

Aid to Trade: Sustainable Transformation of African Financing for children, girls and women

Within every problem lies an opportunity, and nested in every opportunity is a solution.

In 2014, CHESTRAD International led non-state, not for profit actors in the global south in the health consultations to devise a new global agenda that would replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). It was an exciting and challenging process.

We wanted to own our voices to be heard. We wanted the global community to respect the diversity in our country realities as well as the context of governance in economic fragility, conflict and humanitarian conditions caused by natural disasters and much more. We sought to determine our own priorities, within a global community where political and economic power have held sway for centuries. It was important to us that we should hold our own leadership to account, along with national donor governments who provide resources, financial and technical, to them. We called for **One Voice** in diversity and solidarity, protected from climate change, environmental degradation, health threats and social insecurities. We got what we wanted – 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) with 168 targets; a lot more than the MDGs

We noted our modest gains and knew intrinsically that we can and must do better over the next decade. We noted with some dismay, that traditional financial flows from Official Development Assistance (ODA) were declining and this combined with increasing donor hesitancy would be a real threat to our very modest progress in the global south. I joined colleagues led by Anders Nordstrom, Sweden's global health ambassador, to identify a development continuum and graduation from Global Fund support. I also joined and others with Seth Berkley in Gavi as the agency crafted transition plans on immunization, and re-imagined how our health systems could be accountable, secure and sustainable from domestic resources and financing.

The UHC movement got underway. For many of us this looked more like insurance than robust needs based pro-poor financing. I watched with some concern as our non-state actor colleagues in the global north questioned the benefit of sustained ODA flows. Rightly so! We joined them in the call for expansion of domestic financing but without clarity on how!! We also gave rather limited considerations to the significant diversity in health systems and economic capacities across Africa! I was really concerned and had many heated discussions with friends and colleagues – Simon Wright of Save the Children and Bruno Rivalan, who was then at the Action for Global Health (AfGH) and now with the World Bank. Public budgets in Africa will not inflate fast enough to replace ODA. UHC must be prevented from being insurance driven in its approach to finance. Our donor governments must not be let off their own financing commitments. Resource flows though publicly-led must align local to global. Our children, girls and women will be at a significant disadvantage, and we shall lose our very modest gains. The Global Financing Facility (GFF) was established! A great opportunity going forward but maybe not enough. The GFF also had hopes on some form of domestic resources. Non-state actors in the global south needed to think out of the box, do something differently and very urgently!

The Conference of Financing for Development called for blended financing, and I experienced my light bulb moment. Alternative financing models must be at the core of our efforts in Africa. The continent was experiencing modest growth. Private sector capacity and emerging market investments were all directed at our continent. It was producing multi-billionaires in all currencies. Philanthropy was expanding with wealth, accompanied by foundations led by our own for our own – Danjuma, Dangote, Mo Ibrahim and so many others, We can tap into this local growth and be a part of the evolving shift from aid to trade through sustainable innovations in financing.

Our journey to Tariro began at a very modest launch of I Will Give Africa in 2015. We sought to impact on children, girls and women. Much more, we sought to build stronger, more accountable, sustainable yet effective domestic institutions. We sought to expand domestic financing in a bold audacious effort to ‘transform Africa’s begging bowls to cooking pots’.

Our journey of innovation and transformative change began. Tariro was birthed from this effort. I welcome you to **‘TARIRO... that our children, girls and women will survive!’**



Lola Dare

President, Chestrad Global

Side Event at the virtual 75th United Nations General Assembly

24th September 2020