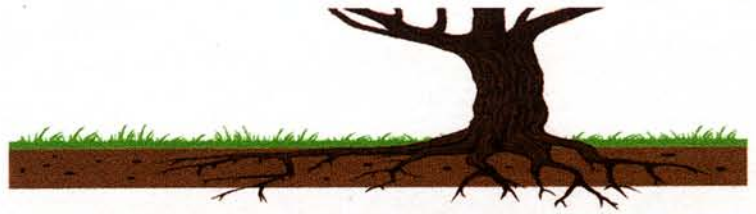


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NEWSLETTER OF: **SERVICE*EDUCATION*ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*SCIENCE (S.E.E.D.S.), INC.**
VOLUME 7 NUMBER 1

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“COMMUNITY IS LOCAL AND GLOBAL”

SERVICE • EDUCATION • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • SCIENCE

Sowing S.E.E.D.S.



Who We Are and Why We Demand Reparations

We are Pan-Africanists, struggling for the survival and self determination of our people. We demand reparations for a half-millennium of genocide and deliberate 'underdevelopment'. Our people have fought enslavement, colonialism and neo-colonialism on both sides of the Atlantic. Through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, Africans literally became capital—the only human capital. African Enslavement was the rapacious economic engine that helped create much of the wealth—the fortunes, estates & palaces, industries and cities—of Europe and the US. This 400-year atrocity has been the worst crime against humanity, ever.

Today, the virulent legacies of African enslavement and colonialism—racism, super-exploitative global capitalism, and cultural imperialism—are proving to be even more 'efficient' destroyers of humanity.

We are activists in the global anti-imperialist, anti-racist grassroots movement for human rights, economic justice and sustainable development. Our planet's resources must be nurtured and equitably used. If we are all to survive and flourish, we must have fundamental, global change.

At this time:

- 20% of the human population guzzles 86% of the world's resources, leaving a miniscule 14% of the available resources for 80% of the population.
- Elites of eight nations control the allocation of resources and distribution of wealth for virtually the entire world.
- This domination is exercised largely through a powerful, exploitative complex of global corporations and banks as well as bureaucracies like the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank (WB) & the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

For this to end, average people must take responsibility for their own empowerment and make the necessary changes. We must form strategic alliances and partnerships locally, nationally and globally.

S.E.E.D.S. addresses key local and global issues and organizes empowering people-to-people linkages through practical education, economic, social and political projects. Take responsibility! Make a real difference in our people's daily lives, while working to transform our "tomorrows". Build the grassroots movement and strengthen our Community—locally and globally. Work with S.E.E.D.S.!

S.E.E.D.S., Inc. *P.O. Box 20098 New York, NY 10023-1477 *Tel: (212) 362-6021 *Fax: (212) 721-1274 *E-Mail Address: Jaydub16@aol.com
ROOTS Staff: Akinlabi (E. Anthony) Mackall, Editor • Roxanne Hughes Wheatland, Jacqueline Wright, Ed. Comm. • Abena Mackall, Photographer

Critical Thinking

EXPLOITATION AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY...

The *global capitalist economy* is a profoundly inequitable and exploitative, worldwide economic system. For nearly a quarter century the global economy has been used to effectively re-colonize the natural resources, financial resources and labor resources of almost all of the nations of the *Global South* (Africa, Asia & Oceania, South America, Central America and the Caribbean). The global economy is controlled by the G-8 nations (US, Japan, Germany, England, France, Canada, Italy and, newly installed, Russia) in concert with their other *Global North* partners (in Europe and Australia). The G-8 indirectly manages its global economic control through pseudo-democratic "international" and "world" organizations known as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). In turn, these institutions relentlessly 'do the bidding', globally, of powerful transnational corporations (TNCs)— all controlled by *Global North* elites. TNCs are also the primary engine of the exploitation of labor and the suppression of worker rights throughout the Global North as well as the Global South. Communities of color within Global North nations are overwhelmingly the most exploited and discriminated against; creating the phenomena of "*the South in the North*".

CURRENCY COLLAPSE = SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVASTATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Over the last decade, the national currencies of most *Global South* countries have collapsed in relationship to the super robust currencies of the *Global North*. Internationally, extreme currency devaluation has left the countries of the *South* with no purchasing "bang for their bucks". They are often literally unable to trade *their currencies* on the international exchanges.

Domestically, currency collapse in *South* countries usually means drastically diminished financial resources and reserves in already-depleted treasuries. Today, the dictates of the World Bank's *structural adjustment*¹ loan agreements, almost uniformly mandate that these nations first make crushing foreign debt payments before tackling daunting domestic challenges (such as child welfare, healthcare, sustainable development, housing and education). This has led to devastation throughout the *Global South*.

Such devastation is best understood through the lives of the people. Examine the conditions of their day-to-day existence, find out about their prospects, and learn something of the quality of their lives. ... Across the Global South, there are millions of infants and children who have been sentenced to tragically shortened lives. There are tens of millions of young women and men whose chances of attaining substantive educational and economic opportunity are virtually nil. (In fact, their dreams for the future often revolve around the very low probability of "someday winning the *visa lottery* and going to live in the 'States'".) And of course, there are also tens of millions of elderly people who, after lifetimes of working harder than any others on the planet, are guaranteed nothing but to die in poverty. They are living proof that people cannot, individually, '*out work*' the grim effects of wrongheaded international policies

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or the inherent exploitation of corporate globalization.

DEBT CANCELLATION: AN IMPORTANT 'FIRST STEP' FOR CHANGE

There is much for us to do. Among the very first things, is to effect the **immediate cancellation of the Global South's debilitating foreign debt**. Much of this debt has been dubiously incurred, and the funds siphoned off by corrupt national elites. Even more of the original loans were poorly conceptualized when their public benefits are compared to their high socio-economic costs. Proponents claim that adherence to the World Bank's debt payment policies, and compliance with the IMF's structural adjustment program constructively help to order national priorities and unleash a nation's productive forces. Instead, the preponderance of evidence is that such *adherence and compliance* simply render most South countries more indebted and economically dependent; and even less empowered to resolve overwhelming health, education and resource problems than they originally were.

Prospects for sustainable global development become even bleaker when these policies are overlaid with the World Trade Organization's policies. For example, one outrageous WTO premise is that (the super powerful) TNCs should be mandated "a level playing field" of unfettered access into the (highly vulnerable) economies of the South countries. If allowed, this would wipe out most indigenously owned enterprise and consolidate a new, ruthlessly efficient economic colonialism within most of these former colonies. Also centuries of history and a flood of contemporary evidence underscore the deplorable records of colonizers and TNCs in: (a) suppressing the incomes and labor rights & conditions of the indigenous populations; and (b) destroying local environments and profoundly disrupting the local-global ecological balance.

THE WAY FORWARD: AVERAGE PEOPLE, ORGANIZED IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Over the long term, the goal is comprehensive, fundamental change on a host of social, environmental, political and economic matters that effect the planet. Toward that end, average people, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities must form strategic partnerships to address critical issues that demand our mutual attention. The aim is to work directly with one another, locally and across boundaries. In civil society's struggles to save our environment, and for human rights, economic justice and sustainable development, these collaborations can be genuinely empowering. They can improve day-to-day conditions, while being vehicles by which next-door neighbors *and* people who actually live 'worlds apart', work together; often finding common ground and an understanding that *community* is "both local and global".

What may be most significant, is that each of the collaborations provides further tangible evidence that organized, voluntary service by average people can make a critical difference. A proliferation of these *strategic partnerships* strengthens our fight against the status quo by effectively conveying progressive ideas and connecting millions of people in thousands of communities and struggles. In time, the sheer numbers of these linkages will be instrumental in transforming attitudes, values and policies; even how people and nations interact and 'do business'. Ultimately, this will translate into a fundamental break with today's outmoded, profoundly exploitative global economic model; and a decisive 'shift' toward socio-economic paradigms that are liberating as well as more equitable.

By The Numbers: *Currency Devaluation in Three African Nations* (©2000)
(Nov. 1994 - Nov 2000)

SELECTED CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES:
VALUES BASED ON TYPICAL CASH EXCHANGE RATE¹ FOR ONE US DOLLAR (\$1.00)

COMPARISON DATES	CEDI (GHANA)	ZIMBABWE DOLLAR	RAND (SOUTH AFRICA)
11/23/94	1,071.00	8.66	3.55
11/23/95	1,405.00	9.25	3.63
11/23/96	1,809.60	10.74	4.30
11/23/97	2,345.00	13.90	4.60
11/23/98	2,447.60	39.00	5.54
11/23/99	3,605.70	39.73	6.11
11/23/00	7,160.00	57.41	8.10
6-yr. value loss	(569%)	(563%)	(128%)

¹NOTE: "Typical Cash Rate" equals Interbank Rate plus 4%.

SOURCES: S.E.E.D.S., Inc.

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By The Numbers Update:
Currency Devaluation in Three African Nations 2001

As would be expected, the domestic currencies of Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa have continued to lose value to the US dollar. Through November 4, 2001, the global capitalist system had shrunk the currencies of these respective countries even further to (a) 7,876 Ghanaian cedis (b) 59.59 Zimbabwe dollars and (c) 9.91 South African Rands for each US dollar.

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