



## Primer #7

# Aid Effectiveness and Women's Rights Series

Gender equality and Aid Effectiveness: **regional perspectives** in the preparation process towards Accra



**REPEM**  
Con el apoyo consultivo ante ECOSOC Naciones Unidas

RED DE EDUCACIÓN POPULAR  
ENTRE MUJERES DE  
AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE



NETWORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN GHANA (NETRIGHT)

## INTRODUCTION: Understanding the Aid Effectiveness Agenda from a Civil Society and Women's Rights Perspective

In 2005 civil society organizations (CSOs) bore witness to the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, an agreement to reform aid delivery and management in order to strengthen its impact and effectiveness. The Paris Declaration was adopted in March 2005 at the 2nd High-Level Forum (HLF-2) organized by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Twenty-five donor countries, eighty developing countries, and twenty-five multilateral institutions are currently adhering to the Declaration<sup>1</sup>.

In 2007, 103 billion USD flowed in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from bilateral and multilateral funding agencies to developing countries.<sup>2</sup> During fifty years of aid allocation, the beneficiaries of these public monies have rarely been women who are receiving a very tiny proportion of overall ODA.<sup>3</sup> Aid as a structuring device, process, and resource has had debatable effectiveness in reducing poverty and inequality, promoting development, and supporting women's rights.

The Paris Declaration commits donor countries to a common set of principles and targets to achieve aid effectiveness, but CSOs are calling for a number of reforms towards a broader framework of development effectiveness based on several general concerns:<sup>4</sup>

- ✓ The new aid architecture needs to be more comprehensive of all development stakeholders, particularly CSOs, including women's organizations.
- ✓ There is currently too much focus on aid management. The emphasis of the Paris Declaration is centred on the "plumbing" or mechanisms of the aid delivery system; the focus should be on reducing poverty and inequality as expressed in the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADG) including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Evaluating aid's effectiveness needs to be integrally linked to the support of human rights, gender equality, decent work, and environmental sustainability.<sup>5</sup>
- ✓ More clarity on the implementation of the Paris Declaration principles is needed. An in-depth discussion of the meaning and impacts of Declaration principles needs to take place. Inputs from CSOs, particularly those related to the principles of ownership, alignment, managing for development results, and mutual accountability, need to be addressed.
- ✓ The monitoring system of the Paris Declaration is a way to impose policy conditionalities. This monitoring system is limited to pre-existent World Bank indicators and reflects a narrow perspective of the commitments to improve aid quality. Monitoring of the Paris Declaration commitments must be fully transparent and inclusive of women's rights organisations and CSOs, and should not be an instrument to impose policy conditionalities that undermine the ownership principle and the right to development.

1 OECD DCD-DAC: [http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_36074966\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_36074966_1_1_1_1,00.html)

2 OECD DCD-DAC: [http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33721\\_40381960\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3343,en_2649_33721_40381960_1_1_1_1,00.html)

3 Although ODA was most frequently mentioned by a total of 35% of AWID "Where is the Money for Women's Rights" Survey respondents, it is clear that funds for gender equality represent a very tiny proportion of overall ODA. See page 48 of AWID's 2007 Second Fundher Report, Financial Sustainability for Women's Movement's Worldwide available for download at [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)

4 Alemany et al., "Implementing the Paris Declaration: Implications for the Promotion of Women's Rights and Gender Equality," January 2008.

5 CSO Final Statement: Civil society statement in Accra warns urgency for action on aid, September 1, 2008, available at <http://www.betteraid.org/>

In September 2008, donor and developing countries met for the 3rd High Level Forum (HLF-3) in Accra, Ghana to assess progress in the implementation of the Paris Declaration and to agree on a new “Agenda for Action”. While women’s rights and women’s empowerment organisations were not present at the HLF-2 in Paris in 2005, they attended in substantial numbers in Accra. Women’s groups were present in Accra through the Accra Women’s Forum (August, 30th), the Civil Society Parallel Forum (August 31st – September 1st) and as part of the official CSO delegations to the HLF-3. During the HLF-3 preparatory process, several regional meetings took place at the official and informal levels and women’s groups were present at both. Additionally, women’s groups self-organized women’s consultations to ensure that women’s voices and proposals were clear, articulated and on time for the preparation process.

#### **ABOUT THIS PRIMER:**

Primer 7 provides an overview of both the official OECD regional meetings and the women’s consultations, with specific focus on the key regional messages that emerged on aid effectiveness, the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). The composition of the meetings and the extent to which gender equality and women’s empowerment were taken into account is highlighted, as well.

## **1. BACKGROUND: PREPARATORY MEETINGS IN THE LEAD UP TO ACCRA**

In the lead up to the Third High Level Forum (HLF-3), several preparatory processes provided important feedback on the status of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and on the broader aid effectiveness agenda.

The OECD Advisory Group on Civil Society (AG) comprised of 3 developing countries’ governments, 3 donor country governments, 3 Southern CSOs, and 3 Northern CSOs, led a broad consultation process. Several national consultations were organized around the world, and six regional consultations were organized between October and early November 2007 that involved roughly 500 participants from at least 80 countries (including about 60 developing countries).<sup>6</sup> The international multi-stakeholder forum on civil society and aid effectiveness held in Ottawa on February 3-6, 2008<sup>7</sup>, with more than 250 participants discussed the main recommendations related to the Accra preparation process and the challenges of the Paris Declaration implementation.

#### **List of Advisory Group Regional Consultations:**

1. East, North and Central Asia and the Pacific: Hanoi, Viet Name on October 9-12, 2007.
2. South and West Asia: Kathmandu, Nepal on October 29-November 1, 2007.
3. Eastern and Southern Africa: Lusaka, Zambia on October 16-19, 2007.
4. West and Central Africa and the Maghreb: Cotonou, Benin on October 22-25, 2007.
5. Latin America and the Caribbean: Managua, Nicaragua on October 29-31, 2007.
6. Northern CSO Consultation: Brussels, Belgium on October 15-16, 2007.

6 The Advisory Group on Civil Society: “Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness: A Synthesis of Advisory Group Regional Consultations and Related Processes.” Appendix One: Advisory Group Consultations and Related Processes, Jan. 2008: p. 25.

7 OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. “ACCRA HLF: UPDATED OVERVIEW AND ROADMAP.” 2-3 April 2008. Document Number DCD/DAC/EFF(2008)8: p.5.

...consultations aimed at gathering feedback on the implementation process of the Paris Declaration from a gender equality perspective...

### Official Regional Meetings:

Between April and June 2008, official regional meetings were organized by the OECD and the regional development banks, to promote regional perspectives, and developing countries involvement into the HLF-3, the preparation of the HLF-3 Roundtables and the drafting of the AAA.

#### Official Regional Meetings:

1. Pacific Island countries: Nadi, Fiji on April 4-7, 2008.
2. East and South Asian countries: Bangkok, Thailand on April 21-22, 2008.
3. South Asian countries: Bangkok, Thailand on May 5-6, 2008.
4. Central and West Asian countries: Bangkok, Thailand on May 8-9, 2008.
5. African countries: Kigali, Rwanda on April 29-30, 2008.
6. Latin American and Caribbean countries: Santa Marta, Colombia on June 5-6, 2008.
7. Middle Eastern countries: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on June 24-25, 2008.

### Parallel Women's Consultations:

Women's rights and women's empowerment organizations organized several women's consultations. These consultations aimed at gathering feedback on the implementation process of the Paris Declaration from a gender equality perspective, and where the result of women's organisations initiative and resource's mobilisation.

#### Women's Consultations on Aid Effectiveness:

1. International Women's Consultation: Ottawa, Canada, January 31-February 1, 2008.
2. European Women's Consultation: Brussels, Belgium, May 7, 2008.
3. African Women's Consultation: Nairobi, Kenya, May 26-27, 2008.
4. West African Women's Consultative Meeting: Lomé, Togo, June 25-27, 2008.
5. Latin American Women's Consultation: Bogotá, Colombia, June 3, 2008.
6. Accra International Women's Forum: Accra, Ghana, August 30, 2008

## 2. OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETINGS

The official regional meetings provided the opportunity to take stock of the progress made toward fulfilling the commitments under the Paris Declaration to discuss and set out specific messages from each region to be used in preparing for the HLF-3 and in drafting the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). Debate topics at the meetings mirrored the topics that occurred at the Roundtables during the HLF-3.<sup>8</sup>

A broad set of participants was present at the official meetings, including representatives of developing countries, non-traditional donors, other providers of development aid and civil society.<sup>9</sup> However, the criteria for CSOs participation diverged from region to region, and the inclusiveness regarding women's rights and women's empowerment organisations also varied from region to region.

<sup>8</sup> Discussion on the content of the Roundtables can be found in "HLF-3 Roundtables: An Introduction to the Nine Roundtables", available at <http://www.accrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21761556~menuPK:4910954~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:4700791,00.html>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2008/Third-Level-Forum-Aid-Effectiveness/default.asp>

**Roundtables (RT) during the HLF-3:**

RT 1: Country Ownership  
 RT 2: Alignment  
 RT 3: Harmonisation  
 RT 4: Managing for Development Results  
 RT 5: Making Mutual Accountability Real  
 RT 6: Role of Civil Society in advancing Aid Effectiveness  
 RT 7: Aid Effectiveness in situations of fragility and conflict  
 RT 8: Enhancing results by applying the Paris Declaration at sector level  
 RT 9: The changing aid architecture

While a diverse set of views emanated from the official discussions, several key messages arose across regions:

- Discussion emphasized the interdependence of the Paris Declaration's principles and the implications of this interdependence for achieving the goals set out in the Declaration.
- Mutual accountability needs to be mutual.
- There is no easy answer on how to integrate gender equality, human rights and environmental sustainability (the so-called cross-cutting issues) but different alternatives need to be explored to achieve development results.
- Tied aid is, effectively, bad aid.
- Greater predictability in aid flows is needed.
- In order to strengthen capacity and increase ownership, the use of country systems is critical.
- Capacity development within developing countries, particularly institutional capacity development, is key.

**a) PACIFIC ISLAND OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETING**

Pacific Island countries<sup>10</sup> participated in a regional meeting in Nadi, Fiji on April 4-7, 2008 to consider progress in the implementation of the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles<sup>11</sup> and prepare for the Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands and Tonga have signed the Paris Declaration. While the remaining Pacific Island countries have not formally endorsed the Paris Declaration, capacity building efforts on public financial management by donor partners have addressed the importance of improving aid effectiveness in order to produce better development results. The workshop was co-sponsored by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the UNDP Pacific Centre, the Asian Development Bank and several other participants.<sup>12</sup>

**CSOs in the Pacific Islands official meeting:**

CSOs were invited to this meeting, but women's rights organizations were not invited<sup>13</sup>, and only gender advocates from UNIFEM were allowed to participate.

There is no easy answer on how to integrate gender equality... to achieve development results.

10 Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

11 The Pacific Principles provide a guide to more effective aid management practices for Pacific Island countries and allow Pacific Island countries to monitor their performance and that of donors in ensuring better development outcomes at the national level. The Pacific Principles have tailored the Paris Principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, mutual accountability and managing for results to best reflect the situation in Pacific Island countries.

12 See: <http://www.acctrahf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21729798-isCURL:Y~menuPK:64861647~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:4700791,00.html>

13 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, "Pacific Regional Workshop On Aid Effectiveness Outcome Document," Available at: <http://www.acctrahf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,Contentmdk:21729798-IsCurl:Y~MenuPK:64861647~Pagepk:64861884~Pipk:64860737~Thesitepk:4700791,00.html>, p.24.

The need to include grassroots communities and a language that people understand was touted as a means to improve country ownership.

### Key messages<sup>14</sup>

While a range of topics was discussed during the meeting, specific focus was given to managing for development results, mutual accountability and the role of aid information management systems.

It was consistently acknowledged that aid is an iterative process and that an improvement to policies, processes and systems needs to match local capacity to embrace change. The need to include grassroots communities and a language that people understand was touted as a means to improve country ownership, although the danger of over-consultation was also noted.

Effective aid information systems, capacity development mechanisms and multi-year planning and budget frameworks were reiterated as essential if developing countries governments are to assume effective ownership over the aid management processes.

Participants emphasized the strong need for donors to harmonize their technical assistance missions, analytical work and reporting. The use of onerous reporting systems, both at the regional and international level, was seen as a burden to the limited human resources and capacity of Pacific Island countries; its use was criticized.

Participants emphasized the need for Managing for Development Results to be focused on outcomes, supported by long-term commitment, and based on national priorities (not donor priorities) and called for greater investment in capacity building. It was stressed that Managing for Development Results must be built into country development plans and long-term expenditure frameworks and the connection with development impact must be made. Additionally, participants agreed that Pacific Island countries need to develop their monitoring, evaluation and statistical capability more fully in order to take ownership of monitoring and to support evidence based policy and planning.

Participants reiterated that the accountability of governments to their citizen requires effective and transparent communication, a capable civil society, and good information flows to and from the grassroots level, including through local government. Participants acknowledged that CSOs also perform key delivery functions, particularly in the education and health sectors, and are key recipients of aid. However, it was also noted that while CSOs have a key role to play in aid effectiveness, more coordination was needed.

Participants suggested that the AAA more strongly address capacity constraints and cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and the needs of marginalized groups. It was noted that the AAA does not sufficiently address issues of regional level support and regional aid effectiveness.

Participants also proposed a number of initiatives that could complement the AAA process and strengthen alignment and mutual accountability. These included complementing existing expenditure and financial assessments and greater attention to the monitoring of technical assistance programs, which are, at present, donor driven.

### Gender equality and women's rights

In the outcome document of the Pacific Regional Workshop there is a relatively strong understanding of the central role gender equality plays in aid and development effectiveness.<sup>15</sup> Participants emphasized the need to recognize and include gender equality in all 5 Paris Principles. Specifically, in regards to Ownership, participants

14 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, "Pacific Regional Workshop On Aid Effectiveness Outcome Document," Available at: <http://www.Accrahif.Net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,Contentmdk:21729798~Iscurt:Y~Menupk:64861647~Pagepk:64861884~Pipk:64860737~Thesitepk:4700791.00.html>

15 These points were drawn from the following document: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, "Pacific Regional Workshop On Aid Effectiveness Outcome Document," available at: <http://www.Accrahif.Net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,Contentmdk:21729798~Iscurt:Y~Menupk:64861647~Pagepk:64861884~Pipk:64860737~Thesitepk:4700791.00.html>

agreed that while ownership rests with government and country, there continues to be insufficient understanding that democracy is about both men and women. In relation to Managing for Development Results, the outcome document states that “civil society has a role in the process and countries prefer to develop this by building on customary leadership values and accountabilities, while keeping in mind the need for full inclusiveness around gender.” The need for more donor/partner engagement on gender and human rights was highlighted, as well as the promotion of good governance and the importance of understanding the causes, dynamics and drivers of conflict, including gender relations in conflicts.

## b) ASIAN OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETING

Three Preparatory Regional Meetings took place in Bangkok, Thailand for the Asian region. The Consultations brought together participants from twenty-five countries covering the three sub-regions of East & South-East Asia (on April 21-22, 2008), South Asia (May 5-6, 2008) and Central & West Asia (May 8-9, 2008). The Asian Development Bank (ADB), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission (EC), the Government of Japan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank sponsored the consultations.

### CSOs in the Asian Regional meeting

Space for three to four country level civil society representatives was made at each of the three preparatory meetings. These representatives were drawn from a pool of civil society representatives that were present at previous regional and global consultations on HLF-3.<sup>16</sup>

During the East and South East Asian Consultations, CSO delegations were present from Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. Advisory Group civil society representatives were also present as were two individuals from UNIFEM Indonesia. During the South Asian consultation, three CSOs were present: VOICE, Green Movement of Sri Lanka and PILER. Additionally, Action Aid was present as a Roundtable observer and an individual from the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence was present as a Rapporteur. From the overview document, it does not appear that any women's rights organizations were in attendance at the South Asian consultation. In the Central Asian consultation, two CSOs were in attendance, one of which was a women's organization, the Forum of Women's NGOs in Kyrgyzstan, who also participated at the HLF-3 in Accra.

## Key messages

It was noted that ownership requires country leadership, good governance, transparency and accountability by both donors and developing countries alike. Furthermore, all agreed that aid and the use of aid should be country driven. India's approach was highlighted for its strong ownership of externally-aided projects through the development of strong systems and institutions, the use of rational and transparent processes, and investment in capacity.

Stronger ownership through the localisation of the Paris Declaration via national declarations and/or action plans addressing key Paris Declaration targets has been witnessed in a number of countries, particularly within South-East Asia and Afghanistan. Participants mentioned that ownership could be reinforced if more governments set out clear aid policies detailing, for example, institutional roles in aid management, approval

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<sup>16</sup> Asian Development Bank, available at: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2008/Third-Level-Forum-Aid-Effectiveness/default.asp>

...democracy is about both men and women...

processes, aid modality preferences and principles to guide an effective division of labour amongst donors.

Participants repeatedly emphasized the need for stronger capacity development and noted that shortcomings in this area have proven to be a key constraint to the delivery of results. Additionally, the point was made that the aid effectiveness agenda has become too technocratic. Participants called for both donors and developing country governments to remain focused on promoting actual development outcomes. The need for a small number of clear and simple indicators of progress, defined at the project design stage, was mentioned.

It was stated that increased use of country systems by donors is the best route to improving such systems. To this end, donors should give reasons for not using country systems, indicate the specific improvements required and contribute to capacity development measures. Insufficient predictability of aid flows was flagged as a serious concern. Countries called for donors to provide indicative three-year commitments for a growing share of aid.

Participants wanted the AAA to be a politically appealing and ambitious document, rather than merely another document for technocrats. Participants also felt that the balance between developing and donor government commitments was uneven: recipient commitments significantly outnumbered donor country commitments.

Participants emphasized that the AAA should explicitly commit donors to reduce the overall number of conditions imposed and not just overlapping conditions.

### Gender equality and women's rights

Those participants leading the work on "cross-cutting" issues underscored the importance of including in-country consultations with those actors in charge of promoting aid effectiveness in the areas of gender equality, human rights, HIV/AIDS and the environment. Additionally, participants called for poverty, gender and the delivery of services to be more explicitly addressed.

## c) AFRICAN OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETING

The African Regional Preparatory Consultation Workshop took place in Kigali, Rwanda, on April 29 and 30, 2008. Organized by the African Development Bank and its co-sponsors (the UK Department for International Development, the OECD-DAC, UNDP, and the World Bank), over 180 representatives from 35 African countries, civil society, regional parliamentary networks, and donors participated.<sup>17</sup>

In order to improve aid effectiveness and development impact within Africa, the Consultation aimed at building consensus on key matters of critical interest to African countries, including country ownership, aid predictability, alignment and the involvement of various stakeholders.<sup>18</sup>

Like in the Latin American official meeting, donors were invited to the Consultation only as observers. In an informal report from the meeting it was argued that this approach allowed African participants to speak more freely and openly, however, the point was also made that such a structure may have inhibited substantive dialogue and furthered a one-sided perspective.

<sup>17</sup> Accra HLF-3 Website, available at: <http://www.accrahlif.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21770763~menuPK:5080678~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:4700791,00.html>

<sup>18</sup> "Preparing for the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Kigali Consultations Workshop – A Synthesis Note," available at: <http://www.accrahlif.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,menuPK:5080678~EcontentMDK:21770905~EpagePK:64861884~EpiPK:64860737~EtheSitePK:4700791,00.html>

### Women's rights organisations in the African meeting

Explicit efforts were made to bring in parliamentarians, women's rights representatives and CSOs.<sup>19</sup> Six slots were allotted for gender advocates and women's rights organizations.

#### Key messages<sup>20</sup>

Participants reiterated that African countries are eager to move from partnership arrangements to full ownership of their development processes. Many of the issues raised at the Consultation related to this overarching theme: misalignment of aid across sectors, use of country systems, conditionality, donor division of labour, tied aid, and capacity building.

The point was made that country ownership of development programs must encompass a broad range of stakeholders, including government, parliament, civil society, decentralized authorities, and donors. The distinctive role of parliament, namely to provide oversight of national budgets and act as guardians of national interest, was stressed.

Participants noted that for most aid dependent countries, the relationship between themselves and donors is better characterized as a partnership with varying degrees of ownership. Participants, therefore, called for a better balance between genuine ownership and partnership. Additionally, frequent calls were made to include CSOs and local government in a country's capacity development efforts.

Enhancing the capacity of countries to operationalise their development strategies through national planning and budgets was marked as a key challenge. Participants called on donors to better coordinate technical assistance programs to address long-term capacity development issues at the institutional and staffing level.

Participants emphasized that when harmonization does not lead toward greater use of country systems (i.e. donors continue to use parallel systems), country systems weaken and the principle of ownership is undermined. To improve alignment, participants recommended that clear aid management structures be developed. Participants also stressed that alignment efforts are severely hindered by tied aid.

Institutional strengthening—which includes multiyear planning, results-based budgeting, evaluation function, statistical capacity, public accounting, control mechanisms, and the capacity development of CSOs—must be considered a critical component of aid effectiveness. Participants highlighted the power imbalance between donors and developing countries: developing country governments have little influence over donor policies and decisions and, as the Paris Declaration is currently formulated, there are few mechanisms for monitoring donor performance or enforcing donor compliance. Participants called upon donors to recommit to strengthening local monitoring and evaluation capacities, including increasing the use of local resources.

Focus was placed on the need to have a better understanding of the causes of conflict and fragility and, in particular, more aptly recognize when countries are sliding into conflict or experiencing deteriorating governance. Participants emphasized that the gap between humanitarian and development activities must be bridged: coordination should ensure that humanitarian, demilitarization, demobilization and development activities are integrated in recovery plans.

...developing country governments have little influence over donor policies and decisions...

<sup>19</sup> Africa Region Accra HLF Preparatory Consultation Workshop, Concept Note, April 28-30, 2008, Kigali, Rwanda

<sup>20</sup> These key messages are taken from "Preparing for the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Kigali Consultations Workshop – A Synthesis Note," available at: <http://www.accrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,menuPK:5080678%7EcontentMDK:21770905%7EpagePK:64861884%7EepiPK:64860737%7EtheSitePK:4700791,00.html>

## South-South cooperation was recognized as an important tool both for increasing knowledge sharing and improving capacity development

Participants felt that the AAA should include a call for donors to align to government policies and programs and for donor coordination to take place within a common framework.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, general budget support was touted as a key mode of financing, due primarily to its ability to exert a stronger influence over the policy environment, its superior ownership properties and its greater aggregate coherence.

An important suggestion that emerged from the parliamentarians was the need for parliament to be given a separate status from CSOs and citizens in the AAA. In an informal report from the meeting it was noted that while in most countries parliament is the final authority in international treaties, in regards to aid, parliament tended to be marginalized.<sup>22</sup> The centrality of Parliament in building democracy and as an integral part of the state has been also raised by CSOs and women's organisations in other venues as a key element to strengthen ownership and local governance.

### Gender equality and women's rights

Women's organizations were successful in emphasizing the importance of using the term gender equality rather than gender. Gender equality reflects the specific power dynamics and inequality present in a society and those at the heart of underdevelopment; gender does not.<sup>23</sup> Cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights issues, need to receive greater attention in sector analysis, policy dialogue and sector strategies.

In the context of Managing for Development Results and mutual accountability, it was stated that assessment of country capacity must include the capacity to address such specific issues as gender equality, human rights and role of Parliament. More attention to and efforts in strengthening statistical capacity are needed. Specifically, it was recommended that indicators developed by UNIFEM be considered for inclusion in performance assessment frameworks.

Within the context of Aid Effectiveness in Fragile Situations, the point was made that joint frameworks for coordination and for monitoring and evaluation should be developed, and gender and human rights must be mainstreamed in these frameworks. Furthermore, it was noted that the needs of women and children, key victims of conflict, should be taken into account in peace efforts.

## d) LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETING

The government of Colombia (through Acción Social Presidential Agency, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Inter-American Development Bank organized the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Consultation in Santa Marta, Colombia on June 5-6, 2008. About 100 participants attended, representing developing countries, donor countries, international organizations, and civil society organizations.<sup>24</sup>

### CSOs in the Latin American meeting

Thirteen slots were allotted to civil society organizations at the LAC regional consultation. However, participation by women's rights organizations was weak: only four participants from women's rights organizations were present.

21 "Preparing for the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Kigali Consultations Workshop – A Synthesis Note," available at: <http://www.accrhif.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,menuPK:5080678%7EcontentMDK:21770905%7EpagePK:64861884%7EpiPK:64860737%7EtheSitePK:4700791,00.html>

22 AWID Informal Notes, April 28, 2008.

23 These point were drawn from "Preparing for the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Kigali Consultations Workshop – A Synthesis Note," available at: <http://www.accrhif.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,menuPK:5080678%7EcontentMDK:21770905%7EpagePK:64861884%7EpiPK:64860737%7EtheSitePK:4700791,00.html>

24 This information is available at: [http://www.accionsocial.gov.co/consulta\\_regional/default/index.html](http://www.accionsocial.gov.co/consulta_regional/default/index.html)

## Key messages<sup>25</sup>

Participants made it clear that countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, most of which are middle-income countries, are looking for effective ways to apply the Paris Declaration's principles to their particular circumstances.

The key messages, covering the topics of ownership, alignment, harmonization, mutual accountability and managing for development results, were summarized within the Outcome Document as follows:

Participants agreed that the Paris Declaration is highly relevant for middle-income countries, as it complements their efforts on institutional strengthening and can help them overcome persistent internal asymmetries.

Strengthening national capacities to design results based frameworks that reflect national priorities and donors' commitments for the medium and long term is critical for improving mutual accountability and transparency on aid management. In relation to indicators, participants argued that the Paris Declaration monitoring survey should use indicators of national systems to determine how well targets are aligned with national priorities.

It was noted that, in spite of the capacities in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, donors have not used country systems sufficiently. To promote national capacities and systems, countries proposed supporting exchanges of experiences among themselves. Specifically, South-South cooperation was recognized as an important tool both for increasing knowledge sharing and improving capacity development in the region. In addition to bilateral and multilateral organizations, participants called for regional organizations to be referenced in the AAA as they also mobilize development resources.

In Latin America the development of wealth redistribution policies, not just poverty reduction policies, is a priority; thus, it is important to include inequality indicators, such as the Gini coefficient, in OECD policy and donors' aid allocations. The point was made that financial accountability has been receiving more attention than the actual impact of aid; this is becoming an obstacle to measuring the real impact of aid in developing countries. The AAA should make clear that development impact is the goal of all aid effectiveness efforts.

## Gender equality and women's rights

Participants strongly emphasized the need for the aid effectiveness agenda to address crosscutting themes more effectively, particularly gender equality. Additionally, States in fragile conditions, such as Haiti, highlighted the relevance of the Paris Declaration principles to support national development efforts.

Participants emphasized that the AAA should encourage democratic and inclusive ownership of development policies and guarantee civic participation by CSOs, particularly women's organizations.

Participants called for dialogue space on issues such as accountability in gender equality and the environment to be included in the AAA.<sup>26</sup> Participants also noted that gender equality, environment and human rights should be included in the management for results frameworks.

In Latin America the development of wealth redistribution policies, not just poverty reduction policies, is a priority.

<sup>25</sup> These messages were drawn from the Santa Marta Outcome Document, entitled "Regional Preparatory Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean for the Third HLF on Aid Effectiveness," available at: <http://www.accrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21826960~menuPK:64861647~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:470791,00.html>

<sup>26</sup> These messages were drawn from the Santa Marta Outcome Document, entitled "Regional Preparatory Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean for the Third HLF on Aid Effectiveness," available at: <http://www.accrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21826960~menuPK:64861647~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:470791,00.html>

The current monitoring system of the Paris Declaration is gender blind and donor-driven.

In order to achieve the goals of the Paris Declaration, CSOs, including women's rights organizations, called for CSOs to be involved in the Aid Effectiveness discussions and to be recognized as political actors in their own right. Additionally, representatives agreed that cross-cutting themes should be included within a broader human rights framework and should be incorporated into sector policies.

### e) MIDDLE EAST OFFICIAL REGIONAL MEETING

The Official Regional preparatory meeting for the Middle East took place in Saudi Arabia on June 24-25, 2008. Organized by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), participants included several countries from the Middle East<sup>27</sup> as well as members of the Coordination Group.<sup>28</sup> The OECD-DAC, the World Bank and the African Development Bank were also present.

#### CSOs in the Middle East Official meeting:

The meeting was closed to civil society representatives, including those from women's rights organizations, were not permitted to attend the official consultation. In May 2008, the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) in partnership with several other organizations organized the civil society consultation to fill this gap. Individuals from the Islamic Development Bank were invited to participate, but no representatives from the organization attended.

#### Key messages<sup>29</sup>

Speakers noted that stronger efforts are required to move forward with the Aid Effectiveness agenda, particularly in relation to alignment, strategy-budget linkages, results orientation and mutual accountability. Participants discussed the relevance of indicators and the ways in which they are reported upon.

A representative from the African Development Bank spoke and shed light on the challenges faced in measuring development effectiveness. Following this, a representative from the World Bank touched upon the increasing number of donors and the parallel fragmentation of aid flows. The rising trend of aid "verticality" and its possible impact on aid effectiveness was also examined.

## 2. WOMEN'S CONSULTATIONS ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

In preparation for the HLF-3, several women's regional consultations took place. The women's consultations offered the opportunity to discuss and bring forth a gender equality perspective on the aid effectiveness process, the HLF-3 and its relation with other international for a such as the Monterrey review.

These consultations brought together a variety of participants, including civil society representatives, gender equality advocates and individuals from women's rights organizations, multilateral agencies and governments, to engender the Aid Effectiveness debates and produce concrete proposal in this sense.

The following points provide a summary of the main messages that arose from each of the women's consultations.<sup>30</sup>

- The participation of CSOs, specifically women's rights organizations, in the aid effectiveness processes, must be ensured.
- The aid effectiveness process and the Paris Declaration should comply with

27 These included Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Syria, and Turkey.

28 The Coordination Group is a gathering of development financing institutions owned, in totality or in majority, by Arab countries. The Group which has been operating since 1975 currently comprises Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, Saudi Fund for Development, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Arab Monetary Fund, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFund), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and IDB.

29 These messages are drawn from the "Islamic Development Bank: Regional Workshop on Aid Effectiveness Final Report," available at <http://www.acrahlf.net/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/ACCRAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21690833~menuPK:64861647~pagePK:64861884~piPK:64860737~theSitePK:4700791,00.html>

30 Gathered by Fernanda Hoppenhaym for a presentation in the Strategic Meeting convened by WIDE: On the road again: Feminist visions and strategies for Accra and Doha, Madrid, July 14-15, 2008

International Human Rights standards and gender equality goals and commitments.

- Indicators of aid's impact should be developed and higher levels of sex disaggregated data should be gathered and utilized.
- Information dissemination and transparency need to be improved.
- CSOs and women's rights organizations should be supported and strengthened, including through direct funding and capacity building efforts.
- The current monitoring system of the Paris Declaration is gender blind and donor-driven. Gender responsive budgeting, gender markers and the inclusion of gender equality indicators were discussed as appropriate and useful tools to monitor the gender dimension of the Paris Declaration's implementation and the new aid modalities.

### **a) INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND NETWORKS AND AID EFFECTIVENESS: OTTAWA, CANADA**

On January 31st and February 1st, 2008, 50 women's rights activists and gender experts from around the world participated in the International Consultation of Women's Organizations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness in Ottawa, Canada. This consultation served as the basis for future consultations and provided a space for women's rights organizations to further analyze the Paris Declaration's principles and acknowledge the opportunities to advance the gender equality and women's rights agenda in the Aid Effectiveness process.

The Consultation was organized by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and Women in Development Europe (WIDE) with the sponsorship of UNIFEM, CIDA-Canada and Action Aid International.<sup>31</sup>

#### **Main recommendations<sup>32</sup>**

The group identified the need to relate the Aid Effectiveness agenda with other goals and processes in the aid and development architecture such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Financing for Development (FfD) process, the Development Cooperation Forum at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).<sup>33</sup> Additionally, it was emphasized that donor and developing country governments should deliver on their commitments to international human rights standards and women's rights and development goals.

Participants underscored the need for strong and autonomous CSOs, including women's organizations, and social movements that are able to disagree and debate with and act as watchdogs to governments; this was seen as critical for the achievement of democratic ownership.

The group emphasized that aid effectiveness without gender equality and a women's rights perspective would not lead to effective development nor would it reduce poverty or achieve the MDGs. It was therefore suggested that the centrality of gender equality and women's rights as a development goal for aid effectiveness be fully recognized and implemented.

Governments, regional and multilateral organizations must interpret the terms of national country ownership as democratic ownership; in this light, donor and developing country governments must commit to supporting the conditions that are necessary

Donor and developing country governments should deliver on their commitments to international human rights standards and women's rights and development goals.

<sup>31</sup> Recommendations of the International Consultation of Women's Organisations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness organized by AWID and WIDE in Ottawa in January 2008.

<sup>32</sup> These recommendations are pulled from the Recommendations of the International Consultation of Women's Organisations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness organized by AWID and WIDE in Ottawa in January 2008.

<sup>33</sup> Recommendations of the International Consultation of Women's Organisations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness organized by AWID and WIDE in Ottawa in January 2008.

## The acquisition and improvement of sex-disaggregated data must become predictable, regular and consistent.

for CSOs, citizens and women's rights organizations to fulfil their roles in development processes (planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation).

The acquisition and improvement of sex-disaggregated data must become predictable, regular and consistent. To improve the gender equality component in the current monitoring system of the Paris Declaration, the use of baselines as well as input and output performance indicators of gender impacts in budgetary reporting must be promoted; and gender targets, inputs and outputs in national budgets and ODA must be specified.

Participants called on donor and developing country governments to strengthen the capacities, resources and authority of national women's machineries to support and monitor line ministries, other government bodies and parliaments in influencing national development planning and budget allocations for gender equality and women's rights. Further, to achieve mutual accountability, the group emphasized the need for all relevant actors to commit to the highest standards of openness and transparency; donors and international financial institutions should deliver timely and meaningful information on aid.

### **b) EUROPEAN CONSULTATION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

The European Consultation, entitled Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Challenges and Opportunities Ahead in the New European Aid Environment, was held on May 7, 2008 in Brussels, Belgium. Organized by WIDE and UNIFEM, the multi-stakeholder dialogue brought together approximately 50-60 stakeholders, including individuals from civil society, the European Commission, the European Parliament, EU Member States' missions and the United Nations.<sup>34</sup> In order to prepare for and influence the discussions at the HLF-3 and at the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development in Doha in December, participants exchanged analyses and recommendations from gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives. Primarily addressed to EU member states and the European Commission, the following key recommendations emerged from the Brussels Consultation.

#### **Main recommendations<sup>35</sup>**

- The European Union and Member States should deliver on their commitments to international human rights frameworks and international women's rights declarations, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and the MDGs and ensure that aid effectively addresses gender inequality, promotes gender equality and fights poverty. Moreover, the EU should uphold its specific commitments to gender equality, including the 2005 EU Consensus on Development and the European Commission (EC) Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation. The implementation of these commitments should be monitored and ensured.

It was acknowledged that the European Commission has the potential to play a constructive and leading role in budget support (as the preferred mode of aid delivery) and matters of governance.

- EU and Member States must commit to reach 30% of ODA for gender equality and women's empowerment by 2015 and provide transparent information on how ODA allocations correspond to policy commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The European Commission should support the capacity development of CSOs to

<sup>34</sup> The Consultation was sponsored by the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and Action Aid International.

<sup>35</sup> These recommendations can be found in the Brussels's outcome document produced by WIDE entitled "Reinterpreting the Paris Nature: The top ten recommendations."

understand and apply gender analysis and gender responsive budgeting. The EC should provide funding to strengthen networking, lobbying and advocacy activities of CSOs so as to enable CSOs, and women's organizations in particular, to increase and improve advocacy efforts for gender equality. Additionally, the European Commission and Member States must make it a priority to strengthen national public awareness about the Paris Declaration and the centrality of gender equality to poverty reduction. Mechanisms for the effective participation of citizens and CSOs, including women's organisations, in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of development processes should be promoted.

- The EU must promote, through the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), the definition of a 2010 working plan to assess the impact of new aid modalities on poverty reduction and the promotion of gender equality and women's rights.

### c) AFRICAN WOMEN'S CONSULTATION<sup>36</sup>

The African Women's Regional Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness and Gender Equality was held in Nairobi, Kenya on May 26-27, 2008. Organized by FEMNET in collaboration with UNIFEM, Action Aid International (AAI), Oxfam Novib, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and the African Women's Economic Policy Network (AWEPON), around 81 individuals attended. Participants included representatives of women's rights organizations and networks from different regions of Africa, members of government, CSOs and several bilateral and multilateral agencies.

The Consultation aimed at creating awareness around the Paris Declaration and identifying threats and opportunities posed by the Paris Declaration's implementation in advancing key development goals, such as poverty reduction and the promotion of gender equality and women's rights in Africa. According to Therese Niyondiko, former Executive Director of FEMNET, the meeting provided the opportunity for participants to gain a common understanding of the aid effectiveness debate, share the recommendations from the International Consultation of Women's Organizations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness and infuse the discussion with an African perspective. With the goal of ensuring that the voices of African women would be heard at the HLF-3, participants focused on sharing strategies and disseminating recommendations on gender equality and strengthening the capacity of African women's organizations to engage in the highly technical Aid Effectiveness discussions.

#### Main recommendations<sup>37</sup>

Participants had the opportunity to analyse the Paris Declaration from a gender perspective. In-depth discussions about the macroeconomics of aid and the funding landscape for gender equality and women's rights took place. The consultation also provided a space for African feminists to critically analyse the recommendations that came out of the Ottawa consultation,<sup>38</sup> and make contributions to enhance the document to adequately reflect the concerns and issues of women from the region.

A clear commitment to engage in the Aid Effectiveness process was reiterated. Women's participation in the AE process in fragile states and conflict areas was discussed and a commitment was made to write an issue paper on the topic. Participants emphasized the need to play a role in disseminating knowledge and raising awareness amongst women's rights organizations on the Paris Declaration and aid effectiveness. Alliance building with other players and social movements was touted as critical. An alternative vision for development, including a need for feminist activists to define development and development effectiveness in their own terms was highlighted.

EU and Member States must commit to reach 30% of ODA for gender equality and women's empowerment by 2015

<sup>36</sup> The information in this section was obtained from The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) website, available at <http://www.femnet.or.ke/calendar.asp>

<sup>37</sup> These outcomes were gathered from the "African Women's Regional Consultation Meeting On Aid Effectiveness And Gender Equality: Road To Accra," produced by FEMNET and available at <http://www.femnet.or.ke/>

<sup>38</sup> An International multi-stakeholder meeting on CSOs and aid effectiveness, the "International Consultation of Women's Organizations and Networks and Aid Effectiveness" was convened by AWID, WIDE and UNIFEM on February 3-6, in Ottawa, Canada. The Consultation resulted in concrete recommendations on aid effectiveness and gender equality.

The women's consultation reiterated the call for effective wealth redistribution policies in Latin America to be developed.

#### d) LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN'S CONSULTATION:

On June 3, 2008, the Red de Educación Popular entre Mujeres (REPEM), the Latin American Chapter of the International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN) and Confluencia Nacional de Redes de Colombia, with the support of Action Aid International, WIDE, AWID and UNIFEM, organized a regional women's consultation in Bogotá, Colombia. The Consultation discussed the special characteristics of the aid effectiveness agenda in Latin America from a women's rights perspective and produced a declaration with some key recommendations relevant for the region.

##### Main recommendations<sup>39</sup>

Participants agreed that the debates about aid effectiveness should be integrated into the discussions on financing for development at the United Nations. Donors and the Latin American states must comply with the commitments they have made to international human rights and women's rights standards and goals. Further, at the HLF-3 in Accra, governments should reaffirm the importance of gender equality as a development goal and recognize that financing for development cannot be assumed to be gender neutral.

Democratic and inclusive ownership of development policies, which ensures the participation of citizens, multilateral institutions and CSOs, including women's organizations, in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of these policies, must be supported. This implies strong country level engagement, with sustained and substantive citizen participation and adequate funding. Participants also emphasized that citizens should be integrated into mutual accountability frameworks through clear mechanisms, as well as through indicators that include social and gender equality. Citizens should be guaranteed access to information and have transparency in the evaluation of results.

The women's consultation reiterated the call for effective wealth redistribution policies in Latin America to be developed. The Bogotá Declaration from this women's consultation made clearly the need to integrate inequality indicators, such as the Gini coefficient,<sup>40</sup> in the structure of ODA processes and within the impact assessments of financing for development and aid effectiveness initiatives. This proposal was well received by government officials during the official regional meeting that took place a few days after the women's consultation.

#### e) WEST AFRICAN WOMEN'S CONSULTATIVE MEETING

From June 25-27, 2008, fifteen West African countries and Mauritania, representing 33 organisations and networks of the sub region came together in Lomé, Togo at the West African Women's Consultative Meeting on Aid Effectiveness and Gender Equality. The meeting was organised by Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF), with financial support from UNIFEM Regional Office for West Africa and OSIWA (Open Society Institute for West Africa).<sup>41</sup> The participants analysed the principles of the Paris Declaration and the draft AAA and produced the following recommendations:

##### Main recommendations<sup>42</sup>

Noting the endemic poverty of African women, the role and place of women in the socio-economic development in African countries and their voicelessness in decision making, yet acknowledging their commitments to poverty eradication and development, participants called upon donors and developing countries to recognise CSOs and

39 These recommendations are derived from the "Las mujeres latinoamericanas y caribeñas opinan: Consulta Regional para América Latina y el Caribe sobre Eficacia de la Ayuda al Desarrollo."

40 The Gini coefficient is a measure of statistical dispersion most prominently used as a measure of inequality of income distribution or inequality of wealth distribution. It is defined as a ratio with values between 0 and 1: A low Gini coefficient indicates more equal income or wealth distribution, while a high Gini coefficient indicates more unequal distribution. 0 corresponds to perfect equality (everyone having exactly the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality (where one person has all the income, while everyone else has zero income). This definition and more information on the Gini coefficient is available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini\\_coefficient](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini_coefficient)

41 "West African Women's Statement On Aid Effectiveness And Gender Equality", available at [http://www.repaoc.org/IMG/pdf/West\\_African\\_Women\\_s\\_Consultation\\_Statement\\_FINAL-2.pdf](http://www.repaoc.org/IMG/pdf/West_African_Women_s_Consultation_Statement_FINAL-2.pdf)

42 These recommendations are pulled directly from the "West African Women's Statement On Aid Effectiveness And Gender Equality", available at [http://www.repaoc.org/IMG/pdf/West\\_African\\_Women\\_s\\_Consultation\\_Statement\\_FINAL-2.pdf](http://www.repaoc.org/IMG/pdf/West_African_Women_s_Consultation_Statement_FINAL-2.pdf)

especially women's organisations as full partners in their own right and as partners in the development process. As such, the capacity of women's rights organisations must be strengthened and supported in order for them to effectively influence the development process.

Governments and donors must interpret national ownership within the context of international and regional women's rights and gender equality obligations in CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the African Union Protocol on Women.

In order to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are included in the development agenda, participants demanded that national programmes and policies should reflect the needs of both women and men. Gender budgeting must be promoted as a tool combined with general budget support and the sector wide approach and the capacities of the ministries of planning and finance to gender mainstream and incorporate gender sensitive budgeting should be strengthened.

In regards to the Paris Declaration principle of Harmonization, participants emphasized that joint donor working strategies must incorporate gender expertise in order to better address gender equality and give voice to the poor. Additionally, within harmonization action plans, both donors and developing countries should agree to commit to address gender equality and women's empowerment in all sectors they fund. Participants called on donors perform a gender analysis of countries in the West Africa sub-region, analyze the challenges that prevent the sub-region from attaining the MDGs and come to common agreements on how they will work with each other to address these issues.

Participants noted that the implementation of the Paris Declaration is monitored through a set of targets and indicators that assess public management systems, rather than the impact of aid on development. Consequently, participants called upon state parties to adopt new indicators, developed in conjunction with civil society, to monitor and evaluate progress in implementation. Additionally, participants highlighted the need for sex-disaggregated data to serve as support for policy adoption and planning and budgeting. In order to promote mutual accountability, participants called for the creation of an effective and relevant independent monitoring and evaluation system to assess the Paris Declaration and its impact on development outcomes.

Participants noted that special attention should be given to fragile states (states coming out of conflict, at war or in post-conflict situations) in regards to the channelling of specific aid to women's organisations to improve the lives of affected women.

## f) ACCRA INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

On the 30th August 2008, more than 200 persons, including gender advocates, experts and individuals from women's rights organisations and women's empowerment organisations, attended the Accra International Women's Forum to discuss the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The Accra Women's Forum was co-organised by NETRIGHT, FEMNET, WIDE, IGTN, DAWN and AWID, with the support of the African Women Development Fund (AWDF), UNIFEM, Action Aid International, and Urgent Action Africa.<sup>43</sup>

### Main recommendations<sup>44</sup>

The Declaration from the Women's Forum, highlighted the dramatic recent figure of 1,4 billion persons living under the new poverty line of USD 1.25, pointing out that the majority of these are women and girls. This figure was included later on in the Civil

1.4 billion  
persons live  
under the new  
poverty line  
of USD 1.25;  
the majority  
of these are  
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girls...

43 AWID Informal Notes on the Accra Women's Forum.

44 The recommendations in this section were taken from Cecilia Alemany (AWID); Notes on the Accra Women's Forum as well as the "Women's Forum Statement: Recommendations for Action on Development Effectiveness in Accra and beyond", available at [www.awid.org/eng/content/download/43402/461138/file/Women's%20Forum%20Statement%20\(FINAL\)-1.pdf](http://www.awid.org/eng/content/download/43402/461138/file/Women's%20Forum%20Statement%20(FINAL)-1.pdf)

Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children.

Society Parallel Forum Declaration (that took place on August 31 and September 1st, 2008) and in the final version of the AAA.

Participants noted that the aid industry today (defined, designed and primarily implemented by donors) is failing to fulfil the right to development as stated in the 1986 UN Declaration, as well as the right to gender equality and the right not to be poor. As such, participants called for the development of an aid system that promotes democratic and sustainable agendas and supports the equitable distribution of productive resources, decent work and the provision of social security for all, particularly women.

Participants called for donors and developing country governments to fully recognize that gender equality, environmental sustainability and respect for human rights are cornerstones of development. This particular point was also raised in other venues such as the Dublin and Dublin + 1 workshop organized by DFID and Gendernet, and was finally integrated in the AAA. This one of the main achievements related to gender equality in the HLF3.

AAA Paragraph 3 of the Accra Agenda for Action: (...) Addressing inequalities of income and opportunity within countries and between states is essential to global progress. Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way.

The need to align the Paris Declaration with internationally agreed development goals (IADG) was a key recommendation from the women's forum, and all the previous women's mobilisations.<sup>45</sup> In the final AAA this systematic request from women's organisation was integrated in some way in Paragraph 13.

#### **Accra Agenda for Action Paragraph 13:**

We will engage in open and inclusive dialogue on development policies. We acknowledge the critical role and responsibility of parliaments in ensuring country ownership of development processes. To further this objective we will take the following actions:

- a) Developing country governments will work more closely with parliaments and local authorities in preparing, implementing and monitoring national development policies and plans. They will also engage with civil society organisations (CSOs).
- b) Donors will support efforts to increase the capacity of all development actors—parliaments, central and local governments, CSOs, research institutes, media and the private sector—to take an active role in dialogue on development policy and on the role of aid in contributing to countries' development objectives.
- c) Developing countries and donors will ensure that their respective development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability and environmental sustainability.**

The group underscored, as women's organisations did in the Ottawa consultation, that aid effectiveness without a gender equality perspective will not lead to effective development nor will it reduce poverty or inequalities. As such, donors and developing country governments must support and strengthen the capacities, resources and authority of national women's machineries to support and monitor line ministries, other government bodies and parliaments in influencing national development planning and budget allocations for gender equality and women's rights.

Donors were called upon to honour their commitment to increase Official Development Assistance (ODA) to 0.7% of their Gross National Product (GNP) and to provide

45 UN/ECOSOC E/2008/XX, Secretary General Report (2008), Trends and progress in international development cooperation, Unedited version.

transparent information on how ODA allocations respond to policy commitments and people's needs.

Participants emphasized that economic policy conditionalities have a negative impact on people, particularly on women and urged donors to recognize this. Economic policy conditionalities that undermine the principle of ownership and contradict the right to development and self-determination must be removed.

Donors and developing country governments must ensure that special funds are available for women's rights organisations and that resources for mobilizing communities are accessible. Funding also needs to be diversified to ensure that the current focus on CSOs as instruments of advocacy does not preclude their role in advancing women's rights and reducing poverty. Furthermore, donors should pay special attention to the needs and rights restitution of victimized women in fragile states (states in conflict, coming out of conflict or post-conflict situations) and in communities experiencing localised conflicts and xenophobia attacks by involving women in peace-building processes. This proposal was somehow integrated in the final AAA agreed in Accra making particular recognition of victimized women in fragile states.

#### Accra Agenda for Action Paragraph 21:

In the Paris Declaration, we agreed that aid effectiveness principles apply equally to development co-operation in situations of fragility, including countries emerging from conflict, but that these principles need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership or capacity. Since then, Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations have been agreed. To further improve aid effectiveness in these environments, we will take the following actions:

- a) Donors will conduct joint assessments of governance and capacity and examine the causes of conflict, fragility and insecurity, engaging developing country authorities and other relevant stakeholders to the maximum extent possible.
- b) At country level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peace and statebuilding objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women. This process will be informed by international dialogue between partners and donors on these objectives as prerequisites for development. (...)

Donors and developing countries should promote the use of a variety of funding mechanisms to ensure progress on women's rights and empowerment, including general and sector budget support, pooled funding through sector wide approaches and partnerships with civil society organisations and UN agencies.

#### Accra Agenda for Action Paragraph 23:

We will improve our management for results by taking the following actions:

- a) Developing countries will strengthen the quality of policy design, implementation and assessment by improving information systems, including, as appropriate, disaggregating data by sex, region and socioeconomic status. (...)

Development results should be measured through existing reporting and monitoring mechanisms for human rights compliance; if new indicators are created, participants emphasized that they should be designed through a more inclusive process that takes into account grassroots beneficiaries and local actors. The monitoring dimension of the Paris Declaration, openly criticized by several actors, and not only by women's organisations or CSOs, wasn't refined in Accra, and at the end of the day the previous machinery was reaffirmed. This area will need much more efforts and systematic alternatives, if not it will remain a World Bank led design that impose policy conditionalities. As an alternative set of indicators to measure progress with a gender equality perspective, the Declaration from the Accra Women's Forum integrated as an annex a recent systematization led by UNIFEM.

Participants emphasized that economic policy conditionalities have a negative impact on people, particularly on women.

## Suggested Alternative Indicators for Monitoring Progress towards National Development Goals, including Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UNIFEM)

<b>Paris Declaration Principle</b>	<b>Suggested Indicators</b>
<b>Ownership</b>	<p>1.1 Countries evaluated in 2010 have institutional structures in place which allow for systematic participation of civil society and women's groups in national development planning (including PRSP formulation), implementation and monitoring.</p> <p>1.2 National development strategies and PRSPs developed up to 2010 integrate a gendered analysis of poverty consistently supported by sex disaggregated data, and reference to national commitments to international conventions such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action.</p> <p>1.3 National gender equality priorities/plans are costed, supported by an action plan and integrated into the national development strategies and PRSPs.</p>
<b>Alignment &amp; Harmonization</b>	<p>2.1 Donor and partner countries evaluated in 2010 have gender responsive budgeting systems in place at national and local levels.</p> <p>2.2 Percentage of donor funds dedicated to capacity building on mainstreaming gender perspectives in public finances for Finance Ministry officials, Line Ministries, Civil society (and in particular women's organizations) and Parliamentarians.</p> <p>2.3 Percentage of public/donor funding for meeting women's specific needs for example, violence against women and HIV/AIDs.</p>
<b>Managing for Results &amp; Mutual Accountability</b>	<p>3.1 The 2010 evaluation of implementation of the Paris Declaration principles include systematic involvement from civil society and women's organizations.</p> <p>3.2 At least three gender-sensitive indicators are assessed during formal aid effectiveness monitoring and evaluation processes.</p> <p>3.3 Performance assessment frameworks of donors include gender equality as a key result and include systematic involvement from civil society and women's organizations.</p> <p>3.4 Percentage of aid dedicated for harmonized systems for joint government/donor capacity building on mainstreaming gender equality in programme-based approaches in place at country level.</p>

## Why Should Women's Rights Activists Care about the AE Agenda? What is at Stake for Women?

### ✓ *The Paris Declaration is genderblind!*

Within this historic document, no measures to promote women's rights, gender equality or human rights standards are proposed or acknowledged through impact assessments or any other measures.

### ✓ *Women's rights and gender equality are often not reflected in national development plans!*

The new aid architecture is designed to align aid to nationally-determined development priorities—severely problematic in some government contexts where gender-sensitive strategies are neither practiced nor promoted. Alignment with a country's priorities, while desirable in theory, when implemented in political contexts characterised by gender inequality, human rights violations, etc... this architecture can negatively impact the lives of women, and hinder the achievement of key development commitments.

### ✓ *Government actions alone will not reduce poverty – adversely affecting women!*

The PD's aid effectiveness agenda focuses on institutional reforms in government for a more effective and efficient aid system, instead of on conditions for effective and sustainable development and for democratizing the international cooperation processes.

### ✓ *Preserve the strategic roles that CSOs play for women!*

Civil society and women's rights organizations have little space to influence the PD implementation process. Their contributions and roles as key development actors is essential for creating a climate of social, political, and economic change and reducing poverty and gender inequality.

### ✓ *The PD is another effort to agree on international targets and indicators (as the MDGs) for aid effectiveness.*

The PD agenda was defined by donors (at the OECD) and the AE process is being monitored by indicators developed by the World Bank. Where are the voices and contributions of women's organizations and other CSOs in this context? Why should international development priorities be agreed at the OECD instead of at a multilateral/multistakeholders' forum as the UN?

### ABOUT THIS SERIES "AID EFFECTIVENESS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS"

The purpose for creating this set of Primers, *Understanding the Aid Effectiveness Agenda* is to share critical information and analysis with women's rights advocates about the new aid architecture that has emerged as a result of the Paris Declaration (PD) — the most recent donor-recipient countries agreement designed to increase the impact of aid. The aid effectiveness agenda born out of the PD currently determines how and to whom aid is being delivered as well as how donor and recipient countries relate to one another. Aid distribution is clearly not simply a mechanistic process, but rather a political one. We hope that the facts and issues discussed within these primers will encourage women's rights advocates and CSOs to join in the process of calling for a more comprehensive, balanced, and inclusive approach to reforming aid so that it reaches the people who need it most, including women!

#### Primer No. 1:

*An Overview of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness & the New Aid Modalities*

#### Primer No. 2:

*Key Official Bodies Related to the Implementation of the Paris Declaration*

#### Primer No. 3:

*CSOs Engagement in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda: The Parallel Process, CSOs concerns and recommendations*

#### Primer No. 4:

*Monitoring and Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Implementation*

#### Primer No. 5:

*Making Women's Rights and Gender Equality a Priority in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda*

#### Primer No. 6:

*Women's organizations proposals to influence the 3rd High Level Forum debates in Accra*

#### Primer No. 7:

*Gender equality and Aid Effectiveness: regional perspectives in the preparation process towards Accra*

**ACRONYMS**

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AG-CS	Advisory Group on Civil Society from the OECD Development Assistance Committee
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
EC	European Commission
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FEMNET	The African Women's Development and Communication Network
FfD	Financing for Development
HLF-3	Third High Level Forum
IADG	Internationally Agreed Development Goals
IGTN	International Gender and Trade Network
ISG	International Steering Group on Civil Society
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NETRIGHT	Network of women's rights in Ghana
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
REPEM	La Red De Educación Popular Entre Mujeres
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WIDE	Women in Development - Europe
WTO	World Trade Organization
WP-EFF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness from the OECD Development Assistance Committee