

Regional Consultation on Financing SMEs and Women Economic Empowerment in the Extractive Sector  
and Structural Economic Transformation in Africa

21-22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017

Third World Network-Africa (TWN-Africa), in collaboration with Diakonia, is convening a West African regional seminar on finance, investment, Extractive sector, gender and equitable structural economic transformation in Africa. The consultation will discuss issues raised by the challenge of finance and investment especially the needs of domestic Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the extractive sector with focus on women. This will be informed by on-going research by TWN-Africa and allies who have been working in this area. This is due to the fact that liberalisation of finance in most African countries over the decades has not addressed the financing needs of SMEs. Rather financial globalization has driven a wedge between the real sectors of Africa's economies and financial sector making the linkages with economic transformation weak. This has profound implication for structurally transforming African economies with small and medium enterprises playing an active role.

The Regional seminar scheduled for the 21-22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 in Accra, Ghana, will bring together key representatives of campaigning Networks such as the Africa Initiative on Mines, Environment and Society (AIMES), The African Development Bank-Civil Society (AfDB-CSO) Forum, Africa Trade Network (ATN), Tax Justice Network, those engaged in the work around illicit financial flows among others working on investment, finance and trade issues. Representatives of key socio-economic constituencies will also attend.