

26.09.2005

Siemenpuu and the World Social Forum (Africa) process
A description of the WSF (Africa) process and the possibilities for
Siemenpuu's participation

Ruby van der Wekken
Network Institute for Global Democratisation (NIGD)

Preface

Scope of the study

The aim of this study has been to write a report on the World Social Forum process and on the ways in which Siemenpuu could relate to the WSF process. The WSF process has a large variety of events and activities. In the study a special emphasis has been on the WSF process now moving towards Africa.

The study gives first of all a description of the WSF process including important current issues and debates. A picture of the WSF Africa process is given. The study then looks at the past experiences of Siemenpuu and the WSF process and also has a closer look at environmental issues at the WSF. Followingly the main future challenges of participating in the WSF process have been addressed (here some of the parts are repeated from previous sections of the study). The study ends with concrete recommendations and further suggestions brought forward for the consideration of Siemenpuu.

The author¹ of the study wants to warmly thank the Board and Staff of Siemenpuu for guiding the process of this study, and for the comments and suggestions offered. A word of special thank goes to the Network Institute for Global Democratisation (NIGD), to the various members who have offered their insights, commented and supported the writing of this study, as well as to all those interviewed for the purpose of this study.

¹ About the author of the study Ruby van der Wekken: I have attended all the WSF (2001-2005) in Porto Alegre and Mumbai. I have furthermore attended as a journalist the World Social Forum International Council (WSF IC) meetings in 2001, and twice as a Network Institute for Global Democratisation (NIGD) representative the WSF IC meetings of 2005 (Brasil January 2005, Holland March 2005). NIGD is a founding member of the WSF IC and several of its members play an important role in the WSF process. Over the past few years and as a NIGD member, I have as such accumulated substantial insight on the WSF process and the WSF IC, and know who are important and relevant WSF actors in the context of the objectives of the study conducted. I have been following WSF IC issues from the WSF IC e-list and have reported on them on a regular basis for NIGD membership and via NIGD newsletter News and Notes to a wider public. I have been living till recently in Brasil (2002-2005) where I have had the opportunity to work together with social movements and other organisations working on the defense of environment and social justice (ecological land reform) in the Brazilian Amazon.

Siemenpuu and the WSF process

1. Introducing the WSF	pg.2
1. Charter of Principles	pg.2
2. The WSF Secretariat and WSF International council	pg.4
3. From protesting "against" something to a proactive "for" something	pg.6
4. Participation in the WSF	pg.9
5. Expansion of the WSF process	pg.11
6. Finnish actors and the WSF	pg.13
2. The WSF process and funding	pg.15
3. A picture of the WSF Africa process	pg.20
1. The positive potential of the WSF global event coming to Africa	pg.21
2. Regional African Social Forum Council : Defining the (collective action) themes in the WSF Africa process	pg.23
3. The polycentric WSF 2006 in Mali	pg.25
4. Challenges and tensions within the WSF Africa process	pg.26
4. Past experiences	pg.31
1. Siemenpuu support to WSF (process) participation and activities	pg.31
2. Positive aspects of participating in the WSF	pg.31
3. Siemenpuu and the WSF process in India	pg.33
4. Some conclusions from the WSF experiences in India	pg.37
5. Environmental issues at the WSF	pg.38
6. Future challenges of (participating in) the WSF Process	pg.45
1. What does the WSF achieve?	pg.45
2. Participation	pg.46
3. The WSF : a true World Social Forum?	pg.47
4. The future of the WSF process	pg.48
5. Environmental issues	pg.50
7. Recommendations	pg.51
1. Siemenpuu strategy and the WSF process	pg.52
2. Concrete recommendations	pg.55
3. Main ideas regarding the concrete recommendations	pg.56
8. References	pg.64
9. Contacts WSF (Africa) process	pg.67
10. Annexes	
Annex 1. World Social Forum Charter of Principles	pg.68
Annex 2. The WSF International Council	pg.71
Annex 3. Charter of principles and values of the African Social Forum	pg.75
Annex 4. Environmental issues at WSF 2003.	pg.78

1. Introducing the World Social Forum

"The World Social Forum (WSF) is the first serious attempt to organize the political forces of global civil society into a unified space of positive agenda making and planning of collective transformative actions", say Heikki Patomäki and Teivo Teivainen: *A Possible World: Democratic Transformation of Global Institutions*, Zed Books, London and New York, 2004.

Thomas Ylä Anttila in his article "The World Social Forum and the Globalisation of Social Movements and Public Spheres" writes on the WSF as seemingly so far the most important effort of global civil society actors to stimulate public debates that are global, and he studies in his study the way global publics can influence national political systems.

The first WSF was held in 2001, in Porto Alegre, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil. It was held in opposition to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, where since 1982 world economic leaders gather.

The WSF was the result of discussions between Brazilian civil society organisations and European movements which came to discuss the idea to organise a forum for alternatives at the same dates as the World Economic Forum. As influential figures we could name Oded Grajew (CIVES, Associação Brasileira de Empresários pela Cidadania Bernard Cassen, (ATTAC France and at the time director of Le Monde Diplomatique), and Francisco Whitaker Ferreira (BNJP, Comissão da Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil).

It was decided that the WSF should be held in the South, should be held on the same dates as the WEF, and its name should be different from that of the WEF with only one key word. Eight of the organisations were to form the WSF Organising Committee, which today still play an important role in the WSF Secretariat and the WSF International Council.

This Brazilian Organizing Committee consisted at the time of the major Brazilian labour movement Central Trade Union Confederation (CUT), the radical peoples movement Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST), the platform of Brazilian NGOs ABONG, the liberation theologians of the Comissão da Justiça e Paz (da Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil) (CBJP), and four smaller civil society organisations: the Brazilian Institute for Socio Economic studies (IBASE), ATTAC Brasil, the human rights NGO network Rede Social de Justiça e Direitos Humanos and progressive businessmen association Associação Brasileira de Empresários pela Cidadania (CIVES).

In terms of numbers, in 2001 at the first WSF a total of 20.000 participants from 117 countries participated and 400 events were held. In 2005, at the fifth WSF, 155.000 participants took place in 2500 events. A number of other activities normally take place prior to or in parallel with the World Social Forum. These include the Forum of Local Authorities, the World Parliamentary Forum, the World Forum of Judges, the

Intercontinental Youth Camp (which from WSF 2003 onwards forms part of the official program).

In different ways and to a different extent the WSF process is viewed by its participants as a unique platform for capacity building, exchange of information and collective action building.

The tool for following and participating in the WSF process is its official website at <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br>. At the moment one can see there that the registration process for the polycentric WSF of 2006 in Caracas, Karachi and Bamako is already opened.

1. Charter of Principles

After the first WSF held in 2001, a Charter was drawn up by the Brazilian organising committee, see Annex 1. The WSF Charter of Principles, page 67.

As the Charter reads, "The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society directed towards fruitful relationships among Humankind and between it and the Earth".

a. The WSF - facilitating change? The WSFs contested character as an Open Space

One of the most important aspects contested about the Charter and the WSF, is its character of an Open Space, in particular the fact that WSF does not issue any statements.

George Monbiot has suggested that the WSF could be a step towards the building of a world parliaments in exile (Monbiot 2002). For others the WSF can not afford to not be outspoken on issues as the International Financial Institutions (see also further on in this study in the chapter "A picture of the WSF Africa process"). One could say that a similar tension was very present in Mumbai and expressed by the Mumbai resistance group which set up camp opposite the official WSF grounds.

The press has often asked for statements and final declarations of WSF events, as they have found it difficult to come to cover something as large as the WSF when coming to look for news.

The issue of the WSF making statements, would logically be connected to a representativity of its decision making body, the WSF International Council (WSF IC) (see more below). The WSF IC is now embarked upon a process to make its composition more representative in terms of geographical base of its members and organization type (NGO, social movements).

It has been commented that a more representative and democratic WSF indeed would give more legitimacy to the WSF IC for the issuing of statements, (though it must be

noted, that not all that want a more representative IC are in favor of a WSF issuing statement or declarations). Some comments go into the direction of the WSF as taking some form of a global political party.

However, for the defenders of the Open Space character of the WSF and its not issuing of any statements, the novelty of the WSF process lies exactly in its bringing together of a diverse spectrum of different kind of organisations, NGO's and movements with different orientations. "A global common policy line would force many to step out from the whole process which would marginalize the whole WSF process," says also Vijay Pratap from WSF Asia process.

Statements are however made throughout the WSF process and the WSF methodology encourages statements and proposals through its methodology (see below). Also for instance the Call for Action agenda drawn up for each coming year at the Social Movements Assembly held at every WSF. This Assembly brings together hundreds of social movements, which has been established through the WSF process and which has a Secretariat in Brasil in the hands of among others CUT and MST. The connected social movements are in a process of establishing a world network of social movements.

The Social Movements Assembly issues a call at each WSF and in 2005 the call was entitled "Call from soicial movement for mobilizations against the war, neoliberalism, exploitation and exclusion. Another world is possible". The call includes an agenda for action. Also at for instance a regional forum as the European Social Forum a social movements assembly is typically held. The massive anti war demonstrations in February 2003 are seen as have been coming forth out of the WSF process, and as such a manifestation of its strength. Numerous other mobilisations have come forth or were strengthened by the call of the Social Movements assembly².

As mentioned in the above, the WSF in 2007 will take place in a polycentric way. The organisations of the WSF IC involved in the preparations are discussing croscutting articulations between the fora. Different themes have been mentioned which would guide these crosscutting articulation as war, free trade, the WTO, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and HIV/AIDS.

b. No political party representatives

Another issue disputed about the Charter of principles of the WSF is in its stating that "Neither party representations nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum. Government leaders and members of legislatures who accept the commitments of this Charter may be invited to participate in a personal capacity."

Political leaders as Brazilian president Lula and Venezuelan president Chavez as well as political parties have always participated in the WSF. For some political parties should be legal participants of the WSF. Others fear a hijacking of the WSF by political campaign objectives.

² For more on the Social movements Assembly, see their website at ww.movsoc.org.

The issue of participation of heads of states/governments is still on the table of debate of the WSF IC. A recently formed subcommission of the WSF IC drew the conclusion that political personalities adhering to the WSF Charter of Principles can make an important contribution to the construction of alternatives. They propose the holding of an open activity with the participation of political personalities, who will be given a set of questions prepared by organisations of the WSF IC. Decisions are yet to be taken within the IC on this issue.

2. WSF Secretariat and the WSF International Council (WSF IC)

Who organises and decides over the WSF?

The WSF IC was set up in 2001 after the first WSF upon invitation by the Brazilian WSF Organizing Committee. The WSF IC discusses the general political issues as well as the WSF future and the annual events methodologies.

Today the WSF IC has a small 140 members and is currently involved in a process in which its composition is being evaluated. For an almost complete list of the WSF IC see Annex 2. The WSF International Council, page 71. From the Nordic Countries, the Network Institute for Global Democratisation (NIGD) is the only member of the IC. Most members are from Latin America and Europe and more members are called for from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.

The WSF IC and its working groups (commissions) hold meetings typically before or after a WSF and increasingly also throughout the year. The WSF IC has several working commissions : Communications, Content and Methodology, Expansion, Resources, and Strategy. This year there have been WSF IC (commission) meetings in Porto Alegre, Holland and Barcelona. A preparatory meeting for the 2006 Polycentric WSF will be held in Bamako, Mali, in September (Mali being besides Caracas, and Karachi a seat of the polycentric WSF 2006). The commissions of the WSF IC are open to every organisation which subscribes to the WSF Charter of Principles (and against whose participation there are no objections from existing members), not just to the members of the IC.

The WSF IC makes decisions via a consensus method. Typically, the WSF Secretariat will present a proposal regarding issues having come forth out of the debate, and in case of strong disagreements voiced in a plenary of the IC the proposal will be adapted to take the considerations into account.

In 2002, the Brazilian Organising Committee became the Secretariat of the WSF. As the process turned towards the Mumbai forum, the WSF Secretariat was renamed the WSF International Secretariat, and existed of 8 Brazilian organisations and 8 Indian organisations. This International Secretariat of Brazilian and Indian origin functioned till April 2005. After a recent WSF IC meeting in Barcelona, the body is now described as a collective responsible for the office of the WSF and is of Brazilian origin. (The working of the WSF Secretariat is further elaborated on in the chapter 2. Funding)

The role of the Secretariat/collective is to stimulate and support regional and thematic forums; facilitate the IC meetings and facilitate the WSF IC commissions; ensure WSF communication process; ensure systematization of the memory of the WSF process; and support fundraising for the WSF process.

”With regards to the support of the Secretariat/collective to regional and thematic forum which are part of the WSF process, two types of support can be distinguished. The first is foremost political, and is a support to construct the forums in the WSF process as open spaces as determined by the Charter of Principles. There is always a tendency by certain groups to want to conquer the open space. Therefore our collective seeks to engage actively in debate with the organizers of the different forums,” explains Antonio Martins, Attac Brasil, member of the WSF Secretariat.

”There is second form of support, also political, but with also a practical dimension. This is support for the concrete construction of social forums. Over the years, we have accumulated a certain amount of experience, regarding the work around the divulgation of the forum, communication (including the website), the construction of the program, the defining of the forum physical spaces, regarding fund raising, the contacts with the press etc. So we try to share these experiences with other forum organizers. A striking example was Mumbai 2004. From 2002, the members of the then called International Secretariat had contact and meetings with Indian organisations, stimulating the realisation of the WSF in Mumbai. When the move to Mumbai was decided, we had a series of Brasil-India meetings. Three months before the opening of the fourth WSF, three of our office people went to work with the organiser in India,” explains Antonio further.

The role of the WSF Secretariat is presented with new challenges with the new polycentric process. All processes are to be extended towards the three working areas Venezuela, Pakistan and Bamako.

Representativity

There are those who feel that the WSF IC makes important decisions for the WSF process, yet however is not representative of the process. The WSF IC has regional imbalances (scarce participation from Africa, Asia and the Arab World) as well as sectorial ones (few young people, blacks, among others. There are also imbalances concerning the thematic areas in which the organization concentrate their activity. The economic justice (development, debt, trade, socio-economic equality, etc.) is the dominant area of activity: 33.3%. It is followed by labor/trade unionism (13.2%) human rights (11.4%) and feminism/women issues (8.8%).

An ideal end of state is currently searched for. One issue is for instance the representation of continental, regional, sub-regional and local WSF processes. Continental forums at this point in time only have an observer status at the IC. This issue is complicated by the workings of different social fora. The European Social Forum for instance makes its

decisions in an open assembly, and as such the issue of their representation in the differently working closed WSF IC is complicated.

A recent evaluation done by the WSF IC does show that activists are questioning representation at WSF IC level. However, others as one of the WSF founders Chico Whitaker do not feel the WSF IC needs to be a representative organ, as the WSF IC according to them merely facilitates the WSF process.

A representative WSF IC would also point to a new gained capacity for the WSF IC to make statements. However, it must not be assumed that all who speak for a more representative IC are automatically in favor of the WSF IC issuing statements.

The issue of the WSF IC as being a representative forum of global civil society is complicated and almost impossible. Social scientists see civil society often as a space for bourgeoisie publicity, where vocal civil society actors present their views. Others defend that the WSF represents transnational civil society and representation should not be based on geographic or nation states boundaries.

In the WSF IC the opinion can be heard that in any case the WSF is not a neutral space and makes decisions, and in light of this representativity matters.

3. From protesting "against" something to a proactive "for" something.

Global civil society has had a commonality in being against something, against a neoliberal driven globalisation. The challenge for the WSF lies in facilitating the formulation of alternatives.

The slogan of the WSF "Another World is Possible" is meant to say exactly that, that the WSF stands for an alternative globalisations, and not merely strives at protesting neo liberal globalisation.

Today the WSF is certainly not any more about connecting anti-Davos (the WSF) and Davos, as it did via satellite connections at the first WSF, but about linking the different polycentric fora of 2006. However, some groups still work in connecting communication channels between participants in the WEFs and WSFs, for instance the Bridge Initiative.

a. Methodology of the WSF

The WSF 2001-2003 had a systematic part of the programs organised by the WSF international Council and the Brazilian organising committee. There was an expanding variety in these centrally organised events, from conferences and testimonies to seminars, panels and tables of controversy. Typically, known personalities of the global justice movement would take part in these events. Besides these centrally organised events, self organised event would take place in the afternoon. Organisations could register with the forum via Internet and hold their events.

Over time, criticism started to be voiced about the nature of these centrally organised events, and attempts were made to make them less elitist and more participatory with their public. Criticism perhaps also regarding a perceived "unproductiveness" of such form of events.

In the WSF in Mumbai of 2004 there were only 13 organised events. The WSF in Mumbai was characterized by mass participation in the streets of the forum of dalits, Adivasis and vernacular groups and the debate about inclusiveness and participation was strengthened in the WSF process. The WSF 2004 registration process worked for the first time with a database, via which one could consult each thematical space and each other's registered activities.

In the WSF of 2005 the WSF activities were 100% selforganised (except for opeing and closing ceremonies, and many other features of the WSF). For the media this has brought more difficulties to find what to focus on as there is no official program, and in general it is believed that this is why large events organised by well funded NGO's with participants like Brazilian President Lula get a lot of attention. Needless to say for those with no means to organise any events, the 100% self organised character of the WSF also presents a problem.

Due to logistical limitations, the Mumbai organising committees asked participants to assess whether a joining of activities could take place. An extension of the logic behind this request was to form the basis for a new methodology introduced at WSF 2005.

The WSF has been developing a methodology to facilitate the forming of alternatives. In 2005, an extensive database accompanied the WSF. Organisations wanting to participate in the WSF, could consult via different search options the events organised by others. Agglutination or the holding of joint events was promoted by the methodology. Several groups as such joined their events around common themes, as for instance "Towards another financial system" which grouped together a series of events with a large group of organizations from different countries.

Another initiative has been the Mural of Proposals. During the WSF, concrete proposals were gathered at stands and at the end of WSF 2005 and a physical Mural of proposals could be visited. The Mural of proposal³ can still be consulted and added onto to.

This methodology is at the moment being worked out further. So there is for instance a proposal on the table by Antonio Martins (Attac Brasil and WSF Secretariat) for a "Map to build a new world⁴". This is a proposal building forward on the registration database of the WSF, to include in an extended database new information on organisations, as forinstance regarding trheir proposed alternatives and other details, in order to create an accesible overview of the organisations and proposals of the global civil society gathering

³ see <http://www.memoria-viva.org/fsm05/>.

⁴ See www.nigd.org/docs/WSFMaptoBuildANewWorldproposal

under the WSF. The proposal wants to further facilitate the communication between WSF participants yet also present the political agenda in its totality.

As such the WSF organisers do not believe that no common statement means no strategy. The challenge however remains how to extract the potential from the self organised activities, referred to as the "fabric of the forum", its greatest strength.

The local organizing committees of the polycentric events of the WSF of 2006 have received some recommendations from the WSF IC's Content and Methodology Commission:

1. Previous consultations in order to decide the thematic areas
2. Anticipation of deadline for registration of activities.
3. Open the space of the Forum for different kind of activities.
4. Stimulate interlink of self-organized activities
- 5- Interlink of activities is not compulsory
6. Planning the Forum's time and space for articulation among organizations
7. Build a Proposals Billboard for the Forum's participants
8. Organize opening and closing ceremony with celebration features
9. A World Social Territory should be built in an urban space, where the events are to take place, following the example of what was done at the WSF 2005.
10. Proposal of communication spaces, in which interconnection among the events will take place.

b. Themes

In the first WSF, the main themes were elaborated by the International Council of the WSF. In 2005 the main themes of the WSF were determined by a consultation process of the organisations participating in the WSF. The consultation process was criticised for not having been sufficiently extended throughout the WSF process, as most of the consulted who responded were Brazilians.

During the first three WSF, the main themes were:

- : Democratic and sustainable development
- : Principles, values, human rights, diversity and equality
- : Media, culture and alternatives to mercantilization and homogenization
- : Political power, civil society and democracy
- : Global democratic order, struggle against militarisation and for peace

The WSF 2004 in India put the spotlight also on the need for the WSF to be more inclusive, also thematically. The main themes of the Mumbai forum were:

- Imperialist globalization
- Patriarchy
- Militarism and peace
- Communalism (religious sectarianism and fundamentalism)
- Casteism & racism (oppression, exclusion and discrimination based on descent and work)

The 11 themes of the WSF 2005 which were the result of a consultation process were:

- A. Autonomous thought, reappropriation and socialisation of knowledge and technologies (233 events)
- B. Defending diversity, plurality and identities (244 events)
- C. Arts and creation: weaving and building people's resistance culture (216 events)
- D. Communication: counter-hegemonic practices, rights and alternatives (124 events)
- E. Assuring and defending Earth and people's common goods - as alternative to commodification and transnational control (161 events)
- F. Social struggles and democratic alternatives - against neoliberal domination (370 events)
- G. Peace, demilitarisation and struggle against war, free trade and debt (189 events)
- H. Towards construction of international democratic order and people's integrations (141 events)
- I. Sovereign economies for and of people - against neoliberal capitalism (291 events)
- J. Human rights and dignity for a just and egalitarian world (475 events)
- K. Ethics, cosmologies and spiritualities - resistance and challenges for a new world (117 events)

Transversal axes had been thought of which would point to the interconnectedness of the thematic areas. These transversal axes did however not function to promote interconnectedness between the areas. The transversal axes were:

1. Social emancipation and political dimensions of struggles
2. Struggle against patriarchal capitalism
3. Struggle against racism and other types of exclusion based on ancestry
4. Gender
5. Diversity

4. Participation in the WSF

Whilst the WSF process is expanding, different challenges remain upfront. So the issue of participation.

In the WSF of 2001, in total 20.000 participants from 117 countries took part; in the WSF of 2002, in total 50.000 participants from 123 countries took part; in the WSF of 2003, in total 100.000 participants from 123 countries took part; in the WSF of 2004, in total 74.000 participants from 117 countries took part, and in the WSF of 2005, 155.000 participants from 135 countries took part.

The WSF held in Brazil typically had most participants coming from Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina and from Southern Europe, from Italy, France and Spain.

However, our focus should not remain on these WSF events. The WSF has grown out into a process including regional, national and thematic forums. (see below under 5. Expansion).

Grassroot, NGO and social movement participation

The WSF was born in Brasil out of the coming together of several civil society sectors and actors in a unique way, namely of the traditional NGO's (ABONG), labour movement (CUT), radical peoples movement (MST), liberation theologians (BNJP), ethical business NGO (CIVES), and the new movements (ATTAC). The WSF is as such seen by many as a new and encouraging initiative of bringing together new movements and more traditional progressive forces and politics, and of facilitating joint action by actors from the whole spectrum of Left and Green politics.

It has been commented that it seems that the founders of the WSF had a somewhat more radical left leaning, but that pretty soon major NGO's, greens and the more reformist left joined the WSF process and the WSF IC.

Another debate on participation in the WSF concerns the participation of the traditional NGOs and new social movements or people movements. Those identifying themselves to the peoples movements or new movements have often been criticising the NGO's or old leftists dominance of the process. Another issue of debate has been regarding some groups and individuals that have been active in the WSF governance organs and which are connected to Trotskyist tendencies of the global left, especially to the Fourth International.

The perceived marginalisation of social movements in the WSF is a frequently heard comment from those that believe that there is an NGO domination of the forum which does limit the space of the social movements and their agenda of struggle against neo-liberal policies (the criticism also seems to refer to the difference between putting forward a more reformist than radical agenda, and sometimes it refers to the fact that the forum does not put out any statements). This is then generally also related to a perceived NGO domination in the WSF IC.

The division between NGO's and other types of organisations is not very clear, and all NGO's are certainly not against the Call for action at the Social movements assembly. In fact some NGO's are very clear supporters of the assembly. The issue seems to be a political debate, which is perhaps connected to other aspects, as also to the visibility which NGO's can achieve for their expensive large scale campaigns, attracting media attention when the WSF is now 100% self organised. .

In the case of Africa, various factors might point to a more defensible position on the WSF process there as being dominated by NGO's, as the large scale existence of development induced NGO's. Particularly also in the WSF Africa process an NGO domination is accused of not allowing for a social forum agenda built from the bottom. Foreign funded NGO's will also be the one who can afford to fly their representatives to abroad held social forum processes.

It should be noted that it has been exactly the aim of the WSF to bring the NGO's and social movements together. The WSF and the WSF IC have been comparatively broad

based, so that the peoples movements have been participating from the birth of the WSF process.

Trade unions have been participating in the WSF in a prominent way, which is seen by many as vital for the building of effective global struggles and action against neoliberalism. Thematically it are the social economic justice issues which are most present in the WSF.

The WSF process is still a marginal process, and it is a challenge to involve also more grass-root movements in the process (See also in "A picture of the WSF Africa process"). Mumbai was a different forum notably in its large presence of Dalit groups, vernacular groups for which large scale mobilisations were conducted. The concerns of the grassroots groups also figured more in the events programmed (See Past Experiences). WSF 2005 in Porto Alegre moved away from the elitist and private Catholic University campus to a public space in an attempt to be more inclusive. The WSF will have to remain expanding its process in order to become more inclusive and of course this issue points to another dimension of the WSF in need of support.

"Bush still rules at the White House, Iraq continues to be bombarded by a savage imperial monster, the WTO continues to use trade as a weapon of mass destruction, debt continues to cripple almost the entire continent of Africa, neoliberal economic policies continue to kill in thousands across Asia and Latin America. But the WSF is about shared concerns, about hope, and about belief that the tide must turn. The WSF is also about differences – differences in what must change, and how it must change. But it is also about a conviction that we must join together in spite of differences," writes Amit Sen Gupta, member of the Indian side of the WSF Secretariat.

5. Expansion of the WSF process

The WSF process is expanding and wants to take more root in new areas by also holding the "global" WSF event in new areas. WSF 2001-2003 and 2005 were held in Porto Alegre, Brasil, but WSF 2004 was held in Mumbai, India.

The WSF in 2006 will take place in a polycentric manner, in Caracas Venezuela, and Karachi, Pakistan on the dates of the WEF in Davos and (probably a week earlier) in Bamako, Mali. In 2007, the WSF will be held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Caracas was the first to announce its candidature, and the process has currently ended its consultation process regarding the themes of the WSF. Fear has been that the WSF in Caracas will be a "Chavez forum", used by Chavez for personal political campaigning. Yet the Caracas organizers stress the independence of the forum which will be a Social forum of the Americas, part of the polycentric WSF.

In Pakistan, the Steering Committee of the WSF process is composed of representatives of all major civil society organizations in Pakistan. As a report reads by Feroz Mehdi (Alternatives, Canada), the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) is expected to be a strong

actor in the WSF in Pakistan, which is considered perhaps the only mass movement in the country today. He also reports that "the civil society actors are not making democracy an issue in the upcoming Forum. Obviously they don't have much choice and concretely they will be at a loss if they do so."

"The WSF in a way is quite a controlled process. It can host over a hundred thousand people in any city without the residents of the city knowing about it. Mumbai is a good example. In Karachi too it will happen within the available boundaries. Jihadis (religious extremists) will not oppose it because of the Forum's stand against the US militarism and Mushharaf will not oppose it because the people attending the Forum will not be there to support the jihadis. And then there is this image of 'good governance' to be maintained, an image which is being supported and funded by many Western countries ..." writes Mehdi.

Whilst some in the WSF IC believe the idea of a polycentric WSF has been an incomplete answer to the incapacity of the WSF IC to deal with the question of whether or not the WSF should be held every year - by others the polycentric WSF is received enthusiastically. It has not yet been decided whether this forum will be repeated in the coming years.

The WSF is not limited to annual events. The WSF has grown out into a process including regional forums, national forums, local forums and thematical forums.

Regional Social Forums are forums which adhere the WSF Charter of Principles (with respect to methodology and politics), and are followed by the WSF IC. "Like the WSF, the Regional Forums create open spaces for dialoguing. These democratic debates include the formulation of proposals and a free sharing of experiences of entities and movements of the civil society that oppose themselves to the neo-liberal globalization." These forums are closely attached to the WSF process, and as such bridge between the WSF and the local, regional realities of social movements and organisations. Examples are the African, European and Pan-Amazon social forums.

Thematic Social Forums are described as "They aim to meet the needs of deepening debates of specific issues that the WSF International Council sees as priorities." So there has been already in 2002 a Thematic Social Forum in Argentina "The neoliberal model in crisis" and a Palestine Thematic Social Forum "Negotiated conflict solution".

Also within the WSF IC, comments have been heard on the holding of more thematic fora, as in any case the methodology of the 2005 forum of dividing the WSF physical space into thematical areas meant one would spend most of the time in ones "own" thematical area. Objections have been made to the holding of the annual global WSF as thematical fora, as this would split the human resources. However, this objection comes of course under question when considering the choice for a polycentric WSF in 2006.

Then there are those forums held around the world which are held in the WSF spirit, but which are not organised nor followed by the WSF IC. These can be national as for

instance the Finnish Social Forum, and the 25 national forums in Africa. Another example is the forum of the Brazilians now being planned in relation to the crisis in the government. These other forums can be also local or thematical forum (for instance the World Education Forum). An example of a local forum is the Midwest Social Forum, which interestingly for 22 years was an annual gathering of radical scholars in the midwestern United States and which is transforming itself into a social forum. About five hundred activists and academics from the Chicago, Milwaukee, and Madison area gathered the first weekend of June for discussions that revolved around issues of peace and global justice, youth organizing, racial justice, and building democracy.

6. Finnish actors and the WSF

In the third chapter of this study, the WSF Africa process will be taken a closer look at. In Finland, different actors have agreed to form an ACWSF⁵ in Finland, which wants to bring the debate and issues around the WSF and the WSF Africa process to the Finnish public. Current members are ATTAC Finland, KDYK (Finnish Lutheran Church Diaconia unit), NIGD (Network Institute for Global Democratization), SASK (Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland), Siemenpuu (Seed Tree Foundation), TSL (Workers' Educational Association Finland), and Vasudhaiva Kutubakam. The commission has already held two meetings. At the first meeting in September 2005, representatives were present from the Asian Social Forum process, the WSF Secretariat and various Africa involved Finnish actors⁶. A second meeting was held shortly after that, with more news on the WSF Africa process from Antonio Martins of the WSF Secretariat who returned to Finland from a preparatory meeting of the WSF Polycentric process in Italy.

In Finland various actors have been involved with the WSF process. The involvement of Siemenpuu has been described further in this study.

Attac is one of the founders of the WSF process and Attac Finland has taken the WSF as one its main themes since its birth, which is seen as creating new transnational space for global progressive action and the formulating of alternatives to neo-liberal policies. Attac members have been actively participating the forums and the international Attac network organises its global meetings typically during the WSFs. Attac Finland continues to focus its international work on WSF and hopes to develop WSF more pro-active direction.

The Coalition for Environment and Development (CED) took early interest in the Indian WSF and got a three year grant from the Finnish foreign ministry (2003-2005) for assisting Finnish and Indian NGOs in organising programme for the event. Now the grant is coming to an end and it is not clear whether WSF engagement continues. Perhaps CED will apply again next year for the Kenya WSF in 2007.

⁵ See for more information on the ACWSF also www.nigd.org/docs/ACWSF

⁶ See the notes of the first meeting at <http://www.attac.fi/ryhmat/tyoryhmat/wsf/acwsf> and the notes of the second meeting at <http://www.nigd.org/docs/ACWSFII>

Fried of the Earth Finland has been involved WSF process very strongly since 2003-2004 when FOE Finland had many activist participates in Mumbai, India WSF January 2004. Since then FOE Finland has been slightly involved with FOE International activities related to the WSF. FOE Finland representatives participated WSF in Porto Alegre January 2005 from as part of FOE International Network. FOE Finland has arranged some activities and in cooperation with others International Boycott Bush campaign in WSF 2004 and 2005. FOE Finland reports to be interested to participate the ESF 2006 and the WSF 2007 in Africa with the FOE International network to strengthen the environmental angle in WSF. No concrete plans are available yet.

The Service Center for Development Cooperation (Kepa), participated in quite a large scale in the WSF of Mumbai, in 2004. Kepa's southern partners were invited to take part in the WSF as well as board members and a Kepa internal meeting was organised, with a focus on land issues. Kepa also offered the possibility of a travel cost compensation of 800 euros to the WSF for its membership via an application process. Kepa was able to use the WSF platform for internal and networking possibilities. Kepa furthermore also in the previous forums conducted information work and had for instance daily reporting on its WebPages from the WSF. Kepa says to be following the WSF process and to be evaluating what its role can be in the future with regards to the WSF.

The Trade Union Solidarity Center of Finland (SASK) has participated all WSF events, except for the first WSF in 2001. The main idea has been to involve Southern partners into the WSF process, to let them use the WSF as their own forum, to exchange ideas and meet other groups. SASK and its partners also organized some seminars at the WSF and the main focus has been on the monitoring of foreign companies. SASK says to remain involved in the WSF process.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Finland (Demokratiafoorumi) has taken a keen interest in the WSF process. The main effort was done in the Mumbai WSF 2004 when VK was member in a group of Finnish and Indian civil society organisations that facilitated more than fifty events and produced a number of publications. The next efforts would be the Asian polycentric WSF in Karachi in January 2006 and the WSF in Kenya 2007. The inputs for these will however not be to the tune of the Mumbai involvement.

Representatives of the Workers Educational Association of Finland (TSL) have participated twice in WSF in Porto Alegre (2002 and 2003). During the second time, TSL supported a group of colleagues from Southern sister organisations (Asia, Africa, Latin America) to participate in the events in POA (around 10 persons). In Finland, TSL has published two newsletters about the WSF process and some books have had articles about the WSF. Since 2002, TSL has had a special network project with the European SOLIDAR net and partners meet and arrange seminars during WSF events (see www.solidar.org).

2. The WSF process and funding

The funding issue of the WSF is both technically and politically a crucial issue. The WSF has exploded in size and consequently so has the financial burden. The costs for the fifth WSF had been estimated at USD 7.547.700, but the actual disbursements totalled USD 8,313,016. It are not just WSF large events that need financing, yet also the permanent functioning of the WSF Secretariat, the WSF International Council and (the tasks of) its commissions, and the technical office (till 2008 in Sao Paulo). In addition to technical and administrative tasks, the WSF Secretariat also bears the politically important burden of serving as institutional memory of the process. For instance, the Brazilian association for non governmental organisations ABONG, one of the initial members of the Brazilian organising committee which today is the WSF Secretariat is conducting an important project of collecting material and documents derived from the WSF process.

The WSF IC has a Resources Commission which is responsible for the creation of a solidarity based international system for funding of the WSF process activities. It furthermore for instance has worked on the carrying out of an extensive survey re the costs of previous forums and has developed a generic budget from which will help the preparations for the polycentric forum of 2006 and the WSF 2007 in Kenya. In September 2005 a framework for funding is expected to be ready.

The fundraising and financial management is mainly carried out by the WSF Secretariat, in particular by two Brazilian organisations, part of the Brazilian Organising Committee, the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic analysis IBASE and ABONG. Different plans are currently evaluated to see how their capacity to deal with the increasing demands can be strengthened, as for instance by the hiring of a financial development consultant to assist with the process of fundraising for 2006.

The Brazilian organizing committee of the WSF has seemingly relied its criteria re funders more on a general principle that "the forum can not receive funds from those that do not want another world to be built" (writes Chico Whitaker in his book *The Challenge of the World Social Forum*). Forum participants have posed questions regarding the funders of the Forum, as for instance the involvement of Petrobras in WSF 2005. The Sustainability working group which worked on environmental issues at the WSF event itself, also pronounced itself against funders which are engaged in unsustainable activities as polluting.

The Indian organizing committee of the WSF 2004 in Mumbai took a more stern stance on funding, and did not accept certain funds as the Brazilian organising committee did accept, as they stated to not want to accept funds "which are clearly situated on the side of those promoting globalisation and agencies controlled by corporate funds". The issue of independence also plays a role in the debate. Not accepted were the funds of the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation (which was once again funder of WSF 2005), USAID, and the Department for International Development of the British Foreign Ministry DFID.

The Resources Commission of the WSF IC stated in the last WSF IC meetings in Barcelona, that it believes it is important for the Forum to decrease its dependency on

funding from governments, the private sector and foundations, and increase the percentage of its support coming from organizational and individual participants and supporters of the Forum itself.

In order to achieve this, it proposes a variety of initiatives and practices, as sliding-scale registration fees based on an ability to contribute, solidarity funding appeals to past participants, fees to be contributed by organizations who using translation facilities and meeting rooms, the use of collection buckets during marches and at airports for receiving small donations of loose change from departing delegates. Other ideas include a raising of the registration fee of the WSF, considered low for Northern participants (approximately 10 euro).

As to where the funding goes, see an overview of the costs of WSF 2005 at <http://www.nigd.org/docs/WSFFinances2005>. As has been reported, elements as (hiring, setting up of and tearing down of) tents in which all forum activities took place have been major costs.

a. WSF 2005 outstanding debt

WSF 2005 is still left with a deficit of approximately USD 1.25 million (from USD 1.5 million). The costs for the fifth WSF had been estimated at USD 7.547.700, but the actual disbursements totalled USD 8,313,016. Resources effectively secured were USD 6.793.705, which thus led to the deficit of USD 1.573.311.

Main reasons for the deficit have been :

- unfavorable exchange rate conversion with regards to the income in USD. Expenditure in Reais practically equaled the cost estimate, but income was below predicted due to the value of the Real (8% loss).
- certain delay in the receiving of funds which resulted in elevating costs of hired services
- infrastructure issues as the WSF location on the shores of Guiba rivers (instead of as previously at university premises in order to make the WSF more participatory) brought along superior costs than foreseen

In particular IBASE and ABONG have been faced with heavy financial crises due to outstanding payments of WSF administrative expenses, which is a serious matter also in light of the continuation of their important role in the WSF Secretariat. It has been generally thought that the debt is a collective political responsibility for the Brazilian Organising Committee and the WSF IC.

b. Solving the WSF 2005 debt issue

USD 600.000 is actually still owed by the Brazilian government, and there are currently discussions going on with the Brazilian Bank for Development regarding a new contribution. The Indian Organising Committee has offered to provide up to USD 25.000, and perhaps Dutch Novib will follow with a contribution of a similar amount.

A letter has been sent out in July to all the organizations which participated in WSF 2005 (approximately 5.000) , to ask for solidarity contributions of USD 200 or more. This

approach was the subject of sufficient debate in the WSF IC. The latest WSF IC meeting in Barcelona however decided favorable on the issue of allowing the WSF Secretariat to use the WSF database for fund raising purposes.

c. Funding the WSF process beyond the event.

Particularly the WSF Secretariat is important to the maintenance of the WSF process. The WSF International Secretariat existed in the first years of 8 Brazilian organisations and 8 Indian organisations were added to the Secretariat in light of the WSF 2004 in India. This International Secretariat of Brazilian and Indian origin functioned till April 2005. After a recent WSF IC meeting in Barcelona, the body is now described as a "collective" responsible for the office of the WSF and it groups together the traditional Brazilian organisations formerly making up the Secretariat.

The collective of CBJP, CUT, MST, IBASE, Cives, Abong, Attac, and the human right network meet about every 15 days to discuss the WSF. Some of these organisations are typically involved with one person in the WSF process, others have a few involved representatives (in total some 12 people). The group works intensively specifically in preparation of IC meetings. These people are not payed for their work, nor receive any compensation for the days they have to ommit their normal professional work. No one of the collective is allowed to occupy government posts.

For the operational tasks and administration related to the WSF, the collective has put together a taskforce of professional workers. They are responsible for activities as answering the questions of organisations or individuals who address the WSF, keeping up the official website, and assist the other forums that ask for assistance. This group has changed a lot over time and its size varies seasonally. When the forum occurred in Brasil, approximately 15 people were working for the WSF. In "normal" times as now, there are 4 to five people working. They are salaried people, but have now also with the polycentric forum an increased work load, and it has been commented from the WSF office that the people working there are actually not able to carry out all the tasts designed for the WSF Office. For the upcoming preparatory meeting of the WSF IC end September 2005 in Bamako, one of the four persons in the WSF office will be staying in Bamako to assit the forum people there.

The mentioned collective of eight organisations is responsible for the politics of the WSF Office and is a stable group. The moments of their largest concentration of work not necessarily goes hand in hand with the agenda of the WSF events. "For instance, between September 2003 and November 2005, the collective was strongly engaged in developing and stimulating the creation of a new methodlogy for the WSF. It was perceived that in 2003 a certain impasse was reached, and the WSF needed to start to stimulate common action of its participants. This work of the colelctive resulted in the new methodlogy of the forum (consultation for the themes of the forum, the defenition of the 11 thematical spaces, the concept of agglutination (the joining of events around common themes), the 100% self organised character of the forum, the Mural of Proposal, etc.)," explains Antonio Martins, Attac Brasil and member of the collective.

The role of the collective in total is to stimulate and support regional and thematic forums (see also Chapter 1. Introducing the WSF); facilitate the IC meetings and facilitate the WSF IC commissions; ensure WSF communication process; ensure systematization of the memory of the WSF process; and support fundraising for the WSF process.

The International Council meetings has often enjoyed extensive hospitality from member organisations. Often there has been solidarity accommodation for IC members from the South and free meals for all. There has also been a mechanism of solidarity contributions from members of the North to facilitate the participation of members from the South (set at 400 euro). Funds have an important role to play in the facilitation of participation throughout the WSF process including the participation and functioning of the WSF IC.

With the polycentric WSF 2006 process new challenges are also in the domain of facilitating preparatory meetings for the forums in Venezuela, Pakistan and Mali. At the end of September 2005, a meeting will be held in Mali, and funding is sought to ensure ample participation for this and following meetings.

Currently there are debates over the architecture of the WSF Secretariat in light of the expansion of the WSF process. No decisions have yet been made as to the new architecture, but comments have been made on the necessity to form some sort of facilitating group.

d. Polycentric WSF 2006 and WSF 2007

Each of the Polycentric WSF will be in charge of the development of funds, whereas as the WSF Secretariat and the Resource Commission will coordinate fundraising efforts in a centralized fashion only in the instances where this makes the most practical sense. Two members of each Polycentric forum will sit in the resources commission of the WSF IC, which has developed a generic budget form which will help the preparations for the polycentric forum.

WSF 2007 in Kenya will bring its own challenges with respect to the necessary funds. The African organizing committee together with the WSF Secretariat is preparing a funding scheme which will be ready by September for potential funders.

e. Organisations and institutions that supported the WSF

Organisations and institutions that supported WSF 2005 (Porto Alegre):

ActionAid, Banco do Brasil, CAFOD, CCFD, Correios Brasil, Christian Aid, Caixa, Development and Peace, Eletrobras, EED, FURNAS, HIVOS, Infraero, Misereor, Ministerio do Turismo, Novib, Oxfam, Petrobras, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Rio Grande do Sul State Government, Sida Sweden.

Organisations and institutions that supported WSF 2004 (Mumbai):

Action Aid, Alternatives, Attac Norway, CCFD, Christian Aid, Development and Peace, EED, FNTG, H. Boll Foundation, HIVOS, ICCO, Oxfam International, SIDA, SolidÉago Foundation, SDC, Tides Foundation, World Council of Churches, Members of India General Council solidarity contributions

Organisations and institutions that supported WSF 2003 (Porto Alegre):
ActionAid, Cafod, CCFD, EED, Fundação Banco do Brazil, Ford Foundation, H. Boll
Foundation, ICCO, Misereor, Novib, Oxfam, Petrobras.

Organisations and institutions that supported WSF 2002 (Porto Alegre):
ActionAid, CCFD, EED, Ford Foundation, ICCO, North-South Centre, NOVIB,
OXFAM GB, Porto Alegre City Government, Procergs, Rio Grande do Sul State
Government, RITS - Rede de Informação para o Terceiro Setor, World Forum of
Alternatives 2002 - Municipality provided USD 300 000, the State USD 1.000.000 for the
WSF.

Organisations and institutions that supported WSF 2001 (Porto Alegre):
Droits et Démocratie, Ford Foundation, H. Boll Foundation, ICCO, Le Monde
Diplomatique, Oxfam, Porto Alegre City Government, RITS - Rede de Informação para o
Terceiro Setor, Rio Grande do Sul State Government.

3. A picture of the WSF process in Africa

Out of the 6 billion people in the world, some 850 million live in Africa. Africa has tremendous resources and based on this it should be among the richest continents in the world.

According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2002, in some of the indebted countries where 70 per cent of the people are impoverished, the governments pay up to 60 per cent of their budgets in debt service. The national income of some of these countries has fallen by 30, 40 or even 50 per cent during the nineties and in others a good 20 per cent of the adult population suffers from HIV/AIDS. The information that furthermore comes our way via the UNDP reports is that the African population is very much infected with HIV/Aids.

Now, the WSF is coming to Africa with the polycentric event in Bamako, Mali and the WSF 2007 Kenya. The forum coming to Kenya was a request of the East African sub region of the Africa Social Forum process.

The structural adjustment programs of the Bretton Woods Institutions began in Latin America and spread through Subsaharan Africa to the rest of the African continent. One reason behind the birth of the WSF process has been a deep dissatisfaction with these programs. Today every African country has experienced structural adjustment programs in some form at some point. It is commented also therefore as interesting that the WSF spreads from Latin America to and through Africa.

So reads the news item in The Nation newspaper of Nairobi, announcing the upcoming WSF forum on the 19th of July:

"Kenya is to host the next World Social Forum.

Nairobi won the bid to stage what is considered the world's largest conference - which annually brings together over 300,000 delegates from social and civil society movements operating in all parts of the world. The WSF, as the conference is called is traditionally held in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, save for 2004 when it moved to Mumbai, India.

In a world which is increasingly seen by some as the playground of global big capital to the detriment of the rest of humanity, the WSF platform has emerged as a strong counterweight to the World Economic Forum (WEC), which is annually held in the Swiss city of Davos.

Tourism boost

The major coup by Kenya in winning the bid was achieved on the back of international recognition and strong lobbying by some of its leading civil society figures, among them

Wahu Kaara (All Africa Conference of Churches), Prof Edward Oyugi (Social Development Network - Kenya), Oduor Ongwen (SEATTINI). The bid was supported by Fatuma Aloo of Femnet Tanzania and Uganda's Elizabeth Eilor (Awepon).

Mr Ongwen said the conference would be a major boost to Kenyan tourism and overall economic development, putting their total projected spending at over Sh10 billion. "Imagine bringing in 20 per cent of all tourists who visit Kenya annually to Nairobi in one week for this extravaganza."

Mrs Kaara said the hosting of the conference in Africa would give the best platform for its mission of "sculpting a more equitable world" and amplifying the world's betrayal by the rich North. They called for cooperation from the regional governments and non-state organizations to make the event a success."

The nature of the above newspaper clipping points to a (criticized) bidding climate accompanying the choice of the WSF hosting country. It is however important to know, that the decision for Kenya to be hosting WSF 2007 was a decision made in the Regional Council of the Africa process, which joins 40 representatives from 40 different regions (see more below).

There is already a WSF process in Africa since the preparations for January 2002, when the first African Social Forum was held in Bamako, Mali, under the banner of "Another Africa is possible". Since then various sub regional, national and thematic initiatives have sprung forth, and even community social forums as held in Kenya. Twenty five national forums are reported to have taken place so far. It is reported that African representatives already spoke of a WSF to be held in Africa at the first WSF International Council in 2001.

After the second ASF held in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia in 2003, a third African Social Forum was held in Lusaka, Zambia in December 2004, attracted approximately 650 social movement activists from across sub-Saharan Africa. There was significant representation from South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, and Nigeria, and smaller delegations from Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and other countries, the largest delegation coming from Zimbabwe. Working languages of the forum were English, French, Portuguese, Arabic and Swahili.

1. The positive potential of the WSF global event coming to Africa

Opinions seem to be positive as to the potential of the annual "global" WSF going to Africa. Some point to how now, when so much attention has been going to Africa as during the G8 summit and the release of the report of the UK Africa Commission with however disputed results, the WSF coming to Africa would be an instance to in a right manner put the spotlight on Africa.

”Both the Mali and Kenya WSFs, 2006 and 2007 provide an ideal stage for Africa to raise pertinent issues affecting the continent, such as HIV/AIDS, Land disputes, corruption, bio-piracy, GMOs, EPAs, Natural resource commercialization and Debt among other issues. Africa would do well to use this stage, which will shift Global focus on Africa, to raise voices of millions of marginalised communities wallowing in abject poverty and demand for a just world. We therefore feel it is ideal that the WSF is coming to Africa. The reality and consequences of trade imbalances, debt, HIV/AIDS, misgovernance, corruption and other critical issues affecting Africa will be best discussed and appreciated on the African soil,” says Emmanuel Green Living Movement, Zambia.

Others point to the positive effect on the organization and coming together of civil society groups in light also of the organisation of the WSF. So its reported from Kenya that civil society groups from different sectors are currently working together in Nairobi who never met before.

Commented is that this is particularly important at this moment, ”Kenya is going through big changes which is having its effects in all sectors, and political identities are being shaped. Having the World Social Forum in Kenya can bring Kenyans together. A new constitution has been drafted via a process including civil society hearings. However, various sectors have been left behind and there is expectations of the forum bringing their voices to the stage,” said Gathurum Mburu, Forum for Urban Ecology, Kenya. In three months a referendum will be held on the newly drafted constitution.

Other comments on the WSF context of Kenya are that ”Kenya is at the cross roads of either delivering a constitution that will be the bane for all the future democratic processes or a total tragedy (main reason being that vernacular groups do not seem to see beyond local linguistic politics). For this reason, it would be interesting to get these same groupings deliberate issues that are a common threat to them, whilst at the same time offering a platform from within which those local differences could be harnessed positively for their own good and at a common enemy,” commented Peter K, Siemenpuu foundation, Finland.

Yet others point to the possibility the WSF presents to display and get attention for the alternatives, for those alternatives and solutions envisioned and debated in Africa for Africa. The Regional Council of the African Social forum states that the Forum will ”create a popular critical mass which will compel the internal and external political forces to take this expression into account. It will thus greatly influence the future of the continent in terms of a democratic reconstruction and the rehabilitation of citizens...it will constitute a high point for building new solidarities among the peoples, in which the continent will be fully present.”

And yet others point to the importance of getting to know the African movements. This not only being an aspect for those from outside the African continent. Also within the African continent, learning from each others experiences and analysis can be a valuable

experience for African organisations and movements meeting under the umbrella of the WSF.

Pointed is also to the potential for mass international mobilisation coming forth out of the meetings held on the African continent.

The forum is said to be an opportunity to show another Africa and all the good things that come forth out of it, and its of great importance that this will be done by Africans to Africans, to regain strength and pride. Nairobi is a socially very divided city and it is commented as good the Forum will take place there and surely also highlight this.

The African social forum adheres to the WSF Charter of Principles, and has further more developed an own Charter after the first two African social forum in 2001 and 2002 (See Annex 3. Charter of the African Social Forum, page 74).

The African Social Forum has a Secretariat maintained by Enda (Environment and Development in the Third World, current plans are to expand the Secretariat to 4 full time working people) and a Regional African Social Forum Council was set up formally in 2004 during a meeting in Cairo. The members of the council are organisations which have taken national, sub-regional and thematic initiatives, members of the African Social Forum's organising committee as well as social movements organised at continental level.

Taoufik Ben Abdallah, Enda, said that currently there are 3 strong ideas within the African regional council on what the Africa WSF 2007 process should contribute to: (1)Autonomy for the continent, sovereignty, in particular regarding the international financial institutions; (2) to consolidate citizenship (in many African countries the concept of citizenship is hollow), (3) to work on African unity, to profit from the diversity of participants to get to something in common.

The WSF IC is underrepresented with regards to African organisations. Only 6,3% of the headquarters of organisations in the WSF IC are located in Africa. Currently a revision of the criteria for IC membership is on going. However, certain for membership applying organisations, including African organisations, are in the mean time receiving IC membership to correct the imbalances.

2. Regional African Social Forum Council : Defining the (collective action) themes in the WSF Africa process

The Council⁷ was founded in Cairo at a meeting in July 2004, with 35 organisations present from South Africa, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Morocco, Mali, Mozambique, Central African Republic, Senegal, Tanzania,

⁷ See for an incomplete list of the Council 9. Contacts, page 68. I have not been able to obtain a complete list of the Council. We might expect this list to be available after the upcoming preparatory meeting of the WSF IC in Bamako.

Tunisia, and Uganda. It has been reported that important actors are networks as the Jubilee campaigns, Action Aid and Friends of the Earth.

The council of today 40 members has as a purpose to serve as the Forum's discussion and decision-making space and it proposes the issues and themes around which the ASF activities are mobilised. The latter presents a difference from the current (not previous) workings of the WSF (and the Americas social forum as well as the Asian social forum), in which the definition of the themes is the result of a consultation process. Membership of the open council depends on both WSF and ASF charter adherence, but does not have representativity as a criteria and members is meant to come from a broad range of organisations.

As the WSF IC, also the African Council has to deal with issues as representativity and transparency. The Council is mentioned to be in a process of enlarging its membership.

At the founding meeting of the Council in 2004, the Council members defined what were the main challenges facing the African continent : The dictatorship of neo-liberal policies and the policy geared towards the militarization of the management of the world Triad (Europe, United States and Japan), under the leadership of the American Empire.

Four main themes were defined which would guide the African Forum activities at the Lusaka African social forum in Dec 2004, and at the WSF 2005 in Porto Alegre:

- 1- The land issue and the future of peasant societies.
- 2- The reconstruction of the United Labour Front.
- 3- National Sovereignty and Democracy
- 4- Reconstructing the United Front of Peoples of the Third World.

Further discussions took place highlighting several aspects which should be guiding the programing in the forums as for instance the need to have a critical attitude towards the Africa Union, the need to connect as well as the need to project another image of Africa. Discussions had an emphasis on the formulations of alternatives and within this a particular emphasis on the role of culture.

Several themes were further defined around which African forum activities would engage in collective action at the forums in Lusaka and in Porto Alegre. These themes were:

- a) Sovereignty and democracy
- b) Land issue and peasant farming
- c) Reconstruction of the labor front
- d) Pan-Africanism in question
- e) Reconstruction of the United Front of Peoples of the South
- f) African Women's Tribunal
- g) Art and Culture
- h) Media and communication
- f) The alternatives formulated by the African organisations.

Participants in the African social forum process organise selforganised activities and links are promoted between these activities and the collective activities. The African social forum process has always also attempted to facilitate a maximum participation of Africans in the "global" WSF events, which has been in increasing numbers over the years. It has been perceived as very important to be present and give visibility to the African issues.

The Regional Council decided on the hosting of the Africa WSF 2007 in Kenya, and is in general the space for the African Social Forum process to make decisions.

Kenyan organisations involved in the WSF process have put up a Secretariat for the WSF 2007 organisation. It has been reported that the organisations are making effort to inform about the WSF process and invite movements from the different sectors aboard. "A coordinator has been hired. Research is going on regarding the mapping out of the available residential facilities, meeting sites, transport, security ... The response is overwhelming. Many civil society formations are involved. These include the ecumenical community, Bunge la Wananchi, People Against Torture, Social Development Network and its membership across the country, KENREN, SEATINI and many others," says Prof Edward Oyugi, director of the Social Development Network and member of the organizing committee of the forum in Kenya.

3. The polycentric WSF 2006 in Mali

Proposals are at the moment for the forum in Mali to be held from the 18th to 22nd of January, 2006. Bamako is hosting other grand scale meetings during the period coinciding with the WEF, and furthermore believed is that as such those who want can take place in more than one WSF. It has been commented that the press is also an important factor to consider, as the "one and only" alterglobalization journalist from some major media will not be able to be in two places at the same time, and if required to do so, the forum of Caracas might win over Mali.

A spokesman of the forum process in Mali, Barry Aminata Traoré (CAD Mali), reported that Malians are very enthusiastic about the forum to be hosted next year in Mali.

The preparatory process for the polycentric WSF 2006 is now some two months underway. After a general assembly of Malian Social movements, different bodies have been formed : A national council (formed by one representative of each of the hundred organisations taking part in the council), an organisation committee (formed by one representative of each of the 11 working commissions), and a coordination committee which is recruiting its personnel. The more than hundred members of the national council of the polycentric WSF in Mali are reported to be from all sectors of society.

There are meetings of organising committees and assemblies for the exchange of information and decision making on the level of national Mali Social Forum council level. Traoré told that there are different challenges facing the process. One is the

challenge of getting the involved actors fully informed about the process, as the WSF is not familiar to all.

4. Challenges and tensions within the WSF Africa process

Politically the challenges for the WSF process wanting to promote the autonomy of civil society in Africa are considerable. As Antonio Martins (ATTAC Brasil) from the WSF Secretariat puts it, the fact that there have been already 3 African Social Forum involving more than 30 countries is therefore very positive. However, participation has not been massive and mainly leaders convened in the meetings. The great challenge is to mobilise civil society and believed is that the WSF of 2007 can give a new impetus to the African Social Forum movement. Material conditions are of course also a challenge in the African WSF process. Conditions also in the sense of the conditions for contact and dialogue between the African countries. However, Martins believes the WSF process will be able to engage great international solidarity in support of the common objectives behind the holding of the WSF in Africa.

A. On (the nature of) participation throughout the African social forum process. Turnout

The turnout for the Lusaka forum was not as large as hoped for (650 participants), however a considerable increase from the previous year. It should be noted that some national forums gather larger crowds, as for instance did the forum in Nigeria, 2000 participants. Needless to say the holding of an African Social forum of the continent of Africa is a huge challenge.

In his article "Africa Social Forum 2004 - whose Forum, which Africa?" Miles Larmer writes on the participation in the African Social Forum that "One solution undoubtedly lies in the organisation of national Social Forums. It was noticeable that those countries that had held such events in the run-up to the ASF (Zimbabwe, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, and Malawi) tended to contribute to the ASF in a more coherent and focused way. The capacity to hold such events is naturally reflective of the tempo of the struggle in various countries: Kenyan activists, still on the offensive following the ousting of the Moi regime in 2003, and pressing home their advantage with its successor, also organised 'community social forums' in the poorest areas of Nairobi. In Nigeria, where a series of general strikes over petrol subsidies have coincided with an increased radicalization of the struggle in the Niger Delta, 3,000 delegates attended the national Social Forum.... At the same time, the sharing and generalising of experiences is necessary to give voice to an Africa-wide social movement."

Needless to say available funds have a big role to play. Criticism is voiced by African activists on the dependency forthcoming from attending the forum for many being possible only by ways of the funding of northern organisations.

South African radical activist Trevor Nwagane told that a proposal is being worked out for the WSF 2007 to facilitate mass participation via bus caravans throughout the African

continent, which would without a doubt have a positive effect on the nature of participation.

”We are noticing an encouraging development in the African Social Forum process which is demonstrated by the organisation of national and regional forums. Certain critiques remain grounded as is the case regarding the democratisation of the ASF. There is on going effort to make the FSA a process carried by mass mobilisation and the popular social movements. In our opinion, this democratisation is first of all the responsibility of the African social movement,” says, a spokesperson of the forum process in Mali, Barry Aminata Traore (CAD Mali).

NGO and Social Movements

Another aspect of participation in the WSF Africa process concerns the participation of NGOs versus social movements. Trevor Nwagane, in his essay on the WSF ”WSF 2007 in Africa must build a mass movement against capitalism” writes on how also seemingly the African forum process is dominated by NGOs rather than by grassroot organisations and social movements.

Tied to this, comes a new feature of the WSF: In contrast to the three first WSFs, the WSF itself does not organise an official program as such any more. Rather, the WSF is composed of hundreds or even thousands of self organised activities, like workshops and seminars according to the WSF methodology (see WSF Methodology).

”The WSF governing structures - its international council and secretariat - are unwittingly allowing the marginalisation and eclipse of social movements by their hands-off, laissez-faire approach to the organisation of events and activities in the WSF space. Thus the Global-Campaign Against Poverty campaign was able to steal the show during the WSF 2005 because Oxfam, Action Aid, the United Nations and other agencies had the resources to secure Lula's time and overwhelm the proceedings with their giant-sized zeppelins and hundreds of thousands of brochures and pamphlets.” writes Trevor.

Also within the International Council these dynamics led to debates regarding the issue as to what attracts visibility during the WSF and most probably some events will be co-organized by WSF organizers and participants.

It should however be noted that it has been exactly the aim of the WSF to bring the NGO's and social movements together. The WSF and the WSF IC have been comparatively broad based, so that the people's movements have been participating from the birth of the WSF process.

“...I do not think that the African Social Forum can be a replacement of NGO networks. ASF is a space for a multiplicity of actors - NGOs, CBOs, social movements, Trade Unions, Faith-based organisations - and as such has a wider agenda than NGO work. ASF can and does provide space for the NGOs to better network, “ comments Oduor Ong'wen, SEATINI Kenya and member of the Kenyan organizing committee.

In 2003, Mondli Hlatshwayo circulated his reflections on ASF in a piece entitled “The African Social Forum-A tale of two forces” wherein he concluded that: “...The ASF has two distinct forces. There are those forces that are radical in character. These forces are largely from Southern Africa. They have attracted very few individuals and organizations in Kenya and Ethiopia. It has to be said that these progressive forces were the minority in the ASF. “Therefore there is a need to strengthen these forces in other regions of Africa particularly in Francophone countries. The other forces are led by NGOs that are not articulating the interests of the toiling masses.”

As Hlatshwayo points to, critique has been often of an ASF agenda set by international NGO's, with perhaps important action points, but not necessarily allowing African civil society to define their own agenda. A similar criticism concerns the featured speakers.

One aspect of this is of course as many Southern countries are faced with: the dependency on the Northern funders. So for instance ASF process meetings get held in the places where invitations are offered to.

Taoufik Ben Abdallah, active WSF IC member and representative of ENDA in the WSF Africa process, which also holds the Secretariat of the WSF Africa process, says however that the WSF Africa process is an autonomous project, and as such disagreeing with the principle of Western NGO's guiding a passive African dependent partner.

He points to the fact that the WSF Africa process of course has to deal with huge challenges. There is no strong organised civil society and conditions are often found lacking but the 25 national social forums that take place in Africa are autonomous projects. The process needs to be supported to expand.

Dot Keet (Alternative Information and Development Center, South Africa) in 2004 posed the questions ” whether Africa has, or rather which African countries have the organisational means and the mass movement base to maintain and contribute further to the patterns of participation and levels of action already established in Brazil and India as being so crucial to the credibility, the aims and the impact of the WSF; and, whether taking up the mammoth responsibility of organising and hosting a world social forum will at this stage of African popular social/political organisations act as an inspiration and a stimulation towards the urgently needed and often very preliminary development of organised mass social forces in most African countries, and the effective activation of such forces.”

Trevor Nwagane in his essay on the WSF further writes that : ”We should use the build-up to the WSF 2007 to build and strengthen the social movements in Africa. We need a programme of action for this momentous task. We should broaden and strengthen the ASF as the tool to co-ordinate this work. Maximum internal democracy, accountability, collective leadership and mass participation are crucial in building the ASF. NGOs and research institutes are important and welcome in the ASF but only those who agree to the primacy of mass organisations in the struggle; only those who privilege methods of struggle which actively involve the rank and file rather than rely on few specialists to

fight it out. The WSF 2007 in Africa should be structured logistically, organisationally and politically to favor the social movements and their daily struggles.”

“I think the (ASF) network brings together social movements which have either graduated from or at the point of graduating from NGOism with all its political limitations. All manner of social organisations are involved. Grass roots social organisation and NGO’s dominate the scene. Trade union movements are beginning to be a distinct feature of the Forum. For instance, COSATU of South Africa, and COTU of Kenya are already members not only of their respective national/regional fora but more importantly of the ASF,” says Edward Oyugi, director of the Social Development Network and member of the organizing committee of the forum in Kenya.

(No) Statement

Activists from South Africa’s Social Movements Indaba (SMI) issued a statement after the ASF in 2004 in Lusaka which connected another aspect to the issue of NGO versus social movement participation to which also Trevor was pointing in his previously quoted comment: "The under representation of social movements in relation to NGOs is reflected in the political content of the forum. It manifests in the persistence of the notion that the Africa Social Forum is nothing other than a space, in contrast to the perspective that it should have a programme to advance our struggle against neoliberalism."

The ASF adheres to the Charter of the WSF by which the WSF does not issue any statements in name of the forum. Yet the ASF of Bamako (2002) and Adis Abeba (2003) did issue a declaration and a consensus respectively. During the Addis Abeba forum in 2003, the African Social forum adopted its charter, which referred to the fact that no statements are to be issued in the name of the forum.

The first African Social Forum held in Bamako, Mali in January 2002, issued a Declaration, "Another Africa is Possible". The Bamako Forum took place at a time when certain African presidents, were pushing for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nepad) to become the economic policy for the continent and the African Social Forum issued a response: According to the Bamako declaration: “initiatives such as Nepad are inspired by the IMF-World Bank strategies of Structural Adjustment Programmes, trade liberalisation that continues to subject Africa to an unequal exchange, and strictures on governance borrowed from the practices of Western countries and not rooted in the culture and history of the peoples of Africa.”

The second African Social forum took place in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in 2003. Over 200 people from 40 countries participated. The Bamako Declaration was reaffirmed at the meeting and a 3 pages Addis Ababa consensus was drawn up in which amongst other the principles of an alternative development paradigm were laid out which included strong stances on various issues as Debt and the WTO. Amongst the principles for an alternative development paradigm was also that "The development of the ASF (should be ed.) based on the participation of grassroots social movements, supported by NGOs, institutions and professionals who act in line with the principles of the ASF."

No statement was issued at the third African Social Forum, held in Lusaka, Zambia in December 2004, which attracted approximately 650 social movement activists from across sub-Saharan Africa.

Also in the meetings of the WSF IC, this issue comes up as part of the WSF and Strategy debate Taoufik Ben Abdallah (Enda) has expressed repeatedly in WSF International Council meetings that the WSF for the forum should be "more than a talkshop" if it comes to Africa, and should pronounce itself for instance on the international financial institutions whose condemned practices are having such visible effects in Africa.

Aminata Barry Traoré (Mali forum process) wrote that "The principles of the World Social Forum do not allow the making of a common statement. But, the WSF is in a process which is developing. In its last meetings, there have been declarations made by groups around certain positions. Regional forums are based on certain problems and specific demands. The Forum of the People in Mali is an activity that has the G8 summits in focus and always a statement is made."

Trevor Nwagane wrote that "The WSF 2007 in Africa cannot afford to be a talk-shop. We should consider a specific concrete campaign and outcome which will benefit the African masses practically. Some have suggested linking the WSF 2007 with the call for the actual cancellation of the debt and the struggle for reparations. I personally support this approach as it unites us with Africans in the diaspora who are also fighting for reparations. But whatever specific campaign we decide upon, be it HIV/AIDS linked to gender equality or trade, we must not forget the analogy of the birds in the cage. The WSF in Africa must help us gather the social forces and build the power to destroy the cage rather than buy us the, freedom of one bird."

There is no contradiction between regional statements and a global open space. We want Africa to have a sense of direction of where we want to go to, but it would be premature to close space at the global level," says Yash Tandon, director of South Centre.

It remains to be seen how the issue of the WSF open space, in particular the fact that no statements nor calls for action are issued in the name of the forum, will be worked out with the polycentric WSF in Mali, and in the WSF in 2007 in Kenya. A reading of the current opinions suggests there will be for sure strong voices demanding for the forum "to speak".

Others however remain convinced that there can be great potential in the grand mobilisations via international campaigns coming forth out of the upcoming WSF events in Africa with out the need for common statements or end documents, which would for them unnecessarily and unproductively lead to the need to choose from the diversity of themes and issues present at the WSF.

And for the defenders of the Open Space, of in particular the WSF as not issuing of any statements, the novelty of the WSF process lies exactly in its bringing together of a diverse spectrum of different kind of organisations, NGO's and movements with different

orientations. A global common policy line would force many to step out from the whole process which would marginalise the whole WSF process.

4. Past experiences at the WSF

1. Siemenpuu support to WSF (process) participation and activities

Siemenpuu first supported a participant to the WSF in 2002, from the *Défense pour l'environnement Camerounais*. In 2003, Siemenpuu funded activities at the Asian social forum in Hyderabad, India, with 20.000 euro. Siemenpuu engaged in the funding of further representatives (and their activities) to the WSF Mumbai forum in 2004 of Save the Abra River Movement (STARM, Philippines), of the Federation of Indonesian peasant Union (FSPI, Indonesia), and of 40 people from Southern Initiative NGO forum for Participatory Development (SINFPAD, India). Siemenpuu supported activities of CSDS, India, with 50.000 euro to contribute to the process and the event of the World Social Forum held in Mumbai on issues of ecological democracy. And in 2005, Siemenpuu funded the participation of 3 representatives to the WSF in Porto Alegre of the Save the Abra River Movement (Philippines), and two representatives of the Green Living Movement (GLM, Zambia). Siemenpuu representatives participated in the WSF of 2004 and 2005.

Siemenpuu has not had a conscious strategically envisioned partnership with the WSF. It has mostly funded the applications of those that have had the idea themselves to apply for the funding. However, in 2004, Siemenpuu board decided to offer the Green Living Movements of Zambia a possibility to participate the WSF and produce a journal. The idea behind this was that as Siemenpuu was sending Indian people to the forum, Siemenpuu also wanted also to give our African partners a possibility to participate, and Siemenpuu wanted to learn what they would think about the forum, which had so far been dominated by South Americans, and in 2004 by Indians.

The WSF "funding cases" represent different experiences, from the funding of the participation of one individual to significant contribution to the Asian Social Forum process in 2003, culminating in the WSF 2004 in Mumbai. Participating in the WSF can take different forms and serve different purposes. Some want to come to discuss certain issues and their solutions, others come mainly to learn.

2. Positive aspects of participating in the WSF

The following aspects were mentioned as positive aspects of attending the WSF in the reports from the participants supported by Siemenpuu to attend the WSF (*Défense pour l'environnement Camerounais*, STARM, FSPI, SINFPAD and GLM). Points have also been included which casually came up in the interviews for this purpose of this study. The comments given have been organised under two broad yet main points. (Please note

that I have treated the support of Siemenpuu to the Ecological Democracy dialogues in India in a following separate section).

Capacity building and Exchange of information

- WSF is a global stage to build capacity at individual and organizational level
- Facilitates the coming together of international alliances
- Participating assists in the process of domesticating global campaigns, advocacy and lobbying on issues that affect the home country and home continent based on experiences from the WSF.
- brings light on issues that generate international debate on board as this helps development support groups to redefine approaches in provision of services to marginalised groups.
- gives insight on importance of collecting adequate information in order to carry out effective advocacy programme.
- learning on importance of networking among civil societies at national and regional level
- learning on importance of engaging grassroot groups in demanding social justice from leaders.
- Important to learn from the hosting countries on specific issues as for instance host country peasant reality
- Exchange of information can reinforce existing movements
- Contacts can lead to diverse future collaborations as for instance the opportunity to give inputs into materials produced elsewhere.
- Gives a glimpse of various efforts resisting globalisation

Collective action building

- Opportunity to unite with other groups involved in struggles over for instance water resources in other parts of the world which strengthen struggle on the ground among the effected communities
- Advance network building
- Exchange of information can lead to the creation of movements
- Events serve as a good opportunity to present own "case" to the international audience
- Networking on related issues as water rights, health and environment and mining on different levels, local to global
- Provides a space to analyze social economic factors, develop proposals, strategise for mobilisation
- Identifying new partners
- By and large WSF is a perfect platform for Campaign, Advocacy and Lobbying at the Global stage.

The comments of the participants point to how their participation in the WSF is not limited to merely participating the event. Siemenpuu partners reported of mobilisations before the WSF event itself, and several of the partners reported how they held meetings after the forum to speak of the learned there (as well as of the WSF process itself).

The participation of SINFPAD from Tali Nadu shows well how participation from national/regional social forums to the WSF can be a process

SINFPAD from Tamil Nadu held several preparatory meetings and seminars before the Mumbai forum, which in itself were informing and mobilising meetings. Reported is of tens of NGO representatives from different districts being present in the meetings. Experiences from the Asian Social Forum were shared by Participants of the ASF and from their as well as the other participants interventions, it became clear that water (privatisation) was a most pressing issue to be focused upon in joint WSF preparations.

At the preparatory sessions, the problems related to water in the different districts were analysed and discussed solutions as the return to traditional irrigation systems. A consolidated position was formed through the participatory process. Ideas were formulated as to present and discuss these issues at the WSF as well as gain support. From these sessions, case studies were prepared to be presented at the WSF and workshops held to explain the problems and consequences. The involved organisations did also form a cultural group that would address the problems through cultural programmes.

The delegation of 40 persons going to Mumbai came out well prepared from this preparatory process. The group held several events, participated in various others and also had a cultural group amongst them which carried out different performances, amongst which an act with the title "Fire globalisation, plant trees of peace and justice in the social forest, where social animals can live their short span of life." One of the forums days they decided to engage in a signature campaign to save the Tamiraparani River. They had made a 10 meter large banner, which attracted media attention as the banner became filled with signatures in just a few hours. SINFPAD was very pleased with the attention for the Tamiraparani river.

Another example of the "use" of the WSF is the educational opportunity the forum offers, here to the Green Living Movement in Zambia which is supported by Siemenpuu also to produce their Green Times newspaper. The report from GLM writes that " ... GLM participants found space within the forum proceedings to share the Zambian situation and to learn from the approaches and strategies others have used for such undertakings as lobbying and advocacy for social and environmental justice."

GLM mentioned furthermore that it was good "to share the learnings and experiences gained from the WSF with other people in home country through the publication and country-wide distribution of a special edition of the Green Times Newspaper on the events at the WSF as a way of generating debate on Global issues that may have socio economic impacts on the country."

3. Siemenpuu and the WSF process in India

Siemenpuu has given out support in India towards the project South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy. The overall objective of SADED/CSDS programme is "to prevent deepening of the crises in South Asia – that have roots in ecology and natural resource use patterns and consolidate ecological democracy efforts in the critical ecozones while providing logistic, academic, and ethical support to the people as well as civil society groups so that they have platforms to share their local/ indigenous ecological wisdom with each other."

Asian Social Forum 2003 (ASF): South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy
Siemenpuu supported CSDS South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy 20.000 euro (November 2002 - October 2003).

As can be seen from the reports, five main workshops/meetings were held drawing together a large number of civil society groups and movements, intellectuals and academics, and it can be seen that participating at the ASF with two workshops was an integral part of accomplishing the objectives of the overall project, the ecological democracy dialogues.

A workshop on "Nepal-India Dialogue on Water and Floods" was held at the ASF in Hyderabad on 3rd January 2003, with representatives from various organisations and movements from India and Nepal. The result of the workshop was a declaration, 'The Hyderabad Water Statement', a document assessing the problems in the region and their solutions. Future action was also discussed at the workshop, including provisions to share the results of the workshop as widely as possible.

A second workshop was held at the ASF on "Privatisation and Corporatisation of Water in India", with the participation of a considerable groups of representatives from institutions and organisations. Some participants from Thailand and Indonesia also took place. The successfully estimated workshop tried to develop an understanding of the process of water sector's privatisation in India, the international experiences and the role of international agencies like the World Trade organisation (WTO), the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), etc. Common strategies to meet the challenge of privatisation of water in India or anywhere in the world were discussed at length. Afterwards once again the results were compiled and distributed for further use.

Stressed was that the workshop gave an opportunity to those whose voice is rarely heard. The participants came to know what has been going on in other parts of the country and the world in the water sector.

It was decided at the fifth workshop held in the context of the dialogues on the "Issues Related to Indigenous People's (Adivasis) Survival Globally" to also hold workshops at the WSF focusing on the indigenous people globally. It was concluded that indigenous people and ecology were inseparable and there was no distinct existence for the indigenous people without their ecological systems. The WSF Mumbai platform would be utilized to understand Adivasis in a better way and convey their concerns and anxieties

to the sympathetic groups, movements and intellectuals. Also water was mentioned as important to bring forward during the WSF.

Later on in the year a separate meeting was organised discussing the WSF participation at length, and different initiatives were mentioned to mobilise participation amongst the movements.

Several initiatives were sparked off as the drawing up of state manifestos regarding ecology, on the basis of which a national manifesto would be prepared, which can be seen as in itself important instances of the forming of a common standpoint. Issues from the Asian dialogues were defined which would benefit from being brought to the forefront at the WSF.

From the reports it becomes visible that (mobilising the) participating in the WSF was envisioned in light of education, learning for the participants, informing, building strength of alliances, to give an opportunity to those whose voice is heard rarely and attempting to hold global dialogues on problems that were perceived as global problems.

WSF Mumbai 2004: South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy II

The Dialogues on Ecological Democracy remained engaged in the WSF process, as the WSF process in India after the Asian Social Forum now took the turn towards the WSF 2005 to be held in Mumbai. The ASF-Hyderabad dialogues were taken up further in the WSF-2004 Mumbai as related reports were circulated in the WSF in Mumbai.

As mentioned in the Asian Social forum engagement described in the above, involving Adivasi people, indigenous peoples participation was encouraged throughout the Asian Social Forum process also by the ecological democracy dialogues, as voices were wanted to be given to those rarely heard, and moreover, Adivasi people were concluded as fundamental to talks on ecological democracy.

The large participation of indigenous people, Adivasi people, Dalits in the WSF of Mumbai was one of the large outstanding differences with the forums held previously in Porto Alegre. Their presence was overwhelming on the forum grounds, and their diverse manifestations put forward important issues, as for instance the inclusiveness of the forum, and the perhaps western way of the set up of the forum and its activities.

As part of the democracy dialogues, the program brought out two issues of "Towards Mumbai" in English and one in Hindi (Mumbai Ki Dagar) before the WSF events took place in Mumbai. These publications were circulated among the activists and posted/e-mailed to several hundred people encouraging them to take part in WSF-Mumbai.

With the collaboration of the program, at the forum, a stall was organised called the Green Corner / Harit Chaupal. This Green Corner functioned as a meeting point for the activists to discuss their activities at the forum.

At the WSF, the programme organised five workshops under the self-organised programme category during the Mumbai Forum: Trees for Survival, Global Environmental Citizens Manifestos, Peoples Transport Policy in the Era of Globalisation, Water in the Era of Globalisation, and Survival of Peasants Globally.

In the "Global Environmental Citizens Manifestos" the Indian - Finnish participation highlighted the need for a global consensus on the ecological issues and in itself was a strengthening of the dialogue between north and south and in the workshop Trees for survival, Finnish and Asian eco activists exchanged their views.

The workshop "Water in the Era of Globalisation" brought a range of civil society groups together addressing these global problems, and in the workshop, 'Survival of Peasants Globally', the representatives voiced their concern over the marginalisation of the peasants and farmers due to onslaught of globalisation in several parts of the world. They felt that the peasants of the world must unite and fight for their survival and dignity, of course, to rescue agriculture and humanity.

Once again the issues at stake were perceived as global problems. After the forum, material was compiled and published from the workshops. However, participation in the WSF was not only limited to these five workshops. In total Saded reports to have had a role to play in some 50 events

Saded conclusions were that the workshop had increased knowledge among the environmental movement activists. In the SADED workshops/ dialogues -- revolving around the various aspects of ecology -- larger and wider South Asian participation was ensured. Activists and representatives of various other ecological organisations also took part in the workshops.

Concluded was also that the WSF-2004 workshops, as part of the SADED-II project, also succeeded in its aim of creating a constructive dialogue about ecological democracy especially at the local levels in different parts of South Asia and among the grassroots level movement groups including organisations engaged in the empowerment of dalits (socio-economically deprived ex-'untouchables'), adivasis (indigenous peoples) and farmers.

There is yet another aspect of the WSF in Mumbai which need to be highlighted. Comments have been made in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study pointing towards the political importance of the WSF held in Mumbai. It is believed that the WSF played an important role in the BJP party in India as not having won the elections, which would have had large feared consequences. If we conclude from the above that the ecological democracy dialogues were an important support to the WSF process, we can conclude also the positive impact of the project (and thus the Siemenpuu funds) to the political important consequences of the WSF in India.

What was also stressed in the comments was that Siemenpuu funds were targeted in a very positive way, as they did not just fund the WSF event itself, but the process. As such Siemenpuu contributed to both organisation and content.

4. Some conclusions from the WSF experiences in India

The Siemenpuu supported ecological democracy dialogues programme in India can be said to have worked positively "through" the WSF process in India both in its first and its second fase. The WSF process functioned as a platform through which to organise the dialogues, taking profit from the moment for mobilization and joint coming together of civil society groups in India.

The project stimulated the participation of Adivasi people as the engagement of this group in dialogues on ecological democracy is fundamental and in turn the participation of these groups strengthened the WSF process, which wants to be a platform to those that are rarely heard.

Adivasi, indigenous peoples, vernacular groups and their ecological concerns were brought to the forefront with Siemenpuu support and by supporting the participation of the grassroot groups, the project strengthened the WSF process. These concerns were also brought to the attention of participating political party members.

"Adivasi people's large participation in the WSF is also a sign of hope for the sustainability of ecology globally as they with their frank and honest discussions/ expressions invented new idiom for ecological democracy. It was evident that minus (without ed.) adivasis (tribal communities) the talks on ecological democracy were fruitless." writes Surech Nautiyal in the SADED report.

The reports and the events held point to the fact that the dialogues felt to be addressing what are also global problems, which could be addressed at the WSF as it offers offers a global platform.

Not all comments on the participating in the WSF in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study have been positive. I have taken these comments up in a following section "Future challenges".

5. Environmental issues at the WSF

Before looking at how environmental issues have been treated at the WSF, we should first take a look at the composition of the WSF IC. The composition of the WSF IC has recently been studied. To be concluded from the 87% of the WSF IC organisations which gave their details concerning their main area of activity, only 10 organisations, or 8,8% can be said to have an environmental orientation to them. So Friends of the Earth International, is active in the WSF IC, and for instance the Secretariat of the WSF Africa process is in hands of ENDA, Environment and Development in the Third World. The WSF IC wants to address the imbalances in its composition and is carrying out an analysis regarding the future composition of the WSF IC. The most IC members are to be found in the economic justice area, 33%, the second largest area is trade unionism/ labour (15%), third comes human rights (13%) and fourth women (10%).

When looking at environmental issues at the WSF, a first question that comes up is as to what can be seen as environmental issues. There are the straightforward environmental issues as energy, water and animal rights. However, looking for an environmental orientation will also mean incorporating issues as consumerism and community oriented lifestyles if we take it that the solution to environmental problems lies in a change of social and cultural habits and values. Indigenous peoples issues bring us then to the topic that at the moment seems to be the most solidifying topic when looking at the Siemenpuu funded projects : ecological democracy.

a. Environmental issues at 2003

Environmental issues at WSF 2003 can be studied from a study conducted by IBASE. There were 1.619 self organised activities, and estimates are that perhaps 1.300 actually happened. Five thematical axes organised the activities of the forum:

- : Democratic and sustainable development
- : Principles, values, human rights, diversity and equality
- : Media, culture and alternatives to mercantilization and homogenization
- : Political power, civil society and democracy
- : Global democratic order, struggle against militarisation and for peace

From the study, we could conclude that 200 events of the total of 1619 registered events, or 12%, have potentially had an environmental orientation. (See Annex 4.Environmental issues at WSF 2003, page 78)

The study points to the isolation of the first thematical ax, the more environmental topical oriented ax. The main themes of the first ax, the ax that entailed the most environmental oriented topics, are less recurring in the other axes, compared to the main themes of the other axes. For instance, the topics with an orientation on gender were more present in the different thematical axes.

Water (29 events) is the most croscutting theme of the themes that have been identified as having an environmental orientation.

WSF organised panels and conferences

As the elaboration of the five thematical axes, so the panels and conferences were the result of elaboration within the WSF International council (also upon consultation with movements, campaigns and organisations).

The panels were meant to present diversity of visions on the themes, issues at stake, diversity of proposals (consensus and divergences) and the emerging themes. The IBASE included reports on the panels from which also existence of an environmental orientation could be subtracted.

We could conclude that 7 of the 31, or 22%, events had some sort of environmental orientation to them - though in some cases this refers to as little evidence as simply a mentioning of a one liner in a report.

The Conferences had as an aim to socialize visions and analyses of personalities of global citizenship for the public at large. One conference out of 10, or 10%, had a clear environmental orientation towards it: "land, territory and food sovereignty", with the personalities of Joao Pedro Stedile (MST), Francisca Rodriquez (Via Campesina), Peter Rosset (Food First) and Pat Mooney (author on biodiversity)

b. Environmental issues at WSF 2004

WSF 2004 had only 13 WSF organised events, all the other of the total of 1200 events were self organised. The WSF in India did not have a thematical division of the events, though for the first time an internet database allowed to consult the activities of other WSF Participants.

There exists to my knowledge no study that has discussed the events of the WSF as the IBASE study of WSF 2003. A hand counted analysis comes to the conclusion that 192 events, or 16% of the 1200 registered events had an environmental orientation to them.

WSF 2004 had a large participation of Adivasi people and Dalits, who participated in the WSF by putting forward their concerns in diverse ways as in the form of manifestations, dancing and singing. The streets of the forum ground were alive with their manifestations, and many felt this was where the heart of WSF 2004 was beating. WSF 2004 has sometimes been referred to as "the peoples forum".

Questions have been posed as to their actual integration into the WSF programme. However, SADED reports of more than 70 seminars, workshops, panel debates and discussions conducted during the WSF-2004 at Mumbai on indigenous rights, land and resources and identity of Adivasis.

IBASE held a different study at the WSF 2004, in which it questioned people as to what they felt was most important when thinking of "another possible world". Water was the second most answered issue.

c. Environmental issues at WSF 2005

There were no WSF organised events at WSF 2005. All the 2561 registered events were selforganised.

The activities of WSF 2005 were divided into 11 thematical themes. It should be noted that the thematical themes were also the lay out of the physical terrain of the WSF. The WSF terrain was very spread out, and elements as the soaring heat during WSF 2005 prevented most people from walking large distances from event to event. One could almost say that the thematical terrains accommodated this divided participation as they were each like small communities in which one could attend events, eat and relax.

In the below the amount of events with a potential environmental orientation are mentioned in brackets following the events.

- A. Autonomous thought, reappropriation and socialisation of knowledge and technologies (22 / 233)
- B. Defending diversity, plurality and identities (16 / 244)
- C. Arts and creation: weaving and building people's resistance culture (0 / 216)
- D. Communication: counter-hegemonic practices, rights and alternatives (1 / 124)
- E. Assuring and defending Earth and people's common goods - as alternative to comodification and transnational control (110 / 161)
- F. Social struggles and democratic alternatives - against neoliberal domination (10 / 370)
- G. Peace, demilitarisation and struggle against war, free trade and debt (3 / 189)
- H. Towards construction of international democratic order and people's integrations (0 / 141)
- I. Sovereign economies for and of people - against neoliberal capitalism (16 / 291)
- J. Human rights and dignity for a just and egalitarian world (23 / 475)
- K. Ethics, cosmovisions and spiritualities - resistance and challenges for a new world (12 / 117)

One can see that thematical terrain E had a clear environmental focus. Environmental issues do not recur in the other thematical areas to a large extent. It can be concluded that 213 event, or 8% of the 2561 events had an environmental orientation.

This is below the numbers for WSF 2003 and 2004. One possible reason for this could be that for instance the organisation working around the socio economic justice issues, which are the strongest represented in the WSF process, worked relatively spoken more well together in the new methodology of the forum, which promoted the agglutination of activities around similar concerns. Each actor however was allowed to register the same amount of event, and perhaps as such organisations in their strengthened (joint) capacity held even more events.

Transversal axes had been though of which would point to the interconnectedness of the thematical areas. These transversal axes did however not function to promote interconnectedness between the areas. The transversal axes were:

1. Social emancipation and political dimensions of struggles
2. Struggle against patriarchal capitalism
3. Struggle against racism and other types of exclusion based on ancestry
4. Gender
5. Diversity

As one can see "environment" is not considered a transversal axis.

A note of caution should be placed on the following sections: it has been commented that environmental issues as water are perhaps more treated in the WSF as social rights issues, then as environmental issues, and therefore one should be careful when concluding that environmental issues are not that well. This is a good point. However, from the above analysis and the interviews held for the purpose of this study, it is still concluded that environmental concerns the environmental organisations have not had a central place in the WSF process.

d. Environmental alliances at the WSF

From the above we can conclude that environmental issues are not prominently present at the WSF. In the first part of this study, a section was devoted to describing the issue of participation in the WSF process. The strong leftist origin of the WSF might explain why the environmental issues have been relatively less prominently present on the WSF agenda.

However, it is important to report on (the potential for) positive cooperation on (global) environmental issues throughout the WSF process.

In the (Siemenpuu) "Past Experiences" part of this study, I have already mentioned alliances built throughout the WSF process, as for instance was done in the Siemenpuu supported project "the South East Asia Dialogues on Ecological Democracy", with the participation of actors as VK.

The to us well-known environmental organisations as FOEI and Green Peace are also active in the WSF process (we should note that some of these organisations are traditionally not that active in Africa - as such also new partners are to be identified in the WSF process now turning towards Africa). So for instance Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF have been involved in the sustainability issues of the WSF event itself (see the following section).

FOEI is a member of the WSF IC and always has had an involvement in the WSF. Their activities during WSF 2005 have been commented on, where FOEI had a large tent with their partners issues on display. FOEI has 10 partners in Africa, and it has been reported they are importantly involved in the WSF Africa process.

Also Greenpeace has traditionally and strongly involved itself in the WSF process. As Marcel Furtado, co-coordinator of Greenpeace WSF delegations, concludes on the website of Greenpeace: "We believe, as the (WSF ed.) slogan says, 'another world is

possible.' Greenpeace will always be there with the society, discussing and debating in order to create a healthier, safer and peaceful world for everyone.”

”The WSF recognises that social and environmental problems are linked and that only by working on both issues together can solutions be achieved. This holistic philosophy is a perspective shared by Greenpeace. We believe that sustainable development and the fight for a healthy environment for future generations is only possible if done jointly with social movements, ” can be furthermore read on the Greenpeace website.

A concrete and to this study new example of alliance building throughout the WSF process on environmental issues can be given by looking at the work supported by the World Rainforest Movement (WRM) and partners. Throughout the WSF process, from Mumbai 2004 to Porto Alegre 2005, the coalition worked on a ”the Mumbai Porto-Alegre Forest Initiative: A number of participants at the World Social Forum 2004 met in Mumbai and believing that forest issues are in essence social and political and that forest communities are increasingly affected by globalization --and new forms of trade and economic liberalization that comes in its way-- agreed on the need to create a global movement to ensure forest conservation and peoples' rights over forests. The principles on which the movement would be based were agreed upon and circulated by the groups as the ”Mumbai Forest Initiative - Statement of Principles”. A year later the group and some other participants of the World Social Forum 2005 met in Porto Alegre, Brazil, reviewed and revised the Mumbai Forest Initiative. The result is the Mumbai - Porto Alegre Forest Initiative. ” (from a special bulletin of the WRM issued after WSF 2005).

What follows are the 12 principles of the declaration. The partners signing the declaration are: World Rainforest Movement, Delhi Forum, National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers of India, Jharkham/Save the Forest Movement (India), New Trade Union Initiative (India), Friends of the Earth International, WALHI/Friends of the Earth (Indonesia), Tebtebba Foundation (Philippines), Coecoceiba/Friends of the Earth (Costa Rica), CENSAT/Friends of the Earth (Colombia), Rede Alerta Contra o Deserto Verde (Brasil), FASE (Brasil), Sobrevivencia/Friends of the Earth (Paraguay), International Forum on Globalisation (USA), Accion Ecologica/Oilwatch (Ecuador). The declaration can still be signed on to. This is an example of international and cross-sectoral cooperation throughout the WSF process on environmental issues.

e. Environmental issues at the WSF itself

One can imagine that an event as the WSF itself brings of plenty of questions regarding a sustainable practices of for instance waste treatment and WSF terrain use.

In 2005 Sustainability Working Group was formed in the WSF Organizing Committee with the NGOs and movements engaged in this space, such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF, and several local movements and organizations. The group was actually formed after the experiences of a similar group in the WSF International Youth camp already several years ago.

The Sustainability Working Group developed a solid residues management proposal with the City Hall's Department of Urban Cleaning and the Porto Alegre Recycling Units

Association for the whole WSF territory. It also initiated an education program stimulating more sustainable practices in the Forum, such as the use of bicycles or collective transports, the rational use of natural resources, consumption of organic products, etc.

”In the fifth WSF, environment was given special attention. In the organizing efforts, there was a working group for sustainability and environment that was set up to make the event more coherent with its own Charter of Principles. As there was 120 tons of waste produced in the Forum each day the working group organized, among other things, the sorting of it to separate containers for recyclables and organics. The efforts to make the Forum more environmentally sound were in many senses successful: The participants could enjoy the shelter provided by the houses made of natural materials, there was ecologically produced food available and in the programme there were sustainability tips provided for the participants, ” write Annukka Berg & Leo Stranius, Friends of the Earth Finland / Peru, in an article produced after WSF 2005.

Comments from Friend of the Earth Brazil which was a member of the group for WSF 2005 are that sustainability issues have not been an integral part of the planning for the WSF events, and do not for instance have an own budget to treat the garbage generated during the WSF.

f. Pan Amazon Social forum

In the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study, the issue of a World Environmental Forum has come up on a few occasions. Thematical forums exist under the framework of the WSF process, and are followed by the WSF IC. So there was the Argentina Thematic Social Forum (in 2002), and Thematic World Social Forum: Democracy, Human Rights, War and Traffic, the latter held in Colombia, in 2003.”

The issue of holding the WSF itself as a thematical forum has come up several times in the WSF IC. Most of the time the argument against it is the possible fragmentation of resources. However, with the decision to hold the WSF 2006 in a polycentric way, in three different countries, the same counter argument could be made.

The Pan Amazon forum held since four years is of course an example of a regional forum in which environmental issues figure prominently. The first two Pan Amazon forums were held in Belem, capital of the state of Pará, Brasil, the third in Venezuela, and the fourth in Manaus, capital of the Amazonas state, Brazil.

I participated the Pan Amazon forum in 2003 with a delegation of representatives from the rural workers union of Santarem (Para, Brasil) and of the national rubber tappers council of Brasil, CNS. The events left the leaders inspired and with new information, which I have heard being shard up in the remote river areas of the Brazilian Amazonas.

When visiting Helsinki and at an occasion organised by the Estelle group, chair person Leide Maria Araujo of the Grupo de Defesa Amazonica (GDA), umbrella organisation of all the NGO’s operating in the Brazilian Amazonas, spoke of the importance to GTA of participating in the WSF process. Movements in the border regions of the amazonas have

come to work together through the WSF process and have come to engage in joint operations regarding illegal border problems in the amazon region.

g. Conclusion on Environmental issues at the WSF

The WSF IC shows an imbalance with regards to organisations and movements representing an environmental orientation.

Environmental issues, or an environmental orientation, are present at the WSF. However, environmental issues are certainly not crosscutting concerns and the percentage of events that had an environmental orientation is low.

The WSF in India had a large presence of indigenous people present. This certainly is to be taken into account when looking at environmental issues at the WSF.

Also with regards to environmental issues, positive alliances have been built throughout the WSF process.

The WSF has had experiences with a Sustainability working group, which seems to be necessary in order to address environmental concerns that come along with the holding of a mass event as the WSF is.

6. Future challenges of (participating in) the WSF process.

The negative comments in the Siemenpuu partner reports and as have been heard in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study on the WSF participation are reflecting several of the main debates around the forum, which are part of the challenges of the WSF (please note that the points presented here are partly repeated from Chapter 1. Introducing the WSF process and Chapter 2. A picture of the WSFR Africa process).

1. What does the WSF achieve?

This is perhaps the main issue which is debated regarding the WSF, and which on one occasion came forward in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study on one occasion.

There are different (connected) dimensions to this debate. One dimensions concerns the Open Space character of the WSF, or at least the fact that the WSF does not issue any statements. For those who believe that the WSF is a global justice movement, this point means that the WSF is not being politically clear, in its not issuing of clear statements. The issue of the not issuing of statements is a point of debate up and into the WSF IC, where in particular African representatives have voiced the concern that the WSF can not come to Africa merely as a "talk shop" but should take a stance on certain pressing issues (see also on the WSF Africa process).

The issue of the WSF making statements, would logically be connected to a representativity of its decision making body, the WSF International Council. The WSF IC is now embarked upon a process to make its composition more representative in terms of geographical base of its members and organization type (NGO, social movements)

Commented has been a more representative and democratic WSF IC indeed would give more legitimacy to the WSF IC for the issuing of statements, (though it must be noted, that not all that want a more representative IC are in favor of a WSF issuing statement or declarations), and thought can be even of the WSF in some form of a global political party.

However, for WSF founding father Chico Whitaker and others, the WSF IC need not necessarily become more representative, as for them the WSF merely facilitates the process.

The view point of those that defend the Open Space point to the fact that the WSF does not want to issue any statements with a certain call for action as this would be the agenda of some, yet not of others, which would evidently lead to a fall out in the ranks.

For those that defend the Open Space character of the WSF, the novelty of the WSF process lies exactly in its bringing together of a diverse spectrum of different kind of

organisations, NGO's and movements with different orientations. A global common policy line would force many to step out from the whole process which would marginalise the whole WSF process.

The WSF in its methodology aims at facilitating the coming together of common concerns and the envisioning of joint common action. Social movements for instance come together in a Social Movements Assemblee which at each WSF comes out with a Call (an agenda) for action. Some significant common actions have come forth out of this, as for instance the grand scale anti war demonstrations on the 15 of February 2003 coming out of the WSF process.

The latter also sheds a light on the comment that the WSF seems to be a large talkshop in which mainly is "preached to the converted". Whilst the facilitation remains a challenge, the WSF exactly wants to facilitate a space for exchange of information but also for debate, conclusion and common vision/action elaboration. Within this process, there still needs to be created more clarity on the solutions to problems within the "global justice and solidarity movement", and participating in the WSF in order to strengthen the debate on the possible solutions to create that "other possible world" remains important.

From the above, we could use as an example for the purpose of this study that environmental concerns are to be strengthened at the WSF, in order to enhance the crosscutting character of an environmental orientation in the work of the global justice and solidarity movement.

Needles to say the WSF will remain challenged regarding questions as to what the WSF does achieve.

What the WSF does currently mean to the participants in its process has been described in the previous chapter on Past Experiences. The WSF going to Africa in 2006 and 2007 brings some own challenges connected to the issue of what the WSF achieves, and these are put forward at the end of this chapter.

2.Participation

In general, the WSF is faced with challenges regarding its inclusiveness. As has been commented earlier in this study, and perhaps due to leftist tradition, certain sectors as trade unions are more represented then others.

NGO and social movement participation

The perceived marginalisation of social movements in the WSF is another issue debated regarding the WSF, and which also came forward in an interviews conducted for the purpose of this study. This is a frequently heard comment from those that believe that there is an NGO domination of the forum which does limit the space of the social movements and their agenda of struggle against neo-liberal policies (the criticism also seems to refer to the difference between putting forward a more reformist than radical

agenda, and sometimes it refers to the fact that the forum does not put out any statements). This is then generally also related to a perceived NGO domination in the WSF IC.

The division between NGO's and other types of organisations is also not very clear, and all NGO's are certainly not against the Call for action at the Social movements assemblee. In fact some NGO's are very clear supporters of the assemblee. The issue seems to be a political debate, which is perhaps connected to other aspects, as also to the visibility which NGO's can achieve for their expensive large scale campaigns, attracting media attention when the WSF is now 100% self organised. .

In the case of Africa, various factors might point to a more defensible position on the WSF process there as being dominated by NGO's, as the large scale existence of Dingo's. Particularly also in the WSF Africa process an NGO domination is accused of not allowing for a™ social forum agenda built from the bottom. Foreign funded NGO's will also be the one who can afford to fly their representatives to abroad held social forum processes.

It should be noted that it has been exactly the aim of the WSF to bring the NGO's and social movements together. The WSF and the WSF and the WSF IC have been comparatively broad based, so that the peoples movements have been participating from the birth of the WSF process.

Grassroot participation

This is another point of debate around the WSF, and also in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study the WSF has been commented upon as not being inclusive enough. Also this criticism is a strong issue in the WSF IC.

Mumbai was a different forum notably in its large presence of Dalit groups, vernacular groups for which large scale mobilisations were conducted. The concerns of the grassroots groups also figured more in the events programmed (See Past Experiences). WSF 2005 in Porto Alegre moved away from the University campus to a public space in an attempt to also be more inclusive. The WSF will have to remain expanding its process in order to become more inclusive and of course this issue points to another dimension of the WSF in need of support.

Another common made linked to the previous, is the issue that the 100% selforganised character of the forum does not enable the holding of event by those marginalised with regards to resources.

3. WSF : a true World Social forum?

Yet another comment from African partners has been that "... It was encouraging to see international movements like Friends of the Earth and the Green Peace taking leading roles in articulating Global issues. On the other hand we felt the issues lacked the African

perspective. At both tents (Friend of the Earth and Green Peace) debates were dominated by Latin American experiences, understandably they were in large numbers (referred is here to two of the large so called "Solidarity tents" present at the 2005 WSF ed.). Also these movements do not have strong establishments in most countries in Africa" (GLM, Zambia).

Commented is that in particular African important topics as HIV/AIDS were not seen as present in the WSF. It is indeed therefore all the more important to support the expansion of the WSF process into Africa, in order to make it more inclusive in its character, and to take further root.

"The WSF going to Africa is both a challenge and opportunity for us. The outcome is unpredictable, but at the very least we would get directly into the mainstream of the WSF. We are marginalized right now, our number and impact are too small when the WSF is organized in other continents," says Yash Tandon, director of the South Centre.

4. The future of the WSF process

The WSF will be polycentric in 2006 and will be held in in January 2006 in Caracas (Venezuela), Karachi (Pakistan), Mali (Bamako). This decision has been made to allow for more widespread WSF participation, also in the global WSF events (Read also more in the WSF part of this study), and, as in general with the expansion of the WSF process, the aim is to further root the WSF in the different areas. The applications for holding the WSF have however come forth out of the regional WSF processes themselves. The WSF polycentric WSF of 2006 will also be held in different places throughout the year, but the three forums in January are generally referred to as the WSF of 2006.

In 2007, the WSF will be held in Nairobi, Kenya. As with the WSF in India, there are fears about the demanding logistical challenges of the event. In light of and a polycnetric forum being held in Africa in 2006, as well as the WSF 2007 in Kenya, I have in the below looked further at the challenges in the WSF process.

Challenges of the WSF Africa process

The above points of future challenges certainly also are points of debate regarding the WSF process now moving in the direction of Africa with a polycentric forum in Mali (2006) and the WSF 2007 in Kenya. In the below these points are briefly repeated in the African WSF process context. Read also the chapter on the WSF Africa process in the WSF part of this study.

One point of view which was encountered in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study is the question what is the use of resources to fly representatives to a foreign country to talk about environment and development anything usefull, when the same amount of resources applied locally would be yielding much more results? What is the

use to fly grassroot people also to the abroad forums, where they will find it had to participate in the debates.

Without denying the challenge that lies in this argument for the WSF process, it is important to point out that there are different issues to be considered in this debate.

One is of course whether one has concluded the WSF process as being a unique platform process in this point in time, facilitating the shaping of alternatives for "another possible world". This means of course looking beyond the local issues, and looking at the global sources of the problems and concluding that global problems need solutions envisioned by a global civil society.

The WSF does not only take place on a global scale, the WSF is a process and also Africa has its African social forum process. So there is an African social forum. A part of the scepticism in this comment regarding the WSF, seems to be related also to the African Social forum experiences, which have not been overwhelmingly positively viewed. Participation has been little, as of course there are considerable challenges regarding participation from across the African continent in the African social forum process.

Commented is of bad organisation, repetitive fruitless talks in the sense that what has been said has been said so many times before. This of course has to do with the fase of stepping from the being anti-something to the proactive. This is a process the WSF at large is going through. It is a challenge for the forum to facilitate this process, but nevertheless the forum believes that it is in the coming together, debating and collective action searching of global civil society that the answers will lie to the global problems. It will be a challenge to the African social forum process and the WSF at large to strengthen its pro active character.

Besides an African social forum, the Africa social forum process has also increasingly regional, national and other local forums. In some areas these processes are gathering considerable strength, and thus participation is consequently also more in the (continental) African social forum. The challenge of a deepening of the WSF process in Africa remains, and it is hoped that the WSF 2007 in Kenya can do so.

Connected to the criticism is the element of the elitist nature of the African social forum process, and here is referred to the existing debate on the dominance of NGO's in the forum. How it are foreign funded NGO's which can fly their representatives to the forums; how NGO's are not allowing for agenda shaping from the ground. An important challenge no doubt also in the African forum process lies in the supporting of grassroot movements, indigenous, traditional and grassroot groups to participate in the forum, and their voice to be heard in the shaping of alternatives.

Taoufik Ben Abdallah, representative of ENDA in the WSF Africa process, which also holds the Secretariat of the WSF Africa process, commented however that the WSF Africa process is an autonomous project, and as such disagreeing with the principle of Western NGO's guiding a passive African dependent partner.

He points to the fact that the WSF Africa process of course has to deal with huge challenges. There is no strong organised civil society and conditions are often found lacking but the 25 national social forums that take place in Africa are autonomous projects. The process needs to be supported to expand.

Dot Keet in 2004 posed the questions " whether Africa has, or rather which African countries have the organisational means and the mass movement base to maintain and contribute further to the patterns of participation and levels of action already established in Brazil and India as being so crucial to the credibility, the aims and the impact of the WSF; and, whether taking up the mammoth responsibility of organising and hosting a world social forum will at this stage of African popular social/political organisations act as an inspiration and a stimulation towards the urgently needed and often very preliminary development of organised mass social forces in most African countries, and the effective activation of such forces."

As already earlier touched upon, the debate on the use of the WSF in Africa is also strong on the issue regarding the WSF being an Open Space and not issuing any statements. Also in the WSF IC, in particular African representatives have voiced the concern that the WSF can not come to Africa merely as a "talkshop" but should take a stance on certain pressing issues (Read also on the WSF Africa process in the WSF part of this study and on the vision for the African regional Council for the WSF 2007).

And as also earlier mentioned, for those that defend the Open Space in its not issuing of any statement, the novelty of the WSF process lies exactly in its bringing together of a diverse spectrum of different kind of organisations, NGO's and movements with different orientations. A global common policy line would force many to step out from the whole process which would marginalise the whole WSF process.

5. Environmental issues

As has also been put forward several times in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study, environmental issues are not present at the WSF to the extent that they should be. Environmental issues had the greatest visibility at the WSF in Mumbai. It remains however a challenge to enhance the visibility of environmental issues at the forum in WSF.

Another future challenge lies in the fact that environmental issues are also not crosscutting concerns as for instance gender is promoted to be. The composition of the WSF IC points to a under presentation often environmental issue oriented organisations.

Enhancing the visibility of environmental issues at the WSF is also to be concluded as challenging from the viewpoint of enhancing the participation of groups fundamental to the environmental debates, as indigenous groups and traditional peoples.

7. Recommendations regarding Siemenpuu and the WSF

The following analysis and recommendations can be seen as carrying a stress on Siemenpuu as an environmental agency.

It has been commented that it would be important to also consider Siemenpuu's relation and contributions to the WSF process from the perspective of the ambitions of Siemenpuu as defined in the statutes. In particular, Siemenpuu should see WSF-engagement as an opportunity to promote its commitment to "the enhanced cooperation between popular movements from different continents, in particular the environment movement and the movement critical of globalisation" as well as Siemenpuu's commitment to "helping people to cope with the problems caused by globalisation and to struggles against these problems". Applications from Southern partners which suggest their engagement with the WSF-process from the point of view of building global alliances against currently dominant globalisation policies should therefore be seriously considered when funding decisions are taken.

Summary:

This study concludes that the WSF process is perfectly in line with Siemenpuu mission, vision and focus, and a partnership with the WSF would be instrumental to the operationalisation of the Siemenpuu strategy⁸.

On the basis of this conclusion, and whilst considering the past experiences of Siemenpuu and the WSF process, and the future challenges reported in this study, this report puts forward the following recommendations, for Siemenpuu to be :

1. supporting the organisation of the WSF process, by supporting the WSF Secretariat;
2. contributing to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues and an increased notion of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns throughout the WSF process;
3. supporting the participation of grassroot groups as indigenous people and forest people in the WSF process, 2. and 3. more concretely by:
 - supporting the participation of Siemenpuu partners in the WSF process.
 - holding an event for Siemenpuu partner / partnerships at the WSF
 - organising discussions about new environmental themes, or important topical environmental problems or more workshop oriented events around around environmental themes
 - involving important environmental movements from the region in which the WSF is held to engage with in the dialogues organised at the WSF.
 - supporting the participation of grass root groups in the forum process and benefit from their participation in dialogues held at the forum on issues as ecological democracy.

⁸ It has been commented that if one looks at Siemenpuu statutes - the mission paragraph - then Siemenpuu is defined quite broadly and in multiple concordance with WSF. If one looks at Siemenpuu more narrowly, as an agency with a sectorial environmental approach, then relating to WSF can also be seen as natural, but the areas of overlapping interest will be smaller. In both ways the WSF can, however, be seen as a natural point of reference for Siemenpuu.

The points in this summary are more worked out in the below. The recommendations are given, followed by the main ideas regarding each recommendation. Following this further suggestions regarding the main ideas are layed out.

It should be noted that these further suggestions are a mapping of the suggestions which came forward in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study. The suggestions represent different options, (the listing has been attempted to be gradually built up from more "simple options" to perhaps more wide ranging options. Please note this order has not always been possible!), and most of them can be seen as oriented towards the Kenya 2007 forum because of time considerations. It has been commented that some of suggestions are beyond the current workings of Siemenpuu. The study however wants to present the recommendations, main ideas and suggestions, after which Siemenpuu should determine to what extent it wants to engage itself with the WSF process.

1. Siemenpuu Strategy and the WSF process

Siemenpuu has been developing a Strategy for the years 2005-2008. The current year 2005 is a transitory phase when the Strategy will be operationalised. Reviewing Siemenpuu's mission, vision and focus point to a clear compatibility with an operationalisation via the WSF process.

A. Siemenpuu mission and the WSF process

Siemenpuu mission is to :

- promote environmental protection and human rights
- advance the peoples' opportunities for participation and to influence to make the political decision-making process more democratic and transparent in the whole world
- promote the co-operation between the people's movements, especially environmental and globalisation critical movements, from different continents.
- deepen the general understanding about the opportunities and the threats for civic action; the building of civil society in different continents and the impacts of the institutional funding to the internal dynamics of people's movements as well as
- support civil society organisations, community groups and research institutes in developing countries working for environment and the promotion of human rights, biological and cultural diversity, social justice and democratisation or help the communities to cope with and fight the negative impacts of globalisation.

The WSF process can be instrumental to Siemenpuu's mission.

Whilst constantly and positively challenged in its capacity to do so, the organizations active within the WSF process strive to facilitate the coming together of global civil society to exchange information, debate and create alternatives which would enable a better world, including a better environment and the defense of human rights. Towards these aims, the WSF at this moment provides a unique platform, allowing for the coming together of organizations, NGO's and people movements from a divers spectrum of

orientations. The WSF through its methodology wants to strengthen the struggle of the organisations, NGO's and movements coming together

The WSF process is expanding significantly, and is offering a true continuous platform for cooperation between peoples movements.

The WSF aims at stimulating deeper understanding for its participants through the exchange of information that takes place throughout its process. The reports from Siemenpuu partners clearly point to the educative role of the WSF, including on elements as civic action.

The WSF is a clear actor in the building up of global civil society. The WSF coming to Africa is often cited as given great opportunities for African movements to start working together and in this strengthened capacity engage in future common action. This will equally be of benefit to the African environmental organisations. An interesting note here is that the Africa process, in its Adis Abeba declaration, specifically spoke of the want to enhance south south cooperation via the WSF process, and for Africa this would be in particular also Asian cooperation.

The reports from India point to clearly to how the issues addressed in the South Asian ecological democracy dialogues were perceived as global problems, and therefore beneficially addressed in the global platform that the WSF offers.

B. Siemenpuu Vision and the WSF process

During 2005-2008 the Siemenpuu Foundation :

- is experimenting and exploring new innovative ways for South-North co-operation
- is a resource organisation promoting civil societies work for environmental and human rights, giving special emphasis to vulnerable groups and politically sensitive issues and is strengthening the peoples movements
- has large knowledge about the different networks in environment and development branch
- is creating awareness about the critiques and alternatives from the South concerning e.g. Western consumerist lifestyle
- is supporting political work of its founding organisations as well as other Finnish and Northern partners by information dissemination and is promoting networking, from the basis of the work done in the South
- is increasing the awareness of the environmental challenges of the developing countries in Finland caused by the different power groups.

The WSF process could be of instrumental value and support to Siemenpuu's vision.

The WSF process is about enhancing the capacity of global civil society to work together and develop alternatives. It would be important that environmental issues are crosscutting concerns in the WSF activities, and as the study has concluded, they are not. Environmental issues are in general not present to an extent as wanted if we want to

promote an environmental orientation in the alternatives developed throughout the WSF process. Siemenpuu contributed to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues at the WSF 2004 in Mumbai via the Ecological democracy dialogues project, which in turn benefited from participating in the WSF.

In line with Siemenpuu's vision, it would also be important for Siemenpuu to support the participation of vulnerable groups in the WSF process. Certain vulnerable groups are fundamental to the debates around environment and sustainability, as are indigenous people, traditional and tribal people. In Mumbai Siemenpuu, perhaps not consciously, was important for the facilitation of the participation of indigenous and vernacular groups in the democracy debates.

Siemenpuu and its partners' participation in the WSF would also be instrumental to Siemenpuu's awareness of the different networks in environmental and development sphere, as the WSF is increasingly expanding its activities and inclusiveness.

By supporting the WSF process, which aims at facilitating the putting forward of alternatives coming from the South, Siemenpuu would be supporting the awareness raising on alternatives coming from the South on various issues, also for instance regarding Western consumerist lifestyles. As an example, it should be noted that also the South is having its debate on consumerist patterns as the declaration of the African Social forum shows, and a solution to this global problem is to be found in the debate of global civil society.

The WSF strengthens South - South cooperation which is an important way of working towards Siemenpuu's vision.

C. Siemenpuu focus and the WSF process

The Siemenpuu focus for the years 2005-2008 is on

- 1) Activism, advocacy and lobbying connected to the environmental issues
- 2) projects promoting ecological democracy in forest and land issues
- 3) Co-operation Program : Cooperation with 3-5 partner organisations.

The WSF process can be instrumental to Siemenpuu's focus.

Participating in the WSF and giving enhanced visibility to environmental problems is a sort of activism and advocacy work within the global justice movement, which in turn would influence the content of the advocacy of the global justice movement.

In the South Asian Dialogues on ecological democracy, it was concluded that ecological democracy is a global problem which can therefore benefit to be discussed throughout the WSF process which is engaging global civil society. In a similar way, also land issues which are a recurrent theme in many countries can benefit from being addressed through the WSF process.

Siemenpuu is planning to set up a Cooperation program with a few partner organisations. In the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study with Siemenpuu staff, it has come to the forefront that there are some cooperation plans under evaluation with Brasil, Mali and India partners for this program. One of the Brasil partners in question, the Brazilian National Rubber Tappers Council, has participated in the WSF process, in both the Pan Amazon forum as well as the Forums in Porto Alegre. Mali has a social forum process, and will be hosting the polycentric WSF of 2006. Aminata Touré, who is a board member of the Mali Folkecenter is well involved with the WSF process in Mali, and the Folkecenter is as such already supporting her work. The Folkecenter could have a role to play to facilitate participation in the WSF. Partners in India as SINFPAD have had positive experiences from its participating, and the WSF process in Asia has already a strong history.

This Cooperation program could benefit from participating in the WSF process. Holding joint meetings throughout the WSF process, might be more beneficial than holding a partnership meeting for instance in Finland.

The study concludes that a partnership with the WSF would be instrumental to the operationalisation of Siemenpuu strategy.

2. Concrete Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusions that can be drawn from the past experiences of Siemenpuu and the WSF process, as well as the future challenges, and the previous conclusions regarding the concluded compatibility of Siemenpuu's mission, vision and focus with an operationalisation via the WSF process, this report puts forward the following recommendations:

Operationalise the Siemenpuu strategy through the WSF process by:

1. supporting the organisation of the WSF process
2. contributing to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues and an increased notion of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns throughout the WSF process
3. supporting the participation of grassroot groups as indigenous people and forest people in the WSF process

Overall recommendation regarding an operationalisation of Siemenpuu strategy through the WSF process:

Some comments have pointed to the fact that Siemenpuu might feel distant from an event as the WSF, and it is unclear what the consequences are of participation in the WSF process.

The study would want to give two recommendations regarding this comment:

- The WSF is a process. In order for Siemenpuu to be/feel engaged in the WSF process, the WSF process should be regularly followed as a process. A first starting point is a regular checking of the official WSF website which contains rich formation on the WSF process : <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br>. Subscribing to the WSF bulletin is

another (this can be done via the website). Someone within Siemenpuu should ideally keep informed of the process and give regular feedback to Siemenpuu office. Siemenpuu has joined the Finnish WSF Africa Commission, in which entities in Finland which are engaged in the WSF process are taking part as for instance VK, ATTAC Finland, SASK and NIGD (Only Nordic member of the WSF International Council) (see also www.nigd.org/docs/ACWSF). This involvement can be of support to Siemenpuus involvements in the WSF and produce usefull feedback.

- The activities carried out by Siemenpuu throughout the WSF process should be documented and the resulting material divulgated as broadly as possible. Afterall it is this material, and reporting which is to bear on the learning of Siemenpuu and its partners.

It has been commented that Siemenpuu would not be able to have additional staff to its disposition for extra activities. Possibilities are thus that WSF involvement would become part and parcel of projects (the possibility to participate in the WSF could be offered to Siemenopuu partners and as such become part of their projects). Secondly, Siemenpuu can take in practical terms mainly a fascilitating role and will engage via cooperation with its own and other partners to engage in further activities throughout the WSF process. The study however wants to recommend a conscios involment with the WSF process which is about the building up of global civil society and its capacity to formulate alternatives. The following sections on main ideas and suggestions regarding the recommendations of this study, are up for the reflection of Siemenpuu board in order to determine which options are seen as important and feasable in the short term / long term.

3. Main ideas regarding the concrete recommendations

The series of interviews conducted for the purpose of this study have put forward different suggestions regarding the possible form of the partnership between Siemenpuu and the WSF. In the below these suggestions have been grouped according to the recommendations of this study.

Recommendation 1. Supporting the WSF process

Main ideas

1. At this point in time, it is recommended that the WSF Secretariat/collective be supported for its daily operations. The WSF International Secretariat existed in the first years of 8 Brazilian organisations and 8 Indian organisations were added to the Secretariat in light of the WSF 2004 in India. This International Secretariat of Brasilian and Indian origin functioned till April 2005. After a recent WSF IC meeting in Barcelona, the body is now described as a "collective" responsible for the office of the WSF and it groups together the traditional Brasilian organisations formerly making up the Secretariat. The role of the Secretariat has been to stimulate and support regional and thematic forums; facilitate the IC meetings and facilitate the WSF IC commissions; ensure WSF communication process; ensure systematization of the memory of the WSF process; and support fundraising for WSF process.

A discussion is currently going on in the WSF IC regarding the architecture of the WSF Secretariat (as well as the WSF IC) in light of the expansion of the WSF process. At the moment the responsibility for the organization of the different Polycentric WSF Forums in Venezuela, Pakistan and Mali will be shared between the different Organizing Committees as determined in the different host countries, the Secretary of the WSF IC and the different commissions of the IC. The role of the WSF Secretariat is presented with new challenges with the new polycentric process.

The WSF 2005 is left with an outstanding debt of approximately USD 1,25 million. Several organisations of the Secretariat have as entities become indebted in this process (see for further details the earlier section Chapter 2.Funding of the WSF). A support to the daily operation of the WSF Secretariat would contribute to securing the operation of the WSF Secretariat.

If Siemenpuu decides to support the WSF Secretariat, persons to be contacted for further information would be for instance members of the WSF Secretariat of IBASE, Moema Miranda and Candido Grzybowski or Antonio Martins of ATTAC Brasil.

2. Another suggestion which has been made is to support the sustainability of the WSF event itself, by supporting the dedicated sustainability working group in the WSF Africa process.

Recommendation 2. Contributing to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues and an increased notion of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns throughout the WSF process and 3. to support the participation of grass root groups as indigenous people and forest people in the WSF process

Main ideas.

Siemenpuu did contribute to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues at the WSF 2004 in Mumbai, by its support to the Ecological democracy dialogues which participated actively in the WSF. Hand in hand with this process, went the support of grassroot groups, vernacular groups to participate in the WSF process, as they are fundamental to talks about ecological democracy.

Following this logic, the main ideas regarding recommendation 2. and recommendation 3. have also been grouped together in the below. Following these main ideas are further suggestions regarding the implementation, which have been put forward in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study.

A. Facilitate the participation of Siemenpuu partners in the WSF process. Several Siemenpuu partners have mentioned to be wanting to participate in the WSF process. Siemenpuu could actively put forward the possibility for funding of partners to participate in the WSF process.

B. Siemenpuu could facilitate an event for Siemenpuu partner / partnerships at the WSF, for WSF partners to engage in global political dialogues through the WSF process to discuss what are perceived as global problems as for instance ecological democracy.

C. Siemenpuu could also enhance the visibility of environmental issues as well as work towards an increased awareness of the cross cutting nature of environmental concerns at the WSF process by facilitating discussions about new environmental themes, or important topical environmental problems or more workshop oriented events around around environmental themes

D. Siemenpuu could choose to facilitate the engagement of important environmental movements from the region in which the WSF is held to engage with in the dialogues organised at the WSF.

E. Siemenpuu could support the participation of grass root groups in the forum process and benefit from their participation in dialogues held at the forum on issues as ecological democracy.

In the below, Further Comments and Suggestions regarding the main ideas A-E on recommendation 2. contributing to an enhanced visibility of environmental issues and an increased awareness of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns throughout the WSF process and 3. to support the participation of grassroots groups as indigenous people and forest people in the WSF process are made.

Regarding A. Support the participation of Siemenpuu partners in the WSF process. Several Siemenpuu partners have mentioned to want to participate in the WSF process. Siemenpuu could actively put forward the possibility for funding of partners to participate in the WSF process.

1. The Polycentric WSF 2006 will take place in Venezuela, Pakistan and Mali, the WSF 2007 in Kenya. Different partners could want to take part in different forums, be they local, national, regional or world social forums.

2. Some partners have pointed to the importance of taking place in the WSF process. With this is referred to the need for support to engage in pre-WSF meetings, in order to come to the WSF and participate on the basis of previous consultative meetings held with important stakeholders. A particular partner in Africa has specifically expressed to want to organise such meetings.

In a similar way, it is commented that after the WSF feedback reports should be facilitated on how country issues were addressed at the global stage so as to influence national policy development in line with global agendas. Pre-WSF country consultative forums and post WSF feedback meetings and the documentation of these processes would be important.

In general, it has been commented that feedback from the WSF would be important, as partners in different countries might have no understanding of each other's problems.

3. An understanding of the WSF process and its methodology for participation would be important to be shared with WSF participating partners. This would be of benefit to their participation (and perhaps their joining up with others in events/future cooperation). A certain partner might for instance be interested in participating in events at the WSF on the subject of mining or dams and through the WSF methodology be able to join partners with common concerns or strengthen existing networks.

4. Partners could perhaps apply for different forms of participating in the WSF process. Perhaps some partners would want support to attend a national forum in their country and get support to take part in that process. Others might want to attend the global WSF and hold consultative meetings in their country. Siemenpuu could request form partners in which way they would want to engage in the WSF process.

Regarding B. Siemenpuu could hold an event for Siemenpuu partner / partnerships at the WSF, for WSF partners to engage in global political dialogues through the WSF process to discuss what are perceived as global problems as for instance ecological democracy.

1. Thinking of the polycentric WSF being held also in Mali, it might simply make more sense to hold a meeting for the partnerships in Mali, Brazil, India in the Mali forum context, than to host a meeting in Helsinki.

2. Seminars or workshop type of events could be facilitated around for instance the theme of ecological democracy or forest peoples involving a diverse range of actors. Siemenpuu's global partnership can be strengthened through an operationalisation via the WSF.

3. Furthermore, by engaging in such dialogues through the WSF process, Siemenpuu would be cooperating here also with the foreign policy of Finland - for example the new report of the Helsinki Group says:

"Deforestation and forest degradation contribute to climate change and loss of biodiversity as well as threatening the livelihood and traditions of indigenous and other forest dependent communities and peoples. We call for a United Nations based legal framework for addressing these issues that put sustainable forestry at risk and for implementing the objectives of the relevant international environmental conventions. It should include empowering participatory network for indigenous peoples and other forest living communities and enable sustainable enterprise benefit from transparent markets."

Also the report of the ILO World Commission has many recommendations related to similar issues.

Siemenpuu can produce thus also a concrete realization to the recommendations of Finnish president and foreign minister to involve global civil society to develop global solutions for more democratic and sustainable future.

Regarding C. Siemenpuu could also enhance the visibility of environmental issues and increase the awareness on the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns at the WSF process by organising discussions about new environmental themes, or important topical environmental problems or more workshop oriented events around environmental themes

Comments have been made about the nature of events at the WSF and about what would be interesting for Siemenpuu partners to do at the WSF. Discussions on the topics should be held between Siemenpuu, its partners and other actors which would be involved in the events.

In these events it would be important to put upfront the principle of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns, in order to avoid exactly a reinforcement of the idea of environmental concerns as being additional, separate concerns (and thus sectorialism).

1. Mentioned has been on a few occasions that perhaps more practical oriented workshops would be interesting to hold at the WSF, on for instance campaigning and best practices. A Siemenpuu partner, which has been successful in the lobbying in public policy regarding environmental issues in its country, could share this experience in a workshop oriented event at the WSF.

2. Mentioned has been that Siemenpuu could contribute to an enhanced visibility of topical environmental issues in the WSF process. Climate change, energy policy, forest issues, GMOs and over-consumption are the main topics in the environmental sector currently, and should be brought more forward in the WSF process.

3. As increasing the awareness of the crosscutting nature of environmental concerns at the WSF process is important, Siemenpuu could also choose to facilitate events which point to the fact that the solution of environmental problems are bound up with a change of social and cultural habits and values. Promoting an environmental orientation then also means promoting promote actions, cooperation and campaigns, which promote democratic practices and cultural dignity of peoples' own heritage and indigenous livelihoods. It has been commented that Siemenpuu could play an important role in bringing forward these new themes into the WSF process.

If Siemenpuu would want to support awareness on the above issues, different themes can be brought to the forefront as for instance lessons from the community life of indigenous cultures; Development cooperation upside down - what social activism in North can learn from movement cultures in Third World and among First Nations and Challenging consumerism - sustainable ways of living and learning based on renewable sources. The themes suggested vary from concrete cooperation perspectives with other donor bodies to

anti-consumerist and community-oriented life style and action culture exchange perspectives.

More theoretical themes are also seen as interesting to develop through the WSF process, as the question of modern science versus traditional knowledge systems and experience rooted ways of orientation. What are for instance non modern, non western knowledge systems related to soil water agriculture forestry, fisheries? How can they be defended and how to incorporate them into politics of sustainable development? In a similar way health care systems could be looked at.

Yet another theme suggested which would be of benefit to the dialogues held at the WSF, would be to hold an event on the methodological experiences and experiments in connection to global dialogues, and pointed is to Siemenpuu's India experiences.

4. Accompanying the process of engaging in the WSF process in the suggested manners, a South-South-North cooperation could be established in which Siemenpuu can support some kind of experience exchange by supporting interaction and sharing of documents from one group to actual needs of another (e.g. through creation of a common resource base of environmentally oriented movement culture).

Regarding D. Siemenpuu could choose to engage important environmental movements from the region in which the WSF is held to engage with in the dialogues organised at the WSF.

This issue has been particularly looked upon within the context of the WSF going to Africa, and more specifically in the context of the WSF 2007 being held in Kenya. We have passed the half of 2005, and it would be more realistic to think of a more substantial idea on the engagement with the WSF being formed in the future months, and as such not in time for the process currently towards Mali.

1. However, working via the Folke center in Mali, Siemenpuu's possible future partner, the Folke center could determine important environmental groups in the region to be cooperated with.

2. Thinking of the WSF in Kenya, mentioned has been a possible cooperation with the Green Belt movement in Kenya.

It has been suggested that if Wangari Maathai would want to be involved in the WSF process, Siemenpuu could support this process. Wangari Maathai might want to assist ecological and cultural renewal in other countries. Siemenpuu could propose this and other ecological movement leaders could be invited, which could lead perhaps to as much as a direction towards a pan African green belt movement.

2. Other groups mentioned in Kenya are the network Eco news, ELSI and MWENGO. It has been commented that in Kenya there are more environmental organisations than in

any other country in Sub Saharan Africa. The existing (tribal) groups might have no communication with INGO's.

3. Siemenpuu could think in the context of the WSF being held in Kenya of cooperation with important organisations in the East Africa region (integration process to be completed in 2008), i.e Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. One could imagine that East African regional issues will be important in the Kenya forum. Rwanda and Burundi are interested to be part of the East African community.

4. There are other important African networks or groups to think of with whom cooperation could be sought with in the WSF process towards Kenya, as TANGO in Tanzania, or LEAT (a lawyers environmental action team).

5. Mentioned have also been international partners with whom Siemenpuu could engage in cooperation throughout the WSF process. So Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) is a member of the WSF IC and it has been pointed out that FOEI has 10 African member organizations who might be involved in the WSF Africa process. Whilst it has been difficult to get information on involved network in the WSF porcess towards Kenya 2007, it has been reported that the Friends of the Earth network is involved in the process. The activties of FOEI at the WSF 2005 have been evaluated as positive.

Regarding E. Siemenpuu could support the participation of grassroot groups in the forum process and benefit from their participation in dialogues held at the forum on issues as ecological democracy

1. By working through the Mali Folkecenter, the Folke center could engage local and regional grassroot organisations with an environmental focus.

Mentioned was that important grassroot groups in the region should be identified according to pressing environmental problems and invited to participate in the WSF process. It are groups African farmers, and fisher communities which are fundamental to be involved in the debates around environment (and the linked poverty debate), and thus also at the debates at the WSF.

2. The WSF has an important exchange of information / educational function. A suggestion regarding Kenya has been to involve a group which would have a wide impact on society : the drummer groups, those that pass the message from village to village.

These groups have an important function in Kenyan society as they bring issue from local to national level and vice versa and they have as such a crosscutting reach. The drummer groups have a national association, and Siemenpuu could scout via this association for community groups with an environmental focus and support their participation.

3. If thinking of grassroot groups which would be important to support in the WSF process, certain general criteria can be thought of:

- no energy using groups

- forest dependent communities / associations (mentioned have been for instance important forest people groups in the North of Kenya, which are threatened of their land.)
- sustainable farming communities
- organic farmers
- tree planting organisations
- village self help movements

4. Groups are mentioned like the cooperative movement in Tanzania, or the Ogoni people in Nigeria (Nigeria has an expanding WSF process), farmers union workers in Mozambique

5. Siemenpuu could also choose to work via established networks as SEATINI (contact person Yash Tandon), the Alternative Information & Development Center, South Africa (contact person Dot Keet) and they would determine which grassroots groups would be important to support. A small group of different organisations could be supported through which grass root groups would participate in the WSF process.

6. Another option would be to take contact with the WSF Africa Regional Council, or the Secretariat which is currently being formed in Kenya for the WSF 2007 process, and get information about which groups are in need of support.

7. Another concrete idea mentioned is for Siemenpuu to support continental ecological caravans to Nairobi by bus.

The WSF process is being criticized for being elitist, how foreign funded Africans are flown in from other countries when local people don not know about the forum (like is said to have happened in the African forum in Zambia). Busses would really change the nature of participation. Bus trips are an effort, yet they are do-able from many parts.

Reports are that WSF involved representatives in South Africa are making a proposal regarding the transport by buses to the WSF in Kenya. Siemenpuu could support the process by offering for instance to stand guarantee for a certain part of the risk taking. Contact person regarding this initiative would be Trevor Ngwane, South Africa.

8. References

Resources used for the purpose of this study and Recommended for further reading:

Nisula, Laura & Sehm-Patomäki, Katarina (2002): We, the Peoples of the World Social Forum, *NIGD Discussion Paper 2/2002*, Helsinki & Nottingham.

Heikki Patomäki and Teivo Teivainen, A possible world : democratic transformation of global institutions, Zed Books, 2004.

Heikki Patomäki and Teivo Teivainen, The World Social Forum An Open Space or a Movement of Movements?, *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2004.

Teivainen, Teivo (2002b): "The World Social Forum and global democratization: Learning from Porto Alegre", *Third World Quarterly*, 23: 4, pp. 607-620.

Boaventura de Souza, The World Social Forum, a Users Manual (2005)

IBASE, Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic studies, Collection World Social Forum 2003

Chico Whitaker (2005). O desafio do Forum Social Mundial

The World Social Forum : Challenging Empires, edited by Jai Sen, Anita Anand, Arturo Escobar, Peter Waterman (2004)

Ylä-Anttila, Thomas (2005), The world social forum and the globalization of social movements sandf public spheres, *ephemera*, 2005. (www.ephemera.org)

(Not used for this study) A Better World is possible (2003): Popular Alternatives to Globalisation at the World Social Forum, Edited by William F. Fisher and Thomas Ponniah.

Reports :

NIGD World Social Forum International Council reports, as for instance by Ruby van der Wekken, 2005, see http://www.nigd.org/wsf/1114451710/index_html

Havana April 2005 meeting of the Hemispheric Council of the Americas report

Report WSF IC Barcelona June 2005 meetings

Programmes of WSF 2001-2005

WSF Reports of Siemenpuu partners

Webarticles:

Feroz, Mehid, Pakistan:the WSF and Democracy, 2005,

<http://www.alternatives.ca/article2057.html> (24.9.2005 last checked)

Miles, Larmer, A range of Articles on the net as Africa Social Forum 2004 - whose Forum, which Africa?, January 2005

http://www.cadtm.org/article.php3?id_article=1107 (24.9.2005 last checked)

Dot Keet, Report from the International Council of the World Social Forum for Social Movement Activists and Analysts in Africa,

<http://www.tni.org/archives/keet/wsf.htm> (24.9.2005 last checked)

Trevor Nwgane, Two essays on the WSF,

<http://www.nigd.org/docs/WSF2007AfricaTrevorNwgane> (24.9.2005 last checked)

Amit Sen Gupta, The World Social Forum sprouts wings, 2005

http://pd.cpim.org/2005/0213/02132005_amitsen.htm (24.9.2005 last checked)

Websites:

<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br>
<http://www.forosocialamericas.org>
<http://www.africansocialforum.org>

Interviews / consultations /comments (e-mail /phone/meeting):

(This is not the complete list of those contacted)

Soren Ambrose (50 years is enough, Kenya)	(18.7.2005, e-mail)
Maria Araujo (GTA, Brasil)	(May 2005, Helsinki)
Taoufik Ben Abdallah (ENDA, Senegal, Africa WSF process Secretariat)	(15.08.2005, telephone)
Patrick Bond (Durban Center for Civil Society)	(11.7.2005, e-mail)
Alessandra Ceregatti (WSF Secretariat, Brasil)	(22.9.2005, email)
A.Bolai Singh (CDO, India)	(22.7.2005, e-mail)
Kari Botas (Siemenpuu)	(04.08.2005, Siemenpuu lunch)
Liane Greeff (Water Justice Africa)	(22.7.2005, e-mail)
Outi Hakkarainen (Kepa)	(23.9.2007, telephone)
Tuula Heima-Tirkkonen (Abilis)	11.7.2005, Abilis office)
Ville Veikko Hirvela (VK, Siemenpuu)	(8.7.2005 e-mail, and further exchanges)
Risto Isomäki (VK, CED)	(9.7.2005, Bromarv)
Peik Johanson (Journalist)	(6.7.2005, Veräjämäki)
Dot Keet (AIDC, South Africa)	(21.7 e-mail)
Heikki Korhonen (Siemenpuu)	(17.7.2005, Bromarv)
Pia Korhonen (Siemenpuu)	(14.7.2005, Siemenpuu office)
Peter Kuria Githinji (Siemenuu)	(11.7.2005 and further telephone contact)
Ana Marie Leung (STARM)	(31.7. 2005 e-mail)
Merja Leskinen (TSL)	(23.9.2005)
Antonio Martins (ATTAC Brasil, WSF Secretariat)	(22.7.2005 email, +several other exchanges by e-mail and during his visit in Finland August 2005)
Hanna Matinpuro (SLL)	(10.9.2005, email)
Gathuru Mburu (Forum for Urban Ecology, Kenya)	(04.08.2005, telephone and email)
Emanuel Mutamba (GLM, Zambia)	(21.7.2005, e-mail)
Anne Muwonge (UWOWA, Uganda)	(30.7.2005, e-mail)
Jean Nke (Défense l'environnement Camerounais)	(03.09.2005, e-mail)
Trevor Nwgame (privatisation forum South Africa)	(22.7.2005, e-mail)
Edward Oyugi (WSF Africa process, Director of Social Development Network (SODNET), Kenya)	(20.9.2005, e-mail)
Oduor Ongwen (WSF Africa process, SEATINI, Kenya)	(21.9.2005, e-mail)
Vijay Pratap (VK, CSDS)	(4.7.2005, Helsinki)
Jukka Pääkkönen (SASK)	(26.9.2005, telephone)
Mikael Rönkkö (Attac)	(2.7.2005, Helsinki)
Esa Salminen (Kepa)	(10.7.2007, e-mail)

Katarina Sehm Patomäki (NIGD) other occasions throughout the study)	(15.8.2005, e-mail, and on various
Leo Stranius (Friends of the Earth Finland)	(14.7.2005 e-mail, further by e-mail
Yash Tandon, South Centre	(26.9.2005, email)
Teivo Teivainen (□□NIGD)	(18.7.2005, Helsinki)
Ibrahim Togola (Mali Folkecenter)	(25.8.2005, telephone)
Aminata Traoré, (CAD Mali, Mali WSF Organising Committee)	(July and 31.8.2005, e-mail)
Clarissa Trois Abreu (FOE Brasil)	(e-mail exchange via Leo Stranius, 31.7. 2005)
Kaisu Tuominen (Siemenpuu)	(5.7.2005, Siemenpuu office)
Marko Ulvila (VK, CED)	(4.7.2005 Helsinki, further by e-mail)
Kai Vaara, (CED)	(15.7.2005, email and several further exchanges
Mark Waller (journalist, South Africa activist)	(4.7.2005, Bromarv)
Thomas Wallgren (VK, Siemenpuu)	(2.7.2005, 12.7.2005 telephone e-mail)

9. Contacts WSF (Africa) process

For the purpose of this study, in this section a listing is given of WSF (Africa) process contact persons and details (when known).

1. WSF process

Alessandra Ceregatti (WSF Secretariat, Brasil) fsmcoordesc@forumsocialmundial.org.br

Antonio Martins (ATTAC Brasil, WSF Secretariat) antonio@planetaportoalegre

Moema Miranda (IBASE, WSF Secretariat) (moema@ibase.org)

Candido Grzybowski (IBASE, WSF Secretariat) (candido@ibase.org)

2. WSF Africa process

Taoufik Ben Abdallah (ENDA, Senegal, Africa WSF process Secretariat) taoufi@enda.sn

Edward Oyugi (WSF Africa Kenya process, Director of Social Development Network (SODNET), Kenya) edward@sodnet.or.ke Land lines: 254 20 2713262, 254 20

2712646 Mobile: 254 722 510405

Oduor Ongwen (WSF Africa Kenya process, SEATINI, Kenya) ongwen@sodnet.or.ke

Aminata Touré, (CAD Mali, Mali WSF Organising Committee) barryaminatou@yahoo.fr

3. Some names of the members of the WSF Africa Regional Council (Several of the affiliations of the below mentioned persons have been found via internet search. It is as such not clear whether this is the affiliation used in the Regional Council itself) :

Taoufik Abdalla (ENDA) of Tunisia;

Fofana Bakari of Guinea;

Edward Oyugi (SODNET), Oduor Ongwen (Seatini), Njoki Njehu ,Wahu Kaara ((All Africa Conference of Churches) of Kenya;

Fatuma Aloo (FEMNET, fallo@zitec.org) and Myanza Mwadhini (National Network of small scale farmers) of Tanzania;

Thomas Deve (Mwengo), Regis Mtutu (Padare, ZSF) of Zimbabwe;

Outtara Diakalia (National Forum against debt and poverty) of Ivory coast;

Demba Dmbele (African Forum on Alternatives, dembussa@hotmail.com), Hellen Rama (Congad), Rabia Abdelkrim Chikh (ENDA, rabiadel@yahoo.fr), Sengor Diana, Diop Buuba (Congad) of Senegal;

Elizabeth Eilor (African Womens Economic Policy Network) of Uganda;

Sara Longwe (FEMNET), Muleya Haachiinda (National Association of Small Scale Farmers), Kiss Brian Abraham of Zambia;

Aminata Traore (CAD) of Mali;

Viriato Tamele (Economic Justice Coalition) of Mozambique;

Mohamed Said Saadi (saadi113@yahoo.fr) of Morocco;

Hassan Sunmonu (OATUU) of Nigeria;

Azeb Girmai (ENDA) of Ethiopia;

Lebohang Pheko (GENTA) of South Africa

Amir Salem (National Association for Human Rights and Development) of Egypt

Mamadov Goita mamdov_goita@yahoo.fr

Bakaly Fofana cecidegna@yahoo.fr

Abdeljelil Bédoui jelil_bedoui@yahoo.com

Annex 1. World Social Forum Charter of Principles⁹

The committee of Brazilian organisations that conceived of, and organised, the first World Social Forum, held in Porto Alegre from January 25th to 30th, 2001, after evaluating the results of that Forum and the expectations it raised, consider it necessary and legitimate to draw up a Charter of Principles to guide the continued pursuit of that initiative. While the principles contained in this Charter - to be respected by all those who wish to take part in the process and to organise new editions of the World Social Forum - are a consolidation of the decisions that presided over the holding of the Porto Alegre Forum and ensured its success, they extend the reach of those decisions and define orientations that flow from their logic.

1. The World Social Forum is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society directed towards fruitful relationships among Humankind and between it and the Earth.

2. The World Social Forum at Porto Alegre was an event localised in time and place. From now on, in the certainty proclaimed at Porto Alegre that “another world is possible”, it becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which cannot be reduced to the events supporting

3. The World Social Forum is a world process. All the meetings that are held as part of this process have an international dimension.

4. The alternatives proposed at the World Social Forum stand in opposition to a process of globalisation commanded by the large multinational corporations and by the governments and international institutions at the service of those corporations’ interests, with the complicity of national governments. They are designed to ensure that globalisation in solidarity will prevail as a new stage in world history. This will respect universal human rights, and those of all citizens — men and women — of all nations and the environment and will rest on democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality and the sovereignty of peoples.

5. The World Social Forum brings together and interlinks only organisations and movements of civil society from all the countries in the world, but intends neither to be a body representing world civil society.

6. The meetings of the World Social Forum do not deliberate on behalf of the World Social Forum as a body. No one, therefore, will be authorised, on behalf of any of the editions of the Forum, to express positions claiming to be those of all its participants. The

⁹ Taken from the official WSF website <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br>

participants in the Forum shall not be called on to take decisions as a body, whether by vote or acclamation, on declarations or proposals for action that would commit all, or the majority, of them and that propose to be taken as establishing positions of the Forum as a body. It thus does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its meetings, nor does it intend to constitute the only option for interrelation and action by the organisations and movements that participate in it.

7. Nonetheless, organisations or groups of organisations that participate in the Forums meetings must be assured the right, during such meetings, to deliberate on declarations or actions they may decide on, whether singly or in coordination with other participants. The World Social Forum undertakes to circulate such decisions widely by the means at its disposal, without directing, hierarchising, censoring or restricting them, but as deliberations of the organisations or groups of organisations that made the decisions.

8. The World Social Forum is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party context that, in a decentralised fashion, interrelates organisations and movements engaged in concrete action at levels from the local to the international to build another world.

9. The World Social Forum will always be a forum open to pluralism and to the diversity of activities and ways of engaging of the organisations and movements that decide to participate in it, as well as the diversity of genders, ethnicities, cultures, generations and physical capacities, providing they abide by this Charter of Principles. Neither party representations nor military organisations shall participate in the Forum. Government leaders and members of legislatures who accept the commitments of this Charter may be invited to participate in a personal capacity.

10. The World Social Forum is opposed to all totalitarian and reductionist views of economy, development and history and to the use of violence as a means of social control by the State. It upholds respect for Human Rights, the practices of real democracy, participatory democracy, peaceful relations, in equality and solidarity, among people, ethnicities, genders and peoples, and condemns all forms of domination and all subjection of one person by another.

11. As a forum for debate, the World Social Forum is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the transparent circulation of the results of that reflection, on the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on means and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalisation with its racist, sexist and environmentally destructive dimensions is creating internationally and within countries.

12. As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the World Social Forum encourages understanding and mutual recognition among its participant organisations and movements, and places special value on the exchange among them, particularly on all

that society is building to centre economic activity and political action on meeting the needs of people and respecting nature, in the present and for future generations.

13. As a context for interrelations, the World Social Forum seeks to strengthen and create new national and international links among organisations and movements of society, that — in both public and private life — will increase the capacity for non-violent social resistance to the process of dehumanisation the world is undergoing and to the violence used by the State, and reinforce the humanising measures being taken by the action of these movements and organisations.

14. The World Social Forum is a process that encourages its participant organisations and movements to situate their actions, from the local level to the national level and seeking active participation in international contexts, as issues of planetary citizenship, and to introduce onto the global agenda the change-inducing practices that they are experimenting in building a new world in solidarity.

Approved and adopted in São Paulo, on April 9, 2001, by the organisations that make up the World Social Forum Organising Committee, approved with modifications by the World Social Forum International Council on June 10, 2001.

Annex 2. The WSF International Council

DELEGATES¹⁰:

50 Years is Enough!

ABONG - Associação Brasileira de ONGs

ACTU - Australian Council of Trade Unions

AFL-CIO - American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations

Africa Trade Network

AIDC - Alternative Information on Development Center

ALAI - Agencia Latinoamericana de Informacion

ALAMPYME – Assoc. Latino Americana de Pequenos e Médios Empresários

Aliança Por Um Mundo Responsável e Solidário

All Arab Peasants & Agricultural Co-operatives Union

ALOP - Assoc. Latino Americana de Organismos de Promoção

Alternatives Information Center

Alternatives

Alternatives Rússia

Amigos da Terra

APRODEV

Arab NGO Network for Development

ARENA - Asian Regional Exchange for New Alternatives

Articulación Feminista Marco Sur

ASC - Aliança Social Continental

Asemblea de los Pueblos del Caribe (APC)

Assemblée Européenne des Citoyens

Assembléia das Nações Unidas dos Povos

Associação para o Progresso das Comunicações

ATTAC- Brasil

ATTAC France

Babels

Bankwatch Network

CADTM- Comité pour l'Annulation de la Dette du Tiers Monde

Canadian Council

Caritas Internationalis

CBJP - Comissão Brasileira de Justiça e Paz

CEAAL – Cons. Educação de Adultos da Am. Latina

CEDAR Internacional

CEDETIM- Centre d'Etudes et d'Initiatives de Solidarité Internationale

Central de Trabajadores Argentinos

CES – European Trade Union Confederation

CETRI

CIDSE

¹⁰ Taken from the official website of the WSF, <http://www.forumsocialmundia.org.br>. Please note that on the website one can obtain further details as website of the organisation and contact address.

CIOSL - Confederação Internacional de Organizações Sindicais Livres
CIVES
CLACSO
CLC - Canadian Labour Congress
CMT – Confederação Mundial do Trabalho
Coligação para a Justiça Econômica
COMPA – Convergência de los Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas
CONAIE
Congreso Nacional Indígena do México
Conselho Mundial de Igrejas
Coordinación del Foro “El Otro Davos”
Coordinadora de Centrais Sindicais do Cone Sul
Corpwatch
COSATU - Congress of South African Trade Unions
CRID – Centre de Recherche et d’Information pour le Développement
CUT – Central Única dos Trabalhadores
Encuentros Hemisféricos contra el ALCA
ENDA
Euralat
Euromarches
FAMES
FECOC - Frente Continental de Organizações Comunitárias
Federación Mundial de Juventudes Democráticas
Fédération démocratique internationale des femmes (FDIF)
Fundación para la Pau/International Peace Bureau (IPB)
FIAN – Food First International Action Network
FIDH – Fed. Internacional Direitos Humanos
Focus on the Global South
Fórum Dakar
Forum Mondial des Alternatives
Forum of the Poor
Fórum Social Italiano
GLBT South-South Dialogue
Global Exchange
Global Policy Network
Greenpeace
Grito dos Excluídos
Grupo de Trabalho Amazônico
Habitat International Coalition
IATP – Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
IBASE
ICAE – Conselho Internacional de Educação de Adultos
IFAT - International Federation of Alternative Trade
IFG – International Forum on Globalization
International Gender and Trade Network
International Network of Street Papers (INSP)

Instituto Paulo Freire
IPS – Inter Press Service
Jubilee South – Asia
Jubileo South – África
Jubileu 2000
Jubileu Sul América Latina
KCTU - Korean Confederation of Trade Unions
KOPA
Land Research Action Network
MST – Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra
Narmada
National Network of Autonomous Women’s Groups
NIGD - Network Institute for Global Democratization
North-South Centre
OCLAE - Continental Organization of Latin America and Caribbean Students
Oneworld
Organization of African Trade Unions Unity
ORIT – Org. Regional Interamericana de Trabalhadores
OXFAM Internacional
Palestinian grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign
Peace Boat
Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo
Projeto K
Public Citizen
Red Latinoamericana Mulheres Transformando a Economia
Rede APM – Agricultures paysannes, sociétés et mondialisation
Rede CONSEU (Conferencia de Naciones sin Estado de Europa)
Rede Dawn de Mulheres
Rede de Solidariedade Ásia Pacífico
Rede Latino-Americana e Caribenha de Mulheres Negras
Rede Mulher e Habitat
Rede Mundial de Mulheres pelos Direitos Reprodutivos
Rede Palestina de ONGs
Rede Social de Justiça e Direitos Humanos
Rede Transforme!
Redes Socioeconomia Solidaria
REPEM – Rede de Educação Popular entre Mulheres
Réseaux Sous -régional sur la Dette et les DSRP
SIGTUR - Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights
Social Watch
Solidar
Solidarity Africa Network in Action
The International Federation Terre des Hommes (IFTDH)
TNI – Transnational Institute
TWN – Third World Network
UBUNTU - Foro Mundial de Redes de la Sociedad Civil

Union Internacional de Estudiantes
Via Campesina
World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (Amarc)
World March of Women
Znet

OBSERVERS

Organizing Committee of the African Social Forum
Organizing Committee of the Americas Social Forum
Organizing Committee of the European Social Forum
Organizing Committee of the Mediterranean Social Forum
Organizing Committee of the of the Pan-Amazonic Social Forum
Organizing Committee of the Thematic Social Forum: Democracy, Human Rights, War
and Drug Traffic
FNTG - Funders Network on Trade & Globalization

Annex 3. Charter of principles and values of the African Social Forum¹¹

After evaluating the results obtained and hopes aroused by the two editions of the African Social Forum (ASF), (organised in Bamako in January 2002 and Addis Ababa in January 2003), the initiators of the ASF considered it necessary to define a Charter of principles and values which establishes the political and moral bases of this collective space, and provide guidance for the continuation of this initiative.

The Principles contained in this Charter, which shall be observed by all those desiring to participate in the Forum and organise activities within it, are in conformity with the ideals that guided the realisation of the two editions of the African Social Forum and defined the new political and moral orientations.

1. The African Social Forum is an open meeting space aimed at deepening reflections, democratic debate, formulating proposals, experiences and articulation of efficient actions, entities and African social movements which are opposed to neo-liberalism, injustice and the domination of the world by market forces.
2. The Bamako Forum was a high point in the existence of the African social movement during which we agreed and proclaimed that « another Africa is possible. » This creed which is also our hobbyhorse shall guide us in the search for and construction of alternatives to the domination and plundering of the continent.
3. The African Social Forum shall speak as a continental body. Thus all the meetings that contribute to this process shall also have a regional dimension.
4. The alternatives proposed by the African Social Forum shall be focussed on the human person and opposed to the merchandising of Africa and the selling off of its riches within the framework of neo-liberal globalisation. The latter is particularly beneficial to the major multinational firms, rich nations and international institutions at the latter's service. The Forum thus objects to the programmes and initiatives launched on behalf of the continent which, in fact, establish the domination of the financial, political and cultural hegemonic forces.
5. The Forum shall, more specifically, campaign in favour of an interdependent African integration based, on the one hand, on the respect of the rights of men and women, minority rights, democracy, the principles of a sustainable development, and on the other, on democratic institutions at the service of interests of the continent, social justice, equality and people's sovereignty.

¹¹ Taken from the official website of the Africa Social forum process
<http://www.africansocialforum.org/english/charte.htm>

6. The African Social Forum shall bring together and connect civil society entities and movements from all African countries, but shall not claim to be representative of the African civil society or exclude from its debates political leaders, mandated by the peoples, who accept to make commitments resulting from this Charter.
7. Meetings of the African Social Forum do not have voting powers. No one shall therefore be authorised to speak on behalf of the Forum, no matter in what form, by presenting viewpoints claiming to be those of the ASF. As members of the Forum, participants shall not take decisions by vote or acclamation, nor approve declarations or proposals for action which bind the Forum.
8. Entities partaking in the Forum proceedings should however be able to deliberate freely during these meetings, alone or with other participants, about declarations and actions which they decide to develop . The world social forum shall undertake to widely circulate these decisions, through the means at its disposal, without imposing directions, hierarchies, censures and restrictions, but as proceedings of entities or groups of entities which would have assumed them.
9. The African Social Forum is a pluralist and diversified, non confessional, non governmental and non partisan space, which links, in a decentralised way and in networks, entities and movements engaged in concrete actions, from the local to the international level, for the construction of another Africa and another world. It shall therefore not establish itself as a governing body for participants during its meetings, nor shall it claim to be the only mode of articulation and action for entities and movements that participate in it.
10. As a meeting space, the Forum is open to pluralism and the diverse commitments and actions of participating entities and movements, such as gender, racial, ethnic and cultural diversity .
11. The African Social Forum believes in the power of democracy as the preferred channel for conflict renegotiation and resolution within societies and between States. Participants to the Forum shall undertake to strengthen participation and citizen control.
12. The African Social Forum shall reject any form of totalitarian and reductionist vision of history and the use of violence by States or any other social or political force. It shall put forward the respect of Human Rights, equitable, interdependent and peaceful relations among peoples, sexes and races, and condemn all forms of domination as well as the subjugation of one human being by another.
13. Meetings of the African Social Forum shall always constitute open spaces for all those desiring to participate in them, with the exception of organisations known to have made an attempt on peoples' lives as a method of political action.
14. As a space for debate, the African Social Forum is a movement of ideas which stimulates reflection and the maximum transparent circulation of the results of this

reflection , on mechanisms and tools of economic domination, means and actions to resist this domination, and on the alternatives that can be proposed to resolve the problems of exclusion and inequality which the current globalisation process has strengthened and aggravated both at continental level and in each African country.

15. As a space for the exchange of experiences, the African Social Forum shall stimulate the knowledge and mutual recognition of participating entities and movements, by specifically enhancing the value of what African societies themselves build in order to streamline economic activity and political action on human needs and the respect of the environment.

16. As a space of articulation, the African Social Forum shall seek to strengthen and create new national and international linkages between entities and civil society movements. The capacity to resist the economic and cultural impoverishment and dehumanisation process, within the continent and the globe, is emerging.

17. The African Social Forum is a process that stimulates entities and movements which contribute in defining their actions in the perspective of the creation of an African and global citizen, introducing, in the continental and global agenda, transforming practices which they experiment in order to build another society, another Africa and another world..

18. The African Social Forum is a process connected to other world processes aimed at building another world on the basis of the principles and values that we are adopting today. It is an integral part of the movement created by the World Social Forum. It shall seek to strengthen the solidarity between the movements and the entities working in Africa and those in other parts of the world.

Addis Ababa, January , 2003.

Annex 4. Environmental issues at WSF 2003.

Environmental issues at WSF 2003 can be studied from a study produced by the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analysis (IBASE), member of the international secretariat of the WSF.

Selforganised activities

There were 1.619 self organised activities, and estimates are that perhaps 1.300 actually happened. Five thematical axes organised the activities of the forum :

- : Democratic and sustainable development
 - : Principles, values, human rights, diversity and equality
 - : Media, culture and alternatives to mercantilization and homogenization
 - : Political power, civil society and democracy
 - : Global democratic order, struggle against militarisation and for peace
- In the IBASE study one can find the themes present per thematical ax.

In the first thematical ax "Democratic and sustainable development", we can conclude that 148 events of the 458 events, or 32%, had potentially an environmental orientation : sustainability (25 events), water (22 events), environment (19 events, contamination, inequilibrium, deforestation, environmental education), agriculture (17 events, family, organic), cooperativism (11 events), health (11 events), food security (11 events), energy (9 events), bio-diversity (7 events), agrarian reform (6 events), education (4 events), mineral resources (3 events), agenda 21 (2 events), indigenous people (1 event).

In the second thematical ax "Principles, values, human rights, diversity and equality" we could say that 39 events of the 486 events, or 8%, had potentially an environmental orientation : education (13 events, environmental included), food security (9 events), Indigenous people (6 events), water (3 events), agrarian reform (3 events), consumption (3 events, patterns, sustainable), environment (2 events, contamination, inequilibrium, deforestation, environmental education)

One note should be made : The second thematical ax includes the themes of spirituality (22 events), one could imagine this to also have entailed events with an environmental, community life style oriented focus.

From the third thematical ax "Media, culture and alternatives to mercantilization and homogenization" only 3 events of the 201 activities, or 1,5%, under the theme of education (environmental included) can be concluded to have potentially had a environmental focus. (Also here the theme spirituality was present, with 6 events)

In the fourth thematical ax "Political power, civil society and democracy" 10 events of the 324 event, or 3%, can be concluded to have had an environmental focus : water (4 events), development (3 events, communitarian, democratic, economic and social, local, sustainable, ecodevelopment), cooperativism (2 events), sustainability (1 event).

As to thematical ax five "Global democratic order, struggle against militarisation and for

peace" , 7 events of the 150 activities, or 5%, can be said to have potentially held a focus on environment : debt (3 events, foreign, ecological), biodiversity (1 event), medicinal plants (1 event), garbage (1 event), food security (1 event), sustainability (1). (Once again the theme spirituality was present, with 6 events).

So we would conclude that 200 events of the total of 1619 events, or 12%, have potentially had an environmental orientation (in the sense of the word as Siemenpuu appreciates).

The IBASE study gives different numbers and diagrams on how the themes and events relate to each other. Interestingly, the study points to the isolation of the first thematical ax, the more environmental topical oriented ax. The main themes of the first ax, the ax which entailed the most environmental oriented topics, are less recurring in the other axes, compared to the main themes of the other axes.

Water (29 events) is the most croscutting theme of the themes that have been identified as having an environmental orientation.

Panels and Conferences

As the elaboration of the five thematical axes, so the panels and conferences were the result of elaboration within the WSF International council (also upon consultation with movements, campaigns and organisations).

The panels were meant to present diversity of visions on the themes, issues at stake, diversity of proposals (consensus and divergences) and the emerging themes. The IBASE included reports on the panels from which also existence of an environmental orientation could be subtracted.

Of thematical ax one, three of the seven panels seemingly also carried an environmental orientation : Beyond Johannesburg: property, control and governance of bio-diversity, water and energy. Involved organisations were forinstance Greenpeace, Friend of the earth, Jubilee, Global ecovillage network, TNI, and Via Campesina. The second event was For another economy : subsistence, localisation, devaluation and reproduction, with for instance Friends of the Earth and Food first. The third event was on the Citizen rights.

Of thematical ax two, one of the five panels had a clear environmental orientation : Full access to water, food and land. Involved organisations were forinstance Friends of the Earth, Alliance. Yet also in the panel "Full access to education, health, and accomodation and social security" the topic of (access to drinking) water arose.

In Thematical ax 4 "Political power, civil society and democracy" in two of the six panels the topic of environmental movements arose.

We could conclude that 7 of the 31, or 22%, events had some sort of environmental orientation to them - though in some cases this refers to as little evidence as simply a mentioning of a one liner in a report.

The Conferences had as an aim to socialise visions and analyses of personalities of global citizenship for the public at large. One conference out of 10, or 10%, had a clear environmental orientation towards it : "land, territory and food sovereignty", with the personalities of Joao Pedor Stedile (MST), Francisca Rodriguez (Via Campesina), Peter Rosset (Food First) and Pat Mooney (author on biodiversity).

□ □ □

