

COORDINATOR OF BLACK WOMEN CHAPTER ESMERALDAS  
CONAMUNE  
ESMERALDAS ECUADOR

## STATUS OF WOMEN IN AFRO-ECUADORIAN IN THE WORKFORCE

In memory of "all those afro-women who worked hard; who always took care of their families and protected them; who fought against slavery. They were all these women who transmitted us the legacy of hard work.

The International Year of African descents seeks to strengthen national actions and regional and international cooperation for the benefit of African Descendents.

The African Descendents of Ecuador we are among the most affected communities by racism and denial of basic rights like equality to enjoy health services and education. The International Year of African Descents seeks to strengthen national measures and national cooperation and regional and international cooperation for the benefit of African Descents

The CONAMUNECE is located in Esmeraldas Ecuador, we think, that it is time to give Afro-Ecuadorian women, the recognition we deserve, since throughout history their contribution to social and human development of the people of Ecuador has been from great relevance, in different stages, of cultures, history, work, education, geographical areas etc. To speak about our employment situation, we must focus on the social gaps of Afro-Ecuadorians, that show us the serious INDICATORS OF EDUCATION that we presented, at the national level, a factor that strongly affects the development opportunities in the labor market in the income and our self-esteem.

The concern from us as Afro Ecuadorian women, is the right to education, because although the illiteracy rate in the last three years has dropped significantly at the national average level, it is not the same in terms of years of schooling and access to higher education, the point of university professionals is the lowest in the Afro-Ecuadorian human development. The rate of access to college is low, the levels are very low on graduate level compared to posgrados white mestizo. The national average, affects negatively on the right to work.

The biggest disparity that we present is between ethnicity and education where low levels of schooling, secondary and higher is observed. The net attendance rate in secondary schools by Afro Ecuadorians barely reaches 38.8%, while this rate in the country is almost 55.3% and on whites 58%. Just 8 out of 100 Afro Ecuadorians attend to college, while in the mestizos are 20 per 100 and on national level 18 per 100, the 58%.

The gap, of the non-attendance of Afro-Ecuadorians is 61%. From here we request that the policy of equal access to higher education should be more aggressive. Affirmative action stated at the Constitution in Article 11, could be a solution.

A second serious problem affecting the Human Rights of Afro-Ecuadorian People is the unemployment. The gap is 149%, that is to say that Afro-Ecuadorian unemployment is 49 times larger than the mestizo unemployment.

Much of the Ecuadorian Afro population (women) work in domestic service, while men work as day laborers. These are jobs that are characterized by taking longer statutory working hours, with low-wage income (USD \$ 80-150 per month) although the national government, its statistics on the national average income reflect women receiving \$ 273 in general, which our entire population has not yet received ..

The Afro-Ecuadorians are mostly involved in the subsistence economy. Given the PERSISTENT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.

In formal employment, most of the Afro Ecuadorian EAP (economically active population) belongs to the peasant and worker sector that take their cheap labor and low-skilled. The Afro-Ecuadorian women and young people are the sector that require more attention in the field of education.

The precarious social indicators presented among we the Afro Ecuadorians demonstrate a critical factor in the issue of unemployment and subemployment broken down by, sex, the Afro-Ecuadorian women take the worst part, this unemployment rate reaches the insolite figure of 16.53%, we find ourselves against a severe panorama of unemployment and the worst conditions. While the National Government implements Public Policy, to attack employment discrimination to the Afro Ecuadorians with the issue of PLAN AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATION and the Process of Decree 60, we have noted with great concern that racism does not yield back, but continues mutating and continues to exclude Afro-Ecuadorian women and men from a decent employment.

We know that this is a country that is recognized by 68% as racist.

And that this Racism is structural and that discrimination persists as an obstacle to equal opportunities.

Although labor market conditions, the racial discrimination persist and shows different realities: we the organized Black Afro Ecuadorian Women, with ingenuity, work for CONAMUNE and CONAMUNECE, that are mobilizing and organizing poor black women in Esmeraldas and the country, in the scope of market productivity, promoting their social and economic independence through the creation of small micro enterprises. Through leadership development between the bases, collective action and improving their situation at all levels, the organization has been working for each worker women without resources would have the right to intervene in public policies that creates our country. To that end, the CONAMUNECE in Esmeraldas creates the BANQUITO PROGRESIVO (daily savings), which has provided

them tiny financial support, of (40 and 50 dollars) support for black women in various economic enterprises as examples: Sales of fast food, crafts, food by orders, infant clothing, bakery, chicken farming, fishing, hairdressing, etc.

This, we have promoted in the communities so that they raise their self-esteem, their entrepreneurial capacity, for they to reach the highest possible degree of economic independence. Groups within each neighborhood, communities, campuses, cantones, are held with great strength. However, the most difficult task is to promote our struggle to raise capital. Since being women, black and poor we have not been the subject for credit in state banks in our country.

The Banquito Progresivo consists of small savings, weekly and monthly, then they lend capital mutually. In 2006 the women set ourselves to achieve several goals like get machinery to work and serve the community. We presented the project through Coopy International-European Union and the CONAMUNE. With the Banquito Progresivo we have achieved capitalizing several women, on fast food sale, now black women continue to work and gradually improving our economic situation.

We PROPOSE: that the international agencies, do NOT distrust our processes, and that more than working with local governments, observed that the organized women and the organization we are the ones that live together with the realities of each sector

That they generate soft capital funds for us.

That they provide us with cutting edge technology specifically for the generation of productive entrepreneurship for afro women.

- \* That they generate for us information programs, training and job training  
By States aimed to women.

- \* To enable us to obtain micro, small and medium enterprises as an engine of growth and employment.

- \* That they assure us with labor insertion and equality on social conditions.

- \* That the Afro Descendants will be subjects to get credit.

Thank you so much

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CONAMUNECE

Esmeraldas Ecuador

Datos; CODAE And CONAMUNECE

