

**Empowering People in Poverty to make
Globalization Work for the Poor!
European Social Forum Seminar/Workshop
Thursday 18th September,
PANORA Cinema, Malmo**

Introduction

Global inequalities are one of the most visible consequences of the current process of globalisation. Throughout the world, inequality between rich and poor, even in the wealthiest nations is rising sharply. Wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the few, while an unacceptably large proportion of the population is becoming even poorer. **Half the world – nearly three billion people – live on less than two dollars a day.** Meanwhile, in the European Union, one of the wealthiest parts of the world, **over 78 million people**, are estimated to be living in poverty and many more experience social exclusion. In some new member states these figures are much higher with many people are facing situations of extreme or absolute poverty.

The **root causes of poverty**, however, remain the same. Poverty, as the state whereby certain groups and people lack the basic means and the fundamental rights to lead a life in dignity, is not accidental. It is the result of systemic imbalances of power which not only undermine the possibilities of the poor to participate in the social, economic and political activities, but also underpin the creation of poverty as an unintended – but widely tolerated – side-effect of the current economic model.

People experiencing poverty both in the EU and the South are systematically marginalised from national and international social and political processes. In order to design meaningful and effective socio-economic policies for poverty eradication, the poor and socially excluded need to be fully engaged in the social and political processes, together with the NGOs that support them. At the local level, this means building a **strong fight through supporting and empowering people experiencing poverty and the communities they live in**, to defend their fundamental rights to a decent life.

At the EU and Global level, new governance structures have to be established. Here, the EU has a particularly important role, both in ensuring active participation of people experiencing poverty and NGO stakeholders in the governance structures for EU and in national policy development and delivery, but also building on the strength of the European Social Model and working to **promote an ethical and sustainable model of development across the world**, building on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals¹, and the UN covenants.

¹ At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets, with a deadline of 2015, that have become known as the [Millennium Development Goals](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/) (MDGs). These 8 goals promote: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 2) Achieve universal primary education, 3) Promote gender equality and empower women, 4) Reduce child mortality, Goal 5, Improve maternal health, Goal 6) Combat HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases, Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability, Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development. <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/>

Aims of Workshop

*This workshop at the ESF this year in Malmo, is jointly organized by the European Anti Poverty Network (EU level and Swedish network), together with two Development Organisations – Dignity International and Concord. In this workshop, we will focus on the **crucial role of participation and direct empowerment strategies in the EU (highlighting the specific Swedish context) and the South, in the fight against poverty** and how we can build a coherent vision and strategy in relation to globalization and poverty based on these approaches.*

The workshop will 3 hours and divided in two parts. Translation in Swedish and English

Workshop Programme: Thursday 18th September 16.00 – 19.00

- **Introduction to Workshop/Seminar**
Sian Jones, Policy Coordinator, European Anti Poverty Network

Part 1: Can Globalization be made to work for the poor, based on empowerment strategies?

- **Round Table Discussion**
 - Ludo Horemans, President of EAPN EU and Belgian Network EAPN
 - Andrea Maksimovic, Concord and Solidar.
- **Plenary Discussion and Debate**

Part 2: Role of Empowerment and Right's based Action in the EU and the South in the fight against poverty

- **Empowering people in poverty. The Swedish/EU experience (Film – The Citizen)**
Sonia Wallbom, EAPN Sweden
- **Stand up for our rights - Experiences from the South and active workshop**
Aye Aye Win, Dignity International
- **Conclusions**

For more information

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