



## Wahu Kaara



Wahu Kaara is a globally renowned Kenyan educator, activist and campaigner for social justice. A prolific writer, poet and speaker, Wahu has devoted her time and energy to civic engagement and incisive analysis of the global political and economic architecture, with a special focus on the impact of globalization on the countries of the South, especially Africa. She has campaigned and written extensively on debt, aid, privatization and human rights and has been a leader in the Africa and Kenya Social Forum councils that organized the inaugural World Social Forum in Africa in Nairobi in January 2007.

Wahu was part of the 1,000 women Nobel Peace Prize nominees for the year 2005. With Brazilian President Lula Ignacio d' Silva, she launched the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January 2005 - the single largest Global mobilization of citizens against poverty. Since 2005, Wahu has been a member of and advocate for Jubilee San Diego, raising awareness of the debt crisis of the most impoverished countries in the world.

Formerly Ecumenical Coordinator for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, Wahu now serves as the Executive Director of the Kenya Debt Relief Network (KENDREN), an organization she helped found in 1999 which has been instrumental in shaping and deepening the understanding and debate around economic policy, good governance and constitution-making at the local levels, with specific focus on how these impact women.

A gender trainer and community mobilizer, Wahu has been at the lead of integrating local communities into the decision making process. In addition to serving on the council of the Africa Social Forum and the Africa Women Economic Policy Network, she is currently involved in the creation of the Africa Mother's Foundation, a nascent continental body that will serve to document the richness of women's contribution in the development of Africa and allow their voices to be heard.

Wahu was born in 1952 at the height of the Kenyan independence struggle and was brought up in Eldoret in the Rift Valley. Injustices in Kenya during her childhood years left a mark on her and provoked her current quest for social justice. Though widowed at an early age, she is a committed Christian, the happy mother of four, and proud grandmother of three, though her first grand daughter, Mary Wahu Mwaura aged two, passed away in a tragic house fire in March 2007.

Determined to walk the talk of empowering women, not just as a support system but as part of the decision-making process and agents of social transformation, Wahu ran unsuccessfully for a parliamentary seat in the just concluded national elections of December 2007 and plans to run for President of Kenya in 2012.