

Drivers of Change Award

Making a real difference

Awards recognise policy work that makes a real difference to the material conditions of people living in poverty, writes **Petronilla Ndebele**

In Southern Africa more than 100-million people live in absolute poverty and eradicating it remains the greatest challenge. With only seven years remaining to meet the millennium development goal of halving extreme poverty and hunger, the region continues to face many developmental challenges. It is the epicentre of HIV/Aids, coupled with food insecurity and extreme inequality. The current power outages and recent floods further undermine the developmental gains achieved in the past years.

Urgent innovative initiatives are required to end poverty. It is possible to secure a region free of poverty if there is improved institutional capacity as well as participatory and accountable systems of governance. Appropriate public policies must be put in place to overcome chronic livelihood insecurity in the context of the HIV/Aids pandemic. Better

international financial and trading systems that work for the poor are urgently needed.

There is a need to coordinate efforts in anti-poverty work. Collective action among all key role players in society in designing and implementing effective anti-poverty strategies is not a choice. Governments must collaborate and cooperate with diverse actors in society when developing policies. Business must adopt models that create wealth and jobs. Civil society must influence the formulation of pro-poor policies and their implementation and find innovative ways to place the poor people at the centre of policy development processes.

It is that time of the year to call for nominations of initiatives, strategies and approaches that contribute to eradicating poverty through the Drivers of Change awards.

Organised as part of the *Mail & Guardian* Investing in the Future



Kliptown residents live in appalling circumstances with no electricity and high rates of unemployment and teenage pregnancy. Photo: Oupa Nkosi

Awards, nominations for the Drivers of Change awards are open until July 4 and are accepted in English, French and Portuguese. The prestigious awards highlight innovative processes that impact on poverty eradication and recognise policy work that makes a real difference to the material conditions of people living in poverty.

Government

Eligible entries include those from ministries, government departments, parliaments or parliamentary forums, parastatals and intergovernmental organisations. Programmes or initiatives that open new possibilities and develop new models for policy engagement in the national and regional policy spheres will no doubt impress the judges. Governments that appreciate consultation in policy development processes in a consistent and inclusive manner stand a good chance of being recognised as a driver of change.

Business

This category includes big corporates, small to medium enterprises, informal traders or corporate foundations. The panel of judges will be looking for exceptional entries that promote sustainable development programmes which bring prosperity to the people. The judges will scrutinise how companies manage the costs and benefits of business activity to both internal and external stakeholders.

Civil society

Civil society organisations that instil a greater poverty focus in their work and influence pro-poor policies may enter the awards. The panel of judges will single out organisations that are credible and genuinely represent the interests of the poor in policy processes. Entries can come from faith-based organisations, the media, popular movements, trade union

organisations, community-based organisations, research institutes, independent foundations and trusts, grant-makers and NGOs, among others.

Individuals

Individuals from any sector who have played a significant role in developing new, innovative and inclusive approaches to anti-poverty work, which has resulted in the improvement of the lives of people in the communities they serve, will be a cut above the rest. Champions of inserting voices of the poor in policy development are drivers of change.

Where from?

Since 2006 eight drivers of change from Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe have been recognised for making a lasting difference in the lives of people living in poverty. These drivers of change have been honoured for various achievements, including: ensuring the voices of the poor informed research and policies; inclusive policy engagement and creative partnership between government and civil society; using innovative business models to build young entrepreneurs; close collaboration of communities, NGOs and the government in conserving natural resources; and driving policies in gender and development.

Nominate outstanding individuals and organisations and you will be promoting innovative processes and approaches that could influence the development of better public policies.

Petronilla Ndebele is the communications and partnerships manager for the Southern Africa Trust

Have you done something great? Shout about it!

Call for nominations of drivers of change to overcome poverty in southern Africa.

The Drivers of Change award honours organisations and individuals who are making a difference in the lives of the poor. We invite you to nominate yourself, your organisation, or any other individuals, organisations, businesses, and government agencies in any southern African country who have demonstrated innovation in the development and implementation of effective public policies and strategies to end poverty in the region.

Nominate innovators and you will raise up a deserving individual, organisation, government agency, or business as a leader in innovation and best practice to end poverty. This includes you!

Entries close on Friday 4 July, 2008. The winners will be announced in October 2008 at a gala event in Johannesburg.

Please contact Sudley Adams on +27 11 250 7300 or +27 82 900 0776 or go to www.southernafricatrust.org for more details and entry forms.



DRIVERS OF CHANGE



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