

Theological Institute for Advocacy and Research in Africa – TARA¹

Institute for Leadership Training and Capacity Building in Social Development for Churches in Africa

July 2011

History and background

Persistent levels of mass poverty² and inequality are challenging the theological foundation of churches in Africa. The need for leadership training and capacity building in applied social research and advocacy towards a meaningful social development³ involvement of the churches in Africa has come to the forefront in this crisis. The Institute intends to make a contribution in addressing this need concretely.

It is widely accepted that the Church in Africa needs to play a pivotal role in development due to its theological self-understanding as well as its social acceptance and infrastructure throughout society. In Southern Africa the churches have a long tradition of social involvement. The churches were an integral part of the struggle for political freedom and they became people's platforms, where human rights and social issues were taken up directly. The church could often speak up where the liberation movement was silenced. After achieving political freedom churches understood their role still as being one of social involvement. This found its expression in e.g. the involvement in income generating projects. At the same time there was often a withdrawal from the direct political sphere in order not to be seen in opposition to the newly established governments⁴.

A critical reflection and assessment of church involvement in development during the last years has brought to the forefront that poverty cannot be tackled on an individual or community project basis only. Up to today many churches in Africa are still faced with continuing and ever deepening levels of poverty and inequality meaning that people are denied their GOD-given right to live in dignity and in

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- 1 Tara is an Otjiherero word, which means 'look' – pointing to the basic idea of the Institute to look carefully at the social realities by doing participatory research, but also points to the advocacy aspects. The churches play a role in making the voices of those who are suffering heard.
 - 2 Throughout this outline the **Desk for Social Development's working definition on poverty** is used, which draws on the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCHR) definition on poverty and Amartya Sen's capability approach. The working definition is: “Poverty is on the one hand characterised by the lack of resources to meet basic needs (nutrition, access to health facilities, housing etc.) and on the other hand by the lack of capability (“real opportunity”) and thirdly the lack of freedom of choice, security and power to take ownership and use resources to become a full functioning agent in society” (DfSD Research Manual, 2006:7).
 - 3 Throughout this outline the **Desk for Social Development's working definition on social development** is used: *Social Development through strategic interventions in society strives towards better living conditions for people living in poverty guided by the principle: that is based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility and cooperation, and full respect for the various religions and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people. (World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen 1995)* *Social development as a function of the church is a new approach in the social involvement of the Church. However, the [church] has historically played a role on political level to represent those, who otherwise were not heard. In its prophetic voice the church became the voice of the voiceless during the liberation struggle. The new challenges of extreme poverty alongside high inequality and the HIV/AIDS pandemic necessitate the church to be true to its calling to stand in for the poor and marginalized. Therefore, the [church] wants to ensure to be a true voice of the people plights engaging constructively on societal level to overcome the social and economic ills in Namibia's society (Strategic Plan DfSD; 2004:4-6).*
 - 4 For a detailed discussion see: Kameeta, Zephania; Haarmann, Claudia; Haarmann, Dirk 2007. *Church-State-Relations as an Ecumenical Issue. A contribution from Africa. Bishop Dr. Z. Kameeta presentation for the 41st International Ecumenical Seminar at the Institute for Ecumenical Research Strasbourg, July 4th – 11th 2007. Strasbourg.*

His image. Staggering mass poverty thereby challenges the divine mission of the church in Africa and necessitates a spiritual and practical renewal to again become prophetic witnesses and meaningful actors on societal level⁵.

In order to be effective and become a meaningful player in a more and more technical development debate, often removed from the reality of the people, the churches need to have an in-depth sociological and economic understanding and ability to conduct quality research in order to use their advantage of being a 'people-centred organisation' and to make this fruitful for local development agendas. This highlights the urgent need for capacity building within the churches to combine theological reflection, a professional understanding of the economic structures at play and the ability to conduct Participatory Learning and Action research⁶. This is the gap the **Theological Institute for Advocacy and Research - TARA** intends to address.

TARA aims at supporting churches in Africa to acquire the necessary skills to act prophetically and professionally in their context, taking ownership of local social development agendas. The intention is three-fold: Firstly, to train and build capacity locally in Africa and to network among the churches. Secondly, to provide expertise to assist and professionally support research, analysis and advocacy work amongst local churches, thus fostering expertise in social development and concrete involvement of churches in the development of the African continent. Thirdly, to render sound information and regional strategic positions on development in a globalized world within the worldwide ecumenical community.

The above mentioned new social development approach has become a central theme in the discussions of the churches of Africa. The establishment and work of the LWF's Arusha Poverty Task Force, of which Bishop Kameeta is the patron, bears witness to this. The DfSD of the ELCRN has developed a new model of the role of the church in development since 2003 by being engaged in capacity building, participatory research and prophetic advocacy.⁷ The work of the DfSD is focused on the Namibian context, but the need and wish for similar approaches and work in other African churches was expressed, for example, when the LWF Assembly in Lund in 2007 identified the ELCRN's approach to poverty as represented by the work of the DfSD as a "best practice model" and recommended it as such to the member churches.

The Church Leadership Conference in Windhoek in 2005, together with the Arusha Poverty Task Force and the Lutheran Council in Africa, echoed the need for a more concrete and prophetic approach towards the ever increasing poverty in Africa from the side of the Lutheran churches. The Conference went further and stipulated key components, like professional capacity building for church leaders and lay people as well as building qualified research and advocacy teams to actively engage in

5 See also Bishop Dr. Z. Kameeta *Capacity building for Churches in Africa towards prophetic and professional engagement in Social Development* at the meeting of the Lutheran Council in Africa in Johannesburg, May 2008.

6 Participatory Learning and Action research underlines: One the one side that the learning processes on the part of both the insiders (community members) and the outsider (facilitator/researcher); they enable people to share, analyse and enhance their knowledge. Furthermore, the fact that information is not extracted from, but generated by, the communities enables the latter to own the information as well as the recommendations and activities arising out of the process.

7 The BIG Pilot project implemented through the Desk for Social Development of the ELCRN is an example of how the church together with broader civil society can engage prophetically and through a small project challenge major economic role players like government as well as e.g. the IMF. See also: Haarmann, Claudia; Haarmann, Dirk; Jauch, Herbert et al 2009. Making the difference! The BIG in Namibia. Basic Income Grant Pilot Project Assessment Report, April 2009. Windhoek. (http://www.bignam.org/Publications/BIG_Assessment_report_08b.pdf)
The DfSD leads the Secretariat of the BIG Coalition and partakes in regional and continental civil society processes (e.g. Civil Society Platform towards Social Protection within the Livingstone Process of the AU Ministers). See also www.dfsd-elcrn.org.

social development:

- *Establish management and leadership training programmes for senior church leaders (Continuing education).*
- *Embark on lay leadership training and empowerment in line with our Lutheran understanding of the priesthood of all believers.*
- *Set up an advocacy team comprising representatives of the sub regions to work with sister churches to support, encourage, advocate and sometimes challenge our governments (Church Leadership Conference in Windhoek, 2005).*

Putting these components in concrete terms means requiring both, socio-economic competency as well as working at the cutting edge of analytical and technical skills in development. There is a great need for a programme where church leaders as well as committed and engaged lay people can find the time and know-how to equip themselves with these skills to take ownership of the social development agenda and to become effective in advocacy work. It does not help to only have development consultants from outside the church, but the technical and professional developmental insights need to be instilled and applied right in the churches.

Aims and Programmes

The following three main programme components are envisaged:

1. **Capacity Building:** Through intensive 4 to 6 week courses small groups of church leaders and committed laity will be professionally trained in social development. The courses will cover the economic and sociological background for development, as well as applied practical training based on concrete and specific needs of our context. These courses will make use of external resource people and experts, if need be. The main focus of such training is poverty and development, economic literacy and advocacy work, but it will also address concrete needs in training like computer skills and proposal and report writing, which are increasingly needed in today's environment in order to be effective.
2. **Development:** TARA will engage in and train people to do participatory research, compile common quantitative research agendas and publish findings. Based on this, prophetic action and advocacy should be promoted by local research and advocacy teams, the churches and the Institute itself. The development experts will provide local and regional support for the teams during this process.
3. **Theological Reflection:** TARA will engage in biblical and systematic theological analysis of and for the development agenda. This will help to define and guide the public role of churches as well as develop material for development work within the churches.

A total of 2-3 intensive courses (each involving a combination of all three programme components) per year are envisaged. The duration and frequency of the courses will be such that church co-workers in their current jobs can attend them, without having to vacate their jobs. Unlike formal university education, TARA intends to directly link up to people's continuous church work. Besides course work, the staff of the Institute will provide support and professional back up for research and development programmes in the churches.

While the national contexts sometimes differ substantially, the question of structural poverty and economic security is cutting across the continent and the Institute will, through a participatory process with the churches involved, identify common areas. At the same time, the specific context of the

country and topical debates in society will be accommodated as far as possible.

By reflecting the development agenda in the light of a thorough biblical and systematic-theological analysis and by developing corresponding material, the Institute hopes to make a contribution towards defining and guiding the public role of churches.

When taking into account the effects of structural poverty and fighting against it, TARA will follow a gender-sensitive approach: The focus on economic security, comprising income, health, food, political awareness etc. is paramount at first for addressing the practical and basic needs of women and children, while also taking account of the role of men in this process. The capacity building and training courses will likewise be gender-sensitive in terms of participants as well as in terms of staff and resource persons, thus empowering women as well as men through skills transfer and continuing education of leadership.

Curriculum

The curriculum will consist of core modules with basic social development and contextual theology theory as well as research methodology⁸. Besides this, topical modules will be included and developed with external expertise, similar to a college. The nature of social action research requires to revise and adapt the curriculum guided by the churches and communities involved and participating. The following modules or units therefore will be put together, adjusted, shortened and extended - depending on the participants and the actual social realities and needs at hand.

- **Basic social development theories**

Starting from perceptions on poverty, various definitions of poverty (e.g. relative vs absolute) are introduced and the application and limitations are discussed. Key is the understanding of poverty as a complex social phenomenon, which is by no means static or cast in stone, but always has to be questioned and linked to people's lives.

Behavioural and structural explanations of poverty and the dialectic of structure and agency are looked at, both in terms of a historic literature overview as well as linking it to the participants' experience.

The concept of insecurity, its origin, and strength and weakness are discussed. A special focus is given to income security and its links to e.g. job, health, political security.

Part of this module is the question of the state and power. This includes the role of the church versus the state.

- **Development economics**

Starting by looking at actual national budgets, key economic concepts are analysed, this includes free-market, interventionism, social spending, social investment, international trade, economic growth, inflation etc.

Depending on the participants and their level of economic background, this will also include economic literacy, e.g. understanding and analysing tables and graphs and linking them to the social underlying realities.

- **Research methodology**

8 Compare the Research Manual developed for the ELCRN researchers (2004 and updated 2006).

This module will start off with the question, why we do need research? It then contains a theoretical overview of research methodologies, key concepts and terminology e.g. insider vs outsider, qualitative vs quantitative, structured interviews vs participatory learning and action research.

It gives guidance of how to compile a research agenda: From the analytical framework, to choosing the research methodology to a plan of action derived from the research results.

Important issues of any data capturing are debated e.g. what is a true reflection of social reality, how not to jump to conclusion. This also emphasises research ethics like confidentiality as well as accountability and transparency of results and actions.

- **Classic qualitative and quantitative research methodologies**

Different tools of qualitative research are explored like structured interviews, case studies etc, including theoretical and practical background of it, like choosing key informants, structuring interviews, recording and transcription, compilation of qualitative research results etc.

In quantitative research, the design of Household Questionnaires, data collection, data entry, data verification, data analysis, visualisation of results will be taught. Depending on the statistical background of the participants, this section includes training in statistical analysis, from a basic level working with counts, percentages and averages in CALC and EXCEL to more advanced statistical analysis introduction and training in SPSS and STATA.

The qualitative and quantitative research of the BIG Pilot Project bears reference.

- **Participatory Research Methodology**

Starting with Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and the Southern African adaptation *Training for Transformation*, key participatory research methodologies and their application are introduced (listening surveys, case studies etc.). Participatory bible studies are included in this section. The participatory bible studies done by the BIG Coalition in Namibia following the methodology of Gerald West's *The Academy of the Poor* bear reference. This module includes also methodologies like budget tracking or the monitoring of a “food basket” like successfully implemented by the Jesuit Centre for Theological Research in Zambia while monitoring the implementation of structural adjustment policies. Furthermore the project evaluation of the ELCRN hostels serves as an applied example of how to actively incorporate stakeholders, including children, in participatory research.

- **Scenario Planning and Microsimulation**

This module introduces basic techniques of scenario planning. *The Mont Fleur Scenarios*, which played a pivotal role in sketching scenarios of transition for South Africa in 1991, give a practical example, how this technique can help to move beyond political ideologies and normative debates, towards creative and consensus building solutions.

Microsimulation techniques are taught to inform creative as well as realistic social and economic scenarios. The level can range from simply linked cells in a spreadsheet programme to complex microsimulation models based on national household survey data. The first application of microsimulation technique in the developing world, as developed during the civil society campaign for a child support grant in South Africa, by Claudia and Dirk Haarmann 1996 to

2000, can illustrate the relevance in social policy development. It further illustrates the mutual dependency between action research and campaign.

- **Report writing**

Naturally, research is only effective if results and outcomes are properly compiled. Training in report writing, illustration and publication is key. With a huge skills deficit in this area, the emphasis is to work with participants from their current level. The focus will be on taking ownership and developing writing skills and coping mechanisms in a highly technical environment. This includes computer literacy in word processing, presentations, mind-mapping and spreadsheet applications.

Depending on the need proposal writing and reports to donors will be included.

- **Advocacy and lobby work**

This module covers applied advocacy and lobby work strategies e.g. strategic networking, planning of an advocacy campaign, approaching decision makers, working with regional and national government, the use of pilot projects

The Institute will explore accreditation options of its courses.

Activities 2010

TARA started in April 2010 and the main tasks were the setting-up of the office and developing its focuses. The identification of the focuses should be based on the experience, agendas and activities of the Churches. TARA therefore planned and carried out a visitation programme to the Churches⁹ in order to introduce the initiative in more depth, but more importantly to learn from the Churches about their activities and challenges in the development field and consult and discuss focus areas for capacity building, especially in the area of research and advocacy. Secondly, TARA engaged in various strategic meetings with other stakeholders for the purpose of networking and integration of other regional agendas. Furthermore, TARA held a scenario planning workshop with the ELCRN to support the church in her quest for strategic planning. This was an opportunity for TARA to introduce this method of planning to a member church and an experience to build on for the benefit of the other churches.

Germany

The Directors went to Germany in March 2010 for their start-up visit to ELM where they were able to meet the colleagues and got to know the work of ELM and how to link the work of TARA with the different departments. ELM received us with open arms and made us very much feel as being part of this worldwide family. In many of the meetings, the strong partnership between LUCSA and ELM became apparent and TARA is looking forward to strengthening this partnership further.



⁹ Note that not all LUCSA churches could be visited. Bishop Ramashapa to cover an as broad as possible funds permitting - will follow.

Picture 1: D. Fröchtling and C. Haarmann at ELM, Hannover/Germany

TARA also took the opportunity to make contact and introduce the programme in more detail to other partners like the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) and the Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (EKiR).

Office set-up & Fundraising

From April 2011 onwards, the Directors set-up the office. TARA received support from ELM and EED with regard to office equipment like a computer, printer etc.

The Directors submitted - together with Bishop Ramashapa - funding proposal to the LWF, the Church of Sweden and ELCA. All three had indicated great interest in the programme and saw possibilities for support. The discussions for support are ongoing between these partners, LUCSA and TARA.

As a short term measure for the first year, TARA and ELM approached VELKD for support of the first year to start-up the programme and to be able to conduct the church visitations. TARA highly appreciated this financial support of VELKD for this first year.

Visitation

TARA visited the Lutheran Churches, LUNODIA structures and other partners in six countries of the region and was given the opportunity to introduce TARA in more detail and to have discussions with the leadership and people working in the development field on their view of focus areas for TARA's involvement. The idea and suggested programmes of TARA received overwhelming support and the need for training of churches in this field was expressed, not only by the Lutheran Churches, but also beyond from the Councils and other ecumenical partners. The following overview of the visits only wants to highlight some of the important points of these discussions. The details will inform the further planning of TARA. In the last section, the lessons attempt to summarise the common points of relevance for the work of TARA.

Namibia

The leadership of the Lutheran Churches in Namibia identified the rising inequality in the country as a main problem and pointed to the fact that development efforts of government do often not reach the people. This also finds its expression in the unequal and unfair access to markets whereby rural traders are exploited and have to sell their products to very low prices to other traders which in turn sell these products for much higher prices in urban areas.



Picture 2: M. Ngodji and D. Haarmann after joint service at Omundaungilo parish during the TARA visit.

Zimbabwe

Although the overall situation has improved since 2008, the continuous political deadlock coupled with the political violence and intimidation characterises the situation in Zimbabwe and leads to an extremely difficult situation for the churches and development partners. The poverty situation with an estimated 90% unemployment rate coupled with the dollarization results not only in food insecurity,

but in the more severe form of even not having access to food at all.

The partners stressed the important role of international solidarity, especially to report about the situation in Zimbabwe and the need to strengthen advocacy work.

In this light, TARA was able to assist the Council of Churches in Zimbabwe to facilitate a meeting with the Council of Churches in Namibia for an exchange and discussion on how to support Zimbabwe in this special situation especially since Namibia is currently heading the regional SADC forum.

Zambia

Many of the people identified poverty and corruption as main challenges, not only effecting the individuals and then the social fibre of society as a whole, but also directly the preaching and the work of the church. One of the Bishop's summarised the situation by saying: *"How can a hungry person understand that he/she is loved by God?"*

More research and networking was seen as important tools to find a common strategy.

TARA could link-up the Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZA) with the Jesuit Centre for Theological Research (JCTR), who have been spearheading research in food security (food baskets) and socio-economic policy in Zambia. JCTR offered to include a representative from ELCZA in one of the trainings in order for ELCZA to become part of the food basket research programme.



Picture 3: Discussions in Zambia

Botswana

There was agreement that HIV and AIDS constitutes a major challenge for the Botswana society. However, there were quite different statements on the level of corruption in the country. While some regarded it as an increasing problem, hampering development efforts and the work of the churches, others stated quite the opposite and expressed the view that the problem of corruption is negligible in Botswana.

Nevertheless, the need for a prophetic church to tackle problems in society was a view commonly held and stressed during the discussions.

Mozambique

There was acknowledgement that since democracy was established, the action space for churches opened up, but the church in Mozambique echoed the assessment of Zambia of having theological difficulties in preaching the good news to the people if they are hungry. The efforts of the Government were recognised, but were assessed as



Picture 4: Talks and planning in Maputo

often not reaching the people in the way they should, resulting in increasing inequality and high poverty levels. Many also pointed to the impact of climate change which increasingly impacts on the agriculture and subsistence farming of many Mozambicans.

The visit to Mozambique coincided with the food riots in Maputo from 1st September to 4th September



Picture 5: Streets of Maputo after 3 days of riots

and Bishop Mabasso went out of his way to take care of us by taking us into his flat to give us shelter and protection during these 3 days of rioting in the city. This situation is obviously of relevance for Mozambique and the region as a whole as the people showed their sheer desperation in the face of poverty and hunger.

TARA wrote an article on these experiences in Maputo during the riots and the consequences for the region (see appendix).

South Africa

South Africa is the regional power centre, both economically and politically.

The churches used to play a prominent role in the political sphere and especially as a voice for the otherwise marginalized. The last years have seen a further polarization between the rich and the poor, with severe social conflict visible in xenophobic attacks, food riots, protest against the non-delivery of services on municipal level and an escalation of violence.

The churches regard the fight for socio-economic justice as a central theme they have to take up. However, the churches are currently facing a lot of structural and capacity problems including challenges at the council of churches which severely hampers its functioning. At the same time, the churches observed the state aligning itself with evangelical often apolitical or extremely conservative groupings. It was seen as absolutely crucial to fill the current vacuum and to reclaim the public space for the benefit of the marginalized and poor.

Lessons

The countries of the region are diverse and the visits drew many country specific lessons. At the same time, common problems and approaches are identifiable and the existing network amongst the churches present potential for the development field by strengthening the voices of the churches in advocacy and policy debates.

The churches' passion for those living in poverty and their eagerness to get involved form the basis for this engagement. However, at the same time, one should be aware that since the political liberation of the countries, churches are often preoccupied with 'internal' church problems of financial and structural questions and challenges.

A further common phenomenon is that the churches' development work is often 'outsourced' to professional agencies. The reasons for this development over the years are manifold ranging from the changes in the political system to human and financial capacity challenges within the churches to funder pressure. Without being able to discuss the possible advantages or disadvantages of this development, one consequence is that some of the churches are either not entering at all or becoming more and more removed from this development work, the debates in the sector and the engagement in

national and international networks.

Given this analysis, the question arises how and for what purpose within the development field can and want the churches use their special potential of being close to the people, make their voices heard and stand in for a more just society. The potential of advocacy based on this special role of the churches in society and the engagement in this field with other partners was discussed. At the same time, the need for a sound basis for such an engagement in terms of capacity and sound research as a basis from which to depart with action was stressed. It is hoped that TARA can make the contribution here and support the churches in their quest.

Advocacy work

Besides the visitation programme and the setting-up, TARA was already able to engage in further projects and running of workshops. These took place in Namibia due to the current limitations in funding, but they serve as an example of TARA's involvement with the churches.

The first one is the work within the BIG Coalition of Namibia. The Coalition lobbies the Namibian Government to implement a national Basic Income Grant. The work of the BIG Coalition can serve as an example for churches in the region and what can be learnt about networking and advocacy. The TARA staff is in the process of writing a booklet about the experience of the BIG Coalition's campaign and advocacy strategies in order for others to learn from it and to identify challenges and chances for new engagement of the churches.

As part of this engagement with the BIG Coalition, together with Bishop Kameeta, Rev. Dr. C. Haarmann led a delegation from Namibia to the Ecumenical Church Day in Germany in May 2010 and presented the BIG at various forums. During the trip to Germany, the delegation also held meetings with several Members of the German Parliament and meet a delegation from the Church of Sweden introducing the BIG programme and TARA as well.

Further involvements included lectures to various study groups, e.g. from Germany and Japan about the BIG and radio and newspaper interviews.

A highlight for 2011 will be the visit of Senator Eduardo Suplicy from Brazil who is a strong supporter of the BIG and who agreed to come to Namibia to exchange ideas and to support the lobby work of the BIG Coalition. TARA is co-responsible to organise this important and high-profile visit which will also include a two day conference on the topic in co-operation with the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation (FES).



Picture 6: Bishop Z. Kameeta, Senator E. Suplicy and C. Haarmann during a public discussion in Munich/ Germany 2010

TARA conducted a scenario planning workshop for the ELCRN to find creative ways to deal with the financial challenges and need for restructuring of the church. The tool of scenario planning is helpful to structure and simplify complex interrelated situations and to equip the leadership to pro-actively plan possibilities for the way ahead and to prepare for future events. This scenario exercise entailed to do research and interviews with various stakeholders, like the human resource department, the partners

etc. before the workshop, a full day workshop with the leadership and heads of various departments of the church to analyse the current situation and to plan strategically ahead by looking at likely developments and how to react to them. TARA produced a detailed report about the workshop and the ways ahead.

Networking

TARA started to build up relationships with several church institutions, research organisations, national and international networks and looked into common projects and joint ventures. During the visitation programme, TARA made contact with several Council of Churches in the respective countries and as part of this also with the Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Federation of Councils in Southern Africa (FOCISA). Likewise, a visit to ESSET resulted into the planning of joint research project for 2011 on alternative models for development with special focus on informal traders.

Current activities

TARA is currently busy with the research project on the concept of '*solidarity economy*' and its possible application in Southern Africa as a viable alternative model for development, with special references to sustainable livelihoods. The research entails a literature review, a study visit to Brazil, a conference in October to present and discuss the results as well as a final report. The results are hoped to inform the churches on new concrete ways, how to address the development challenges in Southern Africa. The results will be circulated in the LUCSA family and beyond. This joint project also provides income for TARA as it is based on a 'consultancy' contract.

TARA is also engage in BIG advocacy work and is in the process of writing a report on the experience with the BIG campaign and the lessons learnt, especially for the potential of the engagement of churches in influencing the development debate.

TARA explores the possibility to join a research project of the Centre for Social Science Research (UCT) on the analysis of the process to bring about political change in Southern Africa? The focus will be on policies for economic security.

ELM / University of Göttingen are setting up an inter-cultural study programme and TARA has been asked to teach courses on poverty and project management.

Challenges

Current challenges is the fundraising for TARA.

The immediate challenge, which had occurred through the cancellation of the LUNODIA workshp in the beginning of the year, has been addressed through the income generated through the 'consultancy' with ESSET and the positive response to the proposal to ELM and VELKD. They are funding the workshops now for November 2011 and beginning 2012.

For the medium to long-term, TARA has submitted proposals to the LWF, the Church of Sweden, BftW. So far, positive first responses had been received, but the proposals were put on hold, due to lack of clarification from LUCSA. For the proposals to be approved, strong support for TARA from the Council and follow up is needed, emphasising the urgent need for funding as soon as possible.

TARA is looking forward to being of service to the churches in Southern Africa.