND FOCCISA RELATIONSHIP**

1. How do you characterize EJM in FOCCISA?

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2. How should EJM be structured within the FOCCISA framework?

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a. Should EJM be network of FOCCISA co-ordinating activities and mobilizing the ecumenical church at a regional level?

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b. Should EJM be an executive body that speaks for FOCCISA at a regional level?

a. -----  
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b.

c. Should be a capacity building organ of FOCCISA building the capacity of the NCCs to engage in economic justice issues as identified by the Network?

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3. How has the role of EJM as program of FOCCISA changed over the years

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4. Are there any roles or functions that ENJ should assume in FOCCISA that it is currently not assuming? If Yes list them.

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5. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of ENJ in the context of FOCCISA?

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**GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

6. In your view how effective is the current EJM governance structure?

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7. How effective is the Steering Committee?

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8. How is the performance of the Steering Committed evaluated?

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9. Should the membership of Steering Committee be broadened? What elements/qualities should be brought into the Steering Committee that may be currently lacking?

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10. In which way do EJA account to FOCCISA and is it sufficient?

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**STRATEGIC RELEVANCE OF ENJ**

11. Does ENJ have a strategic Plan?

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12. If yes, how is the Strategic Plan usually developed?

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13. How are NCCs involved in the ENJ strategic planning process?

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14. What makes EJNI relevant? Provide clear examples

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15. If you had the mandate to lead EJNI and influence how it works, what would you do differently?

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16. What value is ENJ adding to the NCC work? Give examples

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**RELATIONSHIP WITH NCC**

17. Who are the owners of ENJ

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18. How do the owners demonstrate their ownership?

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19. How are the NCCs involved in ENJ affairs?

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20. To what extent do the NCCs actually determine and direct the ENJ agenda/programs?

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21. Who else determines the ENJ agenda (FOCCISA, the EJA Office or donors?)

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22. How do the NCC take forward the agenda and commitments made in ENJ at the country/NCC level?

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23. Do NCCs have similar areas of program focus as EJA at the country level?

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24. Do NCCs have dedicated staff working on economic justice issues?

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**PROGRAM RELEVANCE AND IMPACT**

25. What stands out for you as two key accomplishments of EJNI?

a. In the field of Trade

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b. In SADCC

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c. Debt

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d. Food Security

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26. What do you think has contributed to the achievements named above?

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27. Which of the four areas EJNI focuses on has the biggest impact and why?

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28. Is these areas still relevant or should they be reconsidered?

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29. Of the four focus areas which ones are the NCCs most involved?

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30. Given the current global and regional economic climate, which issues should EJM address in the coming 3-5 years?

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

31. To what extent do you perceive EJM as sustainable (financially, technically, socio-culturally etc.)?

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32. How do funding partners and other partners see the role of EJM?

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33. What challenges is EJM facing in raising funds and expanding/diversifying its funding base?

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34. How can these be overcome?

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35. Can EJM continue without external support?

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36. What are the main obstacles (if any) to ensuring that EJM is sustainable?

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37. What suggestions would you make on how EJM can be sustained?

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**APPENDIX 3: EJN EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE- FUNDING PARTNERS**

1. How long have you been in collaboration/partnership with EJN as a funding partner?  
---Since 2006-----  
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2. What are some of the accomplishments of EJN in FOCCISA?  
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-----The work they are  
doing with the Christian Council of Mozambique-----  
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3. What are some of the present funding opportunities within your organisation that EJN should be aware of?  
-----Oxfam  
America – Southern Africa Regional Office is closing down on 31 October 2009.-----  
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4. If you had the mandate to change the way EJN works/operates, what would you do differently?  
-----They are critical to  
FOCISSA and are well positioned for building capacity, initiating and supporting advocacy to  
advance the interest of poor communities.-----  
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5. Any other comments relevant to the review process?  
-----EJN plays a key  
complimentary role to other civil society groups involved in economic justice and their the  
church as their constituency has the potential for strengthening advocacy efforts at the country  
and regional levels as well creating a strong voice at the global level.-----  
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