

# Primer 11: A Feminist Perspective on the Busan 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and its Outcomes

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS SERIES

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Association For Women's Rights In Development

# ABOUT THE SERIES

## DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The purpose of this series of primers is to share critical information and analysis with women's rights advocates about the new development cooperation system that emerged as a result of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action and is taking new forms after the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness that took place at the end of 2011 in Busan, South Korea. The aid effectiveness agenda—born out of the Paris Declaration—so far had determined how and to whom aid is delivered as well as how donor and developing countries relate to one another. Development cooperation allocation and distribution is clearly not just a mechanistic process, but a political one. The issues discussed within these primers aim to encourage women's rights advocates and civil society organizations to continue and deepen their engagement—or join in the process—of calling for a more comprehensive, balanced, and inclusive approach to development cooperation. Such an approach should promote sustainable and inclusive development for all based on human rights and work towards the achievement of gender equality and women rights.

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**Primer No. 9:** The Road to Korea 2011: Key official and civil society actors

**Primer No.10:** On the Road to Busan: What is at stake for gender equality and women's rights?

### **Primer 11: A feminist perspective on the Busan 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and its outcomes**

A renewed development cooperation framework emerged from the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) that took place in Busan at the end of 2011 responding to new global realities. What does it mean for the advancement of women's rights? By providing a comparative analysis between the Women's Key Demands for Busan and the final official outcomes as agreed in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, this primer provides a critical assessment of the gains and setbacks for women's rights.

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The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is an international feminist, membership organization committed to achieving gender equality, sustainable development and women's human rights. AWID's mission is to strengthen the voice, impact, and influence of women's rights advocates, organizations, and movements internationally to effectively advance the rights of women.

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## ACRONYMS

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AFM	Articulaci3n Feminista Marcosur
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BA	BetterAid
BACG	BetterAid Coordinating Group
BBs	Building Blocks
BCSF	Busan Civil Society Forum
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
BP	Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation
BPd	Busan Partnership document
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communication Network
GENDERNET	OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HLF-2/3/4	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness -2/3/4
IADGs	Internationally Agreed Development Goals
ICPD	Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OF	Open Forum
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD	Paris Declaration
UN	United Nations
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
UN-DCF	United Nations Development Cooperation Forum
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WIDE+	WIDE Plus
WP-EFF	Working Party on Aid Effectiveness

# INTRODUCTION: CHALLENGING THE AID EFFECTIVENESS PARADIGM

In 2005, civil society organizations (CSOs) bore witness to the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD)<sup>1</sup> an agreement to reform aid delivery and management in order to strengthen its impact and effectiveness. The PD was adopted in March 2005 at the 2nd High-Level Forum (HLF-2) on Aid Effectiveness organized by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The first High-Level Forum (HLF) was held in Rome in 2003 when the principles for aid effectiveness were outlined in a concrete declaration for the first time.<sup>2</sup>

While many CSOs acknowledge the importance of the five principles (ownership, alignment, harmonization, mutual accountability and management for results)<sup>3</sup> contained in the PD and the need for reform in official donor/ developing country government development cooperation practices, CSOs are not signatories to the PD. Many have been critical of the process and are engaging in it from that angle.

CSOs and women's rights activists were concerned that the PD agenda was a highly technical process, donor driven, and focused more on aid management and delivery procedures than aid impact in achieving development goals. Along these lines, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General report on "Trends and Progress in International Development Cooperation" ahead of the UN 2008 Development Cooperation Forum (UN-DCF) raised the following concerns, which remain relevant today: "The Paris Declaration marked a step change in articulating benchmarks for progress, yet the negotiation process did not engage the full range of stakeholders [and] ...discussions were dominated by members of the Development Assistance Committee." The PD came about "...without the approval of a conventional international multi-stakeholder process." In addition, "...the aid effectiveness agenda is not yet demonstrating its ability to change donor behaviour" (ECOSOC 15).

To add to this picture, in 2011, major donors' aid to developing countries fell by nearly 3% compared to 2010 figures. This decrease reflects the impacts of the economic crisis and fiscal constraints in several DAC countries, which have shrunk their Official Development Assistance (ODA) budgets. Aid has had debatable effectiveness in reducing poverty and inequality, promoting development, and supporting gender equality and women's rights. After more than fifty years of aid allocation, the beneficiaries of these public resources have rarely been women, who receive only a tiny proportion of overall ODA.<sup>4</sup> Even if more recently aid allocation to gender equality and women's rights issues has increased, this is still far from what is required and demanded (Alpizar, Clark et al 6).

In 2008, and as a result of the 3rd High-Level Forum (HLF-3) held in Accra, Ghana, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) was endorsed to guide implementation of the PD. The efforts by civil society actors, particularly women's rights organizations and gender equality advocates in several regional and international consultations,<sup>5</sup> saw some progress in terms of recognition of gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability. The AAA recognizes these elements as "...cornerstones for achieving enduring impact" ("Accra Agenda for Action" para.3) and also recognizes the need to improve information systems including through the disaggregation of data by sex ("Accra Agenda for Action" para. 23.a), albeit only "when appropriate".<sup>6</sup>

The PD and the AAA both were, until the 4<sup>th</sup> High-Level Forum (HLF-4) that took place in Busan, South Korea in late 2011, the agreements in place concerning the impact and effectiveness of aid and the relationship between developing and developed countries.

CSOs engaging in this process from a critical perspective have also been strongly advocating for a shift from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness.<sup>7</sup> That is to say, to move beyond technical aspects of aid delivery into a much wider concept that encompasses the impact of the actions of development actors on peoples' lives, and examines the root causes and symptoms of poverty, inequality (especially gender inequality), marginalization, and injustice.

Women's rights organizations and gender equality advocates have long mobilized around the aid effectiveness agenda and in July 2011 elaborated on six key demands that were outlined in *Key Demands from Women's*

*Rights Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan 2011) and the Development Cooperation Forum (2012) (UN-DCF)<sup>8</sup> (from now on referred to as Women's Key Demands):*

1. Any new development cooperation framework to be agreed in Busan HLF-4 should be **based on human rights, including women's rights**.
2. A new equitable development cooperation system for gender equality and women's rights **under the United Nations is in place**.
3. **Development effectiveness requires democratic ownership by women** and meaningful and systematic participation by civil society, especially women's and feminist organizations.
4. Promote **multiple accountability systems for women's rights and gender equality** – considering all forms of discrimination experienced by women based on sexism, racism, xenophobia and others – improving existing monitoring systems.<sup>i</sup>
5. Financing for Development: **Gender equality and women's rights beyond mainstreaming**
6. Development cooperation to the countries in situations of fragility and conflict must **acknowledge the differential and disproportional impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls**.

Already in April 2011, CSOs, including a number of women's rights organizations, laid out their main demands in the run-up to HLF-4, in four areas:<sup>9</sup>

1. Fully evaluate and deepen the Paris and Accra commitments
2. Strengthen development effectiveness through practices based on human rights standards
3. Support CSOs as independent development actors in their own right, and commit to an enabling environment for their work in all countries
4. Promote equitable and just development cooperation architecture.

Overall, to be considered effective for gender equality, development cooperation processes and policies must be aligned with international and regional agreements on human rights and gender equality, including the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) and other conventions that frame legal obligations of governments regarding issues of development, human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. While the PD, AAA and the *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation document* (BPd)<sup>10</sup> remain voluntary agreements, international binding treaties endorsed by governments in the last decades must be the framework for development policies and practices. Governments should be held accountable for these commitments also within the development cooperation agenda.

Civil society, represented by the BetterAid network, was considered a development actor in its own right with negotiating power. The HLF-4 reached out to a diverse range of development stakeholders, including traditional and emerging donor governments, the private sector, parliamentarians, and civil society (including women's rights organizations). They all became part of the new body to follow-up on development cooperation commitments moving forward: the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC).

<sup>i</sup> This overarching demand was strengthened further during the Busan Global Women's Consultation in November 2011 and is the basis for this primer.

# 1. The 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan: An Overview

## 1.1 HLF-4 Snapshot

The HLF-4 took place in Busan, South Korea, from November 29 to December 1, 2011, and was intended to be a milestone for international development. The stated objectives of HLF-4 were to assess implementation of the commitments agreed to in the PD and AAA and to draw a new and enlarged framework of development cooperation taking into account the changes at the international level and the fact that aid is only one instrument of development cooperation. Also among the objectives was the need to include a broader array of development stakeholders, involving not only OECD-DAC members, but also representatives from international organizations such as the UN, new South-South cooperation actors, parliamentarians and local authorities, the private sector, and civil society.

Several factors set the tone for HLF-4. Firstly, changes in the geopolitical landscape saw emerging global players such as the BRICS (the group of countries including Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and South-South cooperation high on the agenda. Secondly, the shadow of a deep economic and financial crisis – part and parcel of a larger systemic crisis that includes climatic, social, water, food and energy crises – was cast upon the conference resulting in little political will to engage in financial commitments (particularly on the part of EU countries), even failing to confirm existing agreements (OECD 2012). At the same time, the private sector made its way into the development cooperation debates and economic growth was put on the agenda once again as if it were a magic bullet and ignoring the learning drawn in recent years as to the limitations of economic growth for advancing development.

The new players were crucial to the agenda at the HLF-4 and shifted traditional North to South aid cooperation power dynamics. In order not to lose relevance in a changing development landscape, the OECD worked to keep emerging donors on board, compromising concrete commitments. As a *2012 Oxfam America Brief* explains “Busan created a two-tier approach to development cooperation: one for traditional donors with a so-called unfinished aid agenda and another for emerging donors to be implemented on a discretionary basis” (Oxfam 5).

From a CSO and women’s rights perspective, some of the main issues at stake on the road to HLF-4 were:<sup>11</sup>

- 1) A new development cooperation framework and governance structure should be human rights based and move away from the OECD under the UN, including effective mechanisms of ongoing participation of CSOs.
- 2) Many of the agreements in the PD and AAA remained unfinished business due to lack of targets or time-bound monitorable commitments to measure progress. Other areas were also left out or addressed insufficiently (i.e. decent work, policy conditionality, tied aid, mutual accountability, and the reform of the aid governance system). It is crucial to push for clear time-bound measurable commitments if any impact is to take place.
- 3) There was risk that gender equality and women’s rights issues would be left out or not meaningfully integrated in the final agreement. Gender equality and women’s rights advocates worked in alliance with the BetterAid platform and like-minded governments and OECD staff to integrate gender equality language in the final document. After intense negotiations, the BPD ended up including gender sensitive language as well as a paragraph on gender equality and a specific indicator to measure progress in this area. However, women’s rights organizations say it does not go far enough if not combined with a full human rights based approach to development. See Chapter 2 for more detailed analysis from a women’s rights perspective.

## 1.2 CSO Participation in HFL-4

HLF-4 was hailed as a landmark for inviting key non-governmental development actors to the negotiation for the first time. Of the 3,000 delegates who came together at the official HLF-4, including ministers and heads of international organizations, approximately 300 were CSO representatives. This was a significant increase in participation compared to the HLF-3, where only 80 CSO representatives were allowed to take part in the official conference.

To guide negotiations of the BPd draft “On the Road to HLF-4”, a list of 18 sherpas—individuals representing the different stakeholders involved—was agreed to at the end of October 2011. The elected CSO sherpa was Antonio Tujan, BetterAid Co-Chair, who also had an elected BetterAid negotiation team<sup>ii</sup> to support him, including a women’s rights organization.

The other sherpas included representatives from Bangladesh, Rwanda, South Africa, Mali, Timor-Leste, People’s Republic of China, Mexico, Honduras, France, European Commission, Japan, United Kingdom, United States, and United Nations Development Programme. The group was chaired by Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek (WP-EFF Chair), and Vice-Chairs from Korea and the World Bank also participated in negotiations.<sup>12</sup> The list of sherpas represented six major groups: United Nations Development Group (UNDG), low-income countries, middle income countries, so-called Fragile States grouped in the g7+, CSO representative, and DAC members.”

Among the sherpa groups, several actors were identified as potential allies for CSOs in negotiations, particularly partner countries from the g7+ who were likely to support the demands for a paradigm shift from a donor-driven development cooperation framework. Women’s rights organizations saw some support for gender equality language from Austria, Australia, UNDP, South Korea, and EU; as well as support from partner countries on the global monitoring agenda.

### CSO HLF-4 selection process and gender balance

A careful CSO selection process was discussed during the CSO meeting<sup>13</sup> on March 14 and 15, 2011 in Sweden that gathered more than 80 participants from the Open Forum Global Facilitation Group and the BetterAid Coordinating Group (BACG). A global call for CSO accreditation to participate in HLF-4 was made on April 8, 2011 and more than 600 applications were submitted. Networks and organizations represented in the BetterAid and Open Forum steering groups worked together in regional caucuses to lead the selection process for CSOs wanting to represent their regions and a Global Selection and Oversight Committee<sup>iii</sup> was in place. A quota was set to ensure geographic and thematic balance, including for representation of feminist organizations per region and globally. Moreover, the regional lists had to ensure overall gender balance of representatives.<sup>14</sup>

### The Busan Global Civil Society Forum and its final statement

The Busan Civil Society Forum (BCSF) took place prior to the official meeting on November 26-28, 2011 and gathered over 500 CSOs. During the three days of plenary meetings, workshops, and strategy sessions – including the Busan Global Women’s Forum—CSOs from around the world agreed on common strategies to influence the HLF-4.

The CSO statement to HLF-4 that emerged from the BCSF is entitled “BetterAid and Development Effectiveness for the World We Want”<sup>15</sup> and outlines the three ways to make development work, through policies and practices that:

1. Are rights-based.
2. Guarantee space for civil society organizations and other non-state actors to fulfill their development roles, at a minimum, in keeping with binding commitments outlined in international and regional instruments that guarantee fundamental rights.
3. Ensure that private sector involvement in development actually contributes to development, and respects international labour standards and conventions.<sup>16</sup>

ii The CSO negotiation team was integrated by: CSO sherpa Antonio Tujan (BA Co-Chair), Anne Schoenstein (AWID), Bodo Ellmers (Eurodad), Emele Duituturaga (Co-Chair Open Forum), Jan Dereymaeker (ITUC), Richard Ssewakiryanga (Uganda National NGO Forum).

iii The Global Selection and Oversight Committee was integrated by: Emele Duituturaga (Co-Chair Open Forum), Antonio Tujan (Co-Chair BetterAid), Vazha Salamadze (Co-Chair Open Forum), Anne Schoenstein (BetterAid), Andreas Vogt (Open Forum), Jan Dereymaeker (BetterAid), Amy Bartlett (Open Forum), Krister Holm (BetterAid).

### 1.3 Women's Rights Organizations' Mobilizations Towards HLF-4 and the Busan Global Women's Forum

Women's rights groups have been critical of the OECD-led aid effectiveness process and have engaged from that angle over the past years, since before the HLF-3 in 2008. The advances on gender equality language in the AAA were largely a consequence of women's rights advocates' preparatory work.

Building on the lessons learned from these past experiences of alliance building, an initial core group of three women's rights organizations part of the BACG<sup>17</sup>—the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), WIDE Network, and AWID—kicked off a mobilization process towards HLF-4 with the support of UN Women. They were later joined by Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) and Coordinadora de la Mujer-Bolivia, both also part of the BACG. Part of the mobilization efforts were also supported by BetterAid. The mobilizations included an initial strategy meeting held in New York in February 2011 and an International Consultation on Development Cooperation, Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Brussels in June 2011 to develop common positions and proposals to influence the HLF-4 process and outcome.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to consultations and developing demands with women's organizations and gender equality advocates, women's rights organizations also worked to influence general CSO processes, as well as official processes and debates. Women's groups contributed to drafting the CSO key messages and proposals<sup>19</sup> in April 2011. Women's rights organizations part of the BACG sat at the OECD Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) as full members via BetterAid. The WP-EFF was the official body in charge of preparations towards HLF-4 and negotiations on the BPd. Since 2008 the WP-EFF has allowed a larger representation from developing countries, particularly emerging donor governments, and CSOs.

The Busan Global Women's Forum took place on November 27-28, 2011, organized by APWLD, AWID, FEMNET, WIDE and Coordinadora de la Mujer-Bolivia. It brought together about 60 women from Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America to both coordinate and advance the advocacy of women's organizations during the HLF-4 and to strengthen women's participation in the process.

The political statement<sup>20</sup> that came out of the Busan Global Women's Forum, 2011 makes clear that emphasis on economic growth as a focus of development has not resulted in empowerment of all women, particularly the most marginalized and that a rights-based approach is imperative to drive development for women. In line with the *Women's Key Demands* for HLF-4 and 2012 UN-DCF, the statement calls for a move beyond aid effectiveness towards human rights-based development cooperation as a new framework for international solidarity to advance development and poverty eradication in ways that are coherent with international human rights standards. This includes giving adequate attention to women's rights, the right to development, and to environmental justice.

Moreover, the statement points out that in order to ensure legitimacy through membership of all development actors, an equitable and inclusive multilateral forum for policy dialogue and standard setting on development cooperation is needed based within the UN. In addition, clear, effective and ongoing mechanisms for CSO participation in international development cooperation of all kinds, including South-South and triangular cooperation, needs to be ensured.

## 2. A Critical Analysis of the Busan Outcomes from a Feminist Perspective

### 2.1 The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

The outcomes of HLF-4 were received with mixed feelings by women's rights organizations and gender equality advocates. While recognizing that important progress was made, many of the demands and proposals put forward by CSOs and women's rights organizations were ignored or lacked concrete commitments. The section below assesses the HLF-4 outcomes in the light of the women's organizations' key demands. To what extent were they achieved or not?

Box 1 presents the *Women's Key Demands* by women's rights organisations and gender equality advocates, comparing them with the BPd.

BOX 1: Assessment of the women's rights organisations and gender equality advocates' six key demands to the HLF-4 and the UN Development Cooperation Forum		
RECOMMENDATION		ASSESSMENT
1	Any new development cooperation framework to be agreed in Busan should be based on human rights, including women's rights.	Partly achieved (para 11, 20, 22 and 28 of the BPd)
2	A new equitable development cooperation system for gender equality and women's rights under the UN is in place.	Not (yet?) achieved
3	Development effectiveness requires democratic ownership by women and meaningful and systematic participation by civil society, especially women's and feminist organizations.	Achieved (para 12 and 21 of the BPd)
4	Promote multiple accountability systems for women's rights and gender equality – considering all forms of discrimination experienced by women based on sexism, racism, xenophobia and others – improving existing monitoring systems.	Partly achieved (para 18, 23, 24, and 20 of the BPd)
5	Financing for Development: Gender equality and women's rights beyond mainstreaming.	Not achieved
6	Development cooperation to the countries in situations of fragility and conflict must acknowledge the differential and disproportional impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls.	Very partially achieved (para 20 and 26 of the BPd)

**Demand 1:** Any new development cooperation framework to be agreed at the HLF-4 should be based on human rights, including women's rights. Partly achieved.

The BPd acknowledges in paragraph 11 the sharing of “common principles—consistent with the agreed international commitments on human rights, decent work, gender equality, environmental sustainability and disability—which form the foundation for [...] co-operation for effective development”. Moreover, paragraph 28 shows willingness to “rethink what aid should be spent on and how, in ways that are consistent with the agreed international rights, norms and standards, so that aid catalyses development”. However, when it comes to concrete commitments, a human rights-based approach to development and development cooperation is missing and the only explicit mention of rights based approaches is within the CSO paragraph 22, as if it were only the role of CSOs to promote rights.

**Gender equality and women's empowerment** made important progress compared to HLF-3, recognized with a specific paragraph 20 in the BPd (see Box 2). Paragraph 20b and 20c also partially fulfill demands 4 and 6 of the *Women's Key Demands* as they address aspects of accountability and the important area of peace building and state building. This represents a major advance, considering the first draft of the BPd was totally unacceptable to women's rights groups as it was “gender silent and [did] not advance a vision or framework

where the existing international agreed development goals (IADGs) on gender justice, human rights, decent work and environmental sustainability are at the center”.<sup>21</sup>

The inclusion of the gender equality paragraph was welcomed by women’s groups, but was also accompanied by critiques and proposals for further strengthening the paragraph and the document at large during the negotiation process. While small gains were made, women’s rights were, for example and importantly, never explicitly included, nor was the demand for “ending” and not only “reducing” gender inequality.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, no gender perspective is included throughout the document. As highlighted in the civil society assessment of the BPD<sup>23</sup>, “it makes no concrete time-bound commitments to advance gender equality and women’s rights; and it makes no pledges to ensure that donor and government financing specifically supports the attainment of gender equality and women’s rights”. The agreement also fails to mention the important role that women and women’s rights organizations play in all decision-making processes to focus on women’s equal political participation in development, policy-making and standard-setting. Women, feminists, women’s organizations, and women movements play key roles in development at all levels and the full realization of women’s rights as human rights are essential to any development and to any development cooperation framework. To this end, women’s economic empowerment—alongside their social and political empowerment—is an inalienable right, not a “prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth.”

The overarching concern and demand from women’s rights organizations and other CSOs active in the process was the integration of human rights, its agreements, standards and norms, as the basis for development cooperation into the BPD, among other key priorities. The missing commitment on a human rights based approach to development and development cooperation, as mentioned above, also takes strength away from paragraph 20 because, despite the linking of sex disaggregated data to public policy being a step forward, the realization of gender equality and women’s empowerment can only happen if human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled throughout these same public policies.

## Box 2: Paragraph 20 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

“20. We must accelerate our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women through development programmes grounded in country priorities, recognising that gender equality and women’s empowerment are critical to achieving development results. Reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth. As we redouble our efforts to implement existing commitments we will:

- a) Accelerate and deepen efforts to collect, disseminate, harmonise and make full use of data disaggregated by sex to inform policy decisions and guide investments, ensuring in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men.
- b) Integrate targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments.
- c) Address gender equality and women’s empowerment in all aspects of our development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding.” (OECD. “Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation” para 20)

Paragraph 9 in the BPD also highlights that it is essential to examine the interdependence and coherence of all public policies...” This first half of the sentence is promising. However, paragraph 9 ends with a market-oriented vision, mentioning that public policy coherence should enable countries “to make full use of the opportunities presented by international investment and trade, and to expand their domestic capital markets”. As such the women’s organisations’ call for policy coherence for development and gender equality did in fact not get met. Due to all of the above, and considering that the underlying economic development model of the BPD primarily asserts growth as the driver for development, Demand 1 in the *Women’s Key Demands* is at best partially achieved.

**Demand 2: A new equitable development cooperation system for gender equality and women’s rights under the United Nations is in place. Not (yet?) achieved.**

Although the HLF-4 included a broader range of development actors, the most fundamental question on governance was postponed to a post-HLF-4) process (see Chapter 4 of this Primer). At least in paragraph 36 of the BPD the “UN Development Cooperation Forum is also invited to play a role in consulting on the implementation of agreements reached in Busan”. In that same paragraph, the OECD and the United Nations Development Programme are invited to support the effective functioning of the Global Partnership. This is

still far from Demand 2.1 in the *Women's Key Demands* that calls for situating the development cooperation system within the UN in order to facilitate more democratic and equal participation of all countries and for a strengthening of the UN-DCF as the main space for standard-setting on development cooperation of all kinds.

**Demand 3: Development effectiveness requires democratic ownership by women and meaningful and systematic participation by civil society, especially women's and feminist organizations. Achieved.**

Democratic ownership is recognised in paragraph 12a of the BPd. Even if not included in the section "Shared principles to achieve common goals" of the BPd, it is at the top of the list of actions to be deepened, extended and operationalised. This is an important achievement as it gives space for the fulfilment of demand 3.1 of the *Women's Key Demands*, that the participation of women's organisations in policy dialogues at local, national and international levels is ensured and at all stages of the development process (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

As noted by Fraser Reilly-King, BetterAid member and Policy Analyst for the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, in a post-Busan (HLF-4) analysis, "ownership has a more democratic orientation, refocusing on countries instead of just states--and sets out a more inclusive role for all development actors, including parliaments, local governments and CSOs in shaping development policy". In addition, "transparency and accountability also goes beyond an inter donor-government relationship, to accountability to intended beneficiaries and respective citizens". (Reilly-King)

Thus, ownership recognises an active role for all development actors, including civil society and by extension, women's rights groups. Paragraph 11c recognises "the different and complementary roles of all actors", paragraph 14 welcomes "the inclusion of civil society" (among other actors) and paragraph 22 recognises that "civil society organisations play a vital role [...] in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation". Moreover, paragraph 22 underlines the need to "enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights (ie UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders), that maximises the contributions of CSOs to development.

Although, no specific mention is made to women's and feminist organisations, one can say that since women's rights groups are part of civil society, their overarching demand for democratic ownership and participation is met in the document.

That said, compared to the AAA no progress was made on conditionality issues and mention of aid-modalities is primarily in relation to South-South and triangular cooperation. Regarding the role of the private sector, while there are several references throughout BPd, the text fails to identify a broad and shared agenda for better policy coherence for development.

**Demand 4: Promote multiple accountability systems for women's rights and gender equality — considering all forms of discrimination experienced by women based on sexism, racism, xenophobia and others — improving existing monitoring systems. Partially achieved.**

As mentioned above, accountability moved from the traditional inter-donor-government relationship towards multiple forms of accountability relationships. Paragraph 18d encourages "the active participation of all development co-operation actors in these processes". The BPd made important steps in terms of transparency in paragraph 23, with members committing to improve "the availability and public accessibility of information on development co-operation and other development resources". In addition, members committed to "work to make development co-operation more predictable", with timelines. Thus, by 2013, "those that already took commitments with the Accra Agenda for Action, will provide available, regular, timely rolling three- to five-years indicative forward expenditure and/or implementation plans to all developing countries with which they co-operate" (paragraph 24).

In terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, as mentioned above, paragraph 20b promotes the integration of "targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional commitments". While this is a gain, it is not sufficient for the women's rights groups and other CSOs who had, via BetterAid, submitted language to read: for *mutual* accountability mechanisms, grounded in international and regional *human rights and development* commitments, including CEDAW.<sup>24</sup>

Also, indirectly, the will to improve gender-disaggregated data collection may strengthen efforts to hold development actors accountable for gender equality commitments. However, no mention is made to the

demand 4.3 to screen all aid (including multilateral aid) against the DAC gender equality marker. Hand in hand with the glaring absence of a decision on the future governance of a new Global Partnership, is the area of monitoring. No final agreements were reached in December 2011 regarding governance and monitoring progress but stakeholders agreed to continue negotiations until June 2012 through a smaller group named the Post-Busan Interim Group (PBIG). Civil society had one seat in the PBIG which met three times between February and June 2012 to develop a clear proposal to improve existing monitoring systems.

Demand 4.2 in *Women's Key Demands* make clear that “[a]ccountability must not be based on a new OECD monitoring system and should go beyond measuring outputs (aid delivered) to examine the level of outcomes (results).” It specifies that aid and development cooperation monitoring systems must be improved “by building on and improving the existing country or regionally relevant indicators and accountability mechanisms, such as: MDG targets and indicators, CEDAW reporting requirements, reporting on the BPfA, the ICPD, and other international mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council UPR.”

**Demand 5: Financing for Development: Gender Equality and Women's Rights Beyond Mainstreaming. Not Achieved.**

This is the only recommendation that saw essentially no progress in the BPd. There is no mention of the importance of access to funding by civil society organisations or by women's rights groups. Neither is mention made about ensuring funding for sensitive women's rights issues, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (see demand 5.2). The BPd only refers to financial flows in terms of countries receiving insufficient assistance (paragraph 25c).

The BPd mentions how access to gender-disaggregated data could ensure “in turn that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to benefit both women and men (paragraph 20a)”. Nonetheless paragraph 20a clearly states that all parties involved in development cooperation must both collect gender sensitive data and use that data to guide implementation. This paragraph is welcome, but these targets should be based on international and regional human rights agreements.

Outside the BPd, the Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development was launched during HLF-4 and is relevant for the discussion on financing.(see Chapter 2.2 of this primer for more details on the Joint Action Plan).

**Demand 6: Development cooperation to the countries in situations of fragility and conflict must acknowledge the differential and disproportional impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls. Very partially achieved.**

Although the BPd mentions the need to “address gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of [...] development efforts, including peacebuilding and statebuilding” (paragraph 20c), the text in paragraph 26 (which is devoted to promoting sustainable development in situations of conflict and fragility) fails to recognise the role of feminist and women's organisations in achieving sustainable, peaceful, and lasting solutions. This is a regression compared to commitments taken in the AAA. The text also fails to stress the need to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 (demand 6.1 in *Women's Key Demands*).

However, paragraph 26 includes the New Deal developed by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (under the OECD-DAC) and committed those who have endorsed to implement it. To date, 41 countries have endorsed the New Deal, and it recognises the empowerment of women, as a key actor of peace, as well as the need to promote women's participation in peacebuilding and statebuilding dialogues.<sup>25</sup>

**Overall**, as stated in the *BetterAid Statement on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation*, the BPd has not significantly addressed the unfinished business and lack of implementation of PA and AAA commitments. The BPd also retains overall private sector-led growth as the framework for development. Moreover, the agreements reached attribute a strong role to the for-profit private sector, and lack a comprehensive vision and policy framework to hold business to account against development effectiveness principles.

During the Busan Global Women's Forum, women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality advocates had reaffirmed their vision, developed in the *Women's Key Demands* for HLF-4 and the 2012 Development Cooperation Forum. This vision stands in contrast to the outcome of HLF-4 as shown in Box 3.

### Box 3: Excerpt from the Busan Global Women's Forum political statement

"We reaffirm our vision of a world where aid is no longer necessary. Where transformed power relations and the democratic redistribution of wealth counter norms and structures of injustice and war and create new forms of relations based on respect, solidarity, equity, inclusion, non-subordination and justice for all. We would like this vision of development to be reflected on Busan Outcome Document [BPd]. We believe in development as a Right and that international solidarity through sustainable international cooperation has a crucial role to play in fulfilling states' responsibility to ensure that all people realise their rights. Development is a right and not a leverage for often unequal, unsustainable growth. We challenge mainstream economic development models and aim to shift the dominant development discourse towards an inclusive, sustainable, and just paradigm. We underscore that women, feminists, women's organisations, and women movements play key roles in development at all levels and stress that the full realisation of women's rights as human rights are essential to any development and to any development cooperation framework."

*The full political statement can be accessed on the AWID website.<sup>26</sup>*

In addition to the above analysis, Box 4 portrays the executive summary of the CSO assessment of the BPd. Women's rights groups contributed to it. The full assessment is recommended reading, as it comprehensively reviews the common CSO demands for HLF-4.<sup>27</sup>

## Box 4: The CSO Assessment of the Busan Partnership Agreement

*Taken from the Executive Summary of the "Assessment of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation from a civil society perspective", Better Aid, March 2012*

### Executive Summary

Civil Society went to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) calling for a Busan Compact on Development Effectiveness to put human rights and democratic ownership at the heart of global development. We recognise that the HLF4 ushered in a new era in the global effort to advance people's development needs and rights. Developments in the scope and membership of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (BPd) offer both opportunities and challenges for the future. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) also acknowledges the greatly enhanced space created for formal civil society engagement in the HLF-4 and subsequent processes.

This is Civil Society's assessment of the BPd against our CSO Key Messages and Proposals.

### **A: Fully evaluate and deepen the Paris and Accra commitments through reforms based on democratic ownership**

Civil Society believes that the BPd does not adequately respond to the failure of all development actors--especially donors--to fully implement their commitments under the Paris Declaration (PD) and Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). The absence of concrete timelines and targets for these is a cause for major concern, and must be redressed fully in the post-Busan accountability framework. Civil Society welcomes the BPd's commitment 'to deepen, extend and operationalise the democratic ownership of development policies' and the reference to both country ownership and inclusive partnerships in the preamble. We remain highly concerned that the language on the private sector focuses too strongly on enabling its role: the private sector should also be made clearly accountable for a responsible contribution to development outcomes.

### **B: Strengthen development effectiveness through development cooperation practices that promote human rights standards and focus on the eradication of the causes of poverty and inequality.**

Civil Society regrets that the underlying model of the BPd is private sector-led growth as the driver of development. The BPd makes only token reference to human rights as the basis of development, and its treatment of women's rights and the decent work agenda is weak.

### **C. Affirm and ensure the participation of the full diversity of CSOs as independent development actors in their own right.**

Civil Society warmly welcomes the BPd's endorsement of the Istanbul Principles on CSO Development Effectiveness. We remain concerned that the BPd's commitment to create an enabling environment for CSOs does not create an accountability framework that will enable CSOs to fight back against government abuse of freedoms. Nor has there been any reproach for governments which fail to recognize the right of CSOs, as development actors in their own right, to fully participate in the decision-making processes which determine whether development is sustainable and respects human rights.

### **D. Promote equitable and just development cooperation architecture.**

The BPd deferred the most important decisions about the accountability framework for commitments made in Busan (and the PD/AAA) until June 2012. We believe that an equitable and inclusive governance structure and an ambitious monitoring framework with both global and country indicators are vital for ensuring that all actors indeed fulfil their commitments going forward.

## 2.2 The Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development

*The Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development* (Joint Action Plan) was initiated by the United States (US) and the HLF-4 host country, South Korea. Prior to its launch, consultation on the plan with women's rights organizations was highly unsatisfactory as it came at a very late stage with too tight deadlines to facilitate appropriate consultation.

Therefore, in HLF-4, women's organizations drafted and released a position on the plan<sup>28</sup> that "recognize[s] the effort of the Korean and US Governments to produce the *Busan Joint Action Plan on Gender* as an outcome of the High Level Forum 4 (...) recognize[s] the efforts of the Korean Government to promote Gender Equality as a central principle of the HLF4 and the Busan Outcome Document...[and] welcome[s] any efforts of states to increase funding to women's rights and empowerment(...) urging governments to make substantial financial commitments to the advancement of women's rights." However, the position raised major concerns with the plan including that it did not sufficiently promote the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and substantive equality and conflated economic growth with development. It also stressed that the human rights-based plan should be developed in dialogue with women's rights organizations and gender equality advocates ("Position on the proposed Busan Joint Action Plan on Gender Equality and Development", 1, 2011).

As one outcome of the critique raised, consultation on the plan with women's rights organizations continued after HLF-4. The final version of the Joint Action Plan now includes reference to women's rights and calls on giving due consideration to CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and other human rights instruments.

For all details, including on the new Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Initiative, the final version of the Joint Action Plan is available online in pdf format.<sup>29</sup>

## 3. Regional Perspectives

In April 2012, the 12th AWID International Forum on Women's Rights and Development<sup>30</sup> took place in Istanbul, Turkey. AWID, along with APWLD, Coordinadora de la Mujer-Bolivia and FEMNET organized a session on "Post-Busan: What are the priorities going forward for advancing women's rights in the context of development cooperation?" This chapter draws on this session and on information and positions shared by APWLD, Coordinadora de la Mujer-Bolivia, FEMNET and WIDE+ after the 2012 AWID Forum. It presents reflections, priorities, and next steps for the regional level from women's rights organizations from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

### 3.1 The Asian Region – from APWLD

#### What are the regional implications of the Busan Partnership Document?

One of the main achievements of HLF-4 was the inclusion of new actors:

- It was important for Asia that China and India were recognised as South-South development actors with a role to play as partners in the BPD. Recognising India and China as development partners could be valuable not just as donors but as the home to half the world's poor. China has significantly reduced the number of people living in poverty since its reform process and could indeed have much to offer around land reform and rural development.
- It was also interesting to see the role the Republic of Korea played as an emerging donor and the process certainly galvanised civil society efforts with Korea to more closely monitor the role of Korean aid.
- The recognition of civil society as a development actor in its own right was also important, particularly the recognition that an enabling environment for civil society is essential for our work. In some countries of Asia, civil society is under constant threat.

However, the broadening of the partnership appears to mostly benefit the private sector—who were not party to the negotiations but benefited from the outcomes that institutionalise the private sector as a development actor. In this way we feel that HLF-4 promoted "more of the same" with little real accountability or change in failed models.

#### What are the implications for the advancement of women's rights?

While the recognition of gender equality and women's empowerment for development were important achievements in the text, the absence of reference to women's rights tools and the broader focus of the document on economic growth make the text appear instrumental.

Increasingly gender equality is promoted because it can stimulate economic growth (women as an untapped source of human capital). This approach does little to promote women's labour rights, political rights and, moreover, it reinforces inequalities.

If the follow up monitoring processes can actually measure increases in allocations of funding to women's rights there could be some meaningful outcome. But civil society should also monitor what these allocations are for and assess whether or not they advance women's rights.

### 3.2 The Latin American Region – from Coordinadora de la Mujer-Bolivia

#### What were or are next steps concerning the region?

Post-Busan (HLF-4), Coordinadora de la Mujer, together with Articulación Feminista Marcosur (AFM), convened a regional workshop attended by 12 representatives of women's rights organizations and networks in Latin America and the Caribbean. The meeting served as a space to debate and build a common agenda for action and political position, reflected in the following statement:

“Women from the South: Post-Busan  
Statement from Feminist Networks in Latin America

We, feminist organizations and networks in Latin America, from the strength of our autonomy and diversity of our movements, committed to building truly democratic and secular states to ensure implementation and expansion of women's human rights, socio-environmental justice and redistribution of resources, we state that:

1. We strive for the construction of alternatives in the economic, political, social, and cultural relationships between nations based on solidarity, fair distribution of wealth, power and care responsibilities.
2. We believe in societies where patriarchy, racism and colonialism are eradicated. Societies free from all forms of violence against all peoples regardless of their condition. Societies free from fundamentalism and war, that guarantee gender and social equality and justice as rights. Societies in which people and not the market and banks, are at the center of the political agenda. Societies where natural resources are recognized, respected and defended as “commons”.
3. We reject the imposition of an economic and development model that generates and increases inequalities. That destroys Nature and commodifies it by inventing, cynically, a “green economy” that is meant to increase growth rates and market profits. A model that prefers to save the banks and bankers while financial insecurity and unemployment leaves millions in the streets. A model based on profit and competition, where people's ability to consume is more important than their citizenship rights. A system that in order to overcome the crisis that it helped to create, seeks support in reactionary and fundamentalist forces that want women to go back to their household to fulfill traditional and subordinated roles.
4. We reaffirm our commitment to generate, support and promote processes of individual and collective empowerment based on bodily, political and economic autonomy that lead to the emancipation of women in all their diversity.
5. We demand that both development cooperation and South-South cooperation recognize the centrality of women's rights in the context of a culture and full respect of human rights and that they are founded in equal relationships that respect autonomous and active participation of organizations, groups, movements and feminist and women's rights networks at national, regional and global levels.

March 2012  
Santa Cruz de la Sierra- Bolivia” <sup>31</sup>

Other issues were proposed for a future agenda such as: focus on South-South cooperation by monitoring and mapping existing areas of cooperation in our governments within the framework of regional spaces such as UNASUR, the Andean Community, MERCOSUR; working on building spaces to share women's rights and feminist agendas from the South; promote spaces for articulation among diverse women's organizations that allow the construction of a regional agenda from a feminist political approach that strengthens social movements to reach consensus and that has advocacy space to visibilize our political role at the local, national, regional, and global levels.

### 3.3 The African Region – from FEMNET

This section presents action points in relation to the GPEDC taken from the FEMNET manual *“What You Need to Know About Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Information Pack and Engagement Guide for Women’s Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates on the Outcomes of the High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness in Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011).”*

#### **Demand to finalize and implement the Busan Partnership document with respect to human rights, including women’s rights.**

Women’s Organizations and Gender Equality Advocates should:

On a global level:

- Join and/or support the advocacy work by FEMNET and other regional and global networks towards the OECD Working Party Plenary to agree on gender sensitive and human rights-based indicators to monitor progress in the BPd implementation.
- Call for a democratic and just governance framework post-Busan (HF-4) with the UN at its heart with the full inclusion and recognition of civil society as a development actor in its own right.
- Demand a new governance structure that exercises accountability for all commitments made by all actor which signed to BPd.

On a regional level:

- Engage with the representatives of the African Union as members of the post-Busan (HLF-4) Interim group negotiating the monitoring and governance framework to guide BPd implementation.
- In view of the emphasis placed by the BPd on country-led implementation and the commitment to build, at the global level, on initiatives led by developing countries, advocate to ensure that African representatives engage in genuine consultations with women’s groups, feminist organizations and gender equality advocates while exercising their leadership over the process.

On a country level:

- Don’t let the dust settle on the BPd paragraph 20 addressing gender equality and women’s empowerment, nor on paragraph 22 recognizing a vital role of the civil society in a development process.
- Engage with your government and ask how they plan to deliver. In line with the “global light and country heavy” approach there is potential to replicate the New Global Partnership at country level by way of an open and transparent partnership of all actors, including women and feminist organizations.
- Exercise your role as a development actor in your own right and bring your voice and experience into the process of designing ‘country compacts’ and agreeing on the formulation of ‘developing countries’ results (a new country-focused approach to guide the cooperation between the development partners).
- Use the leverage of the New Global Partnership to advocate for a human rights based approach to development from all actors, particularly South-South cooperation providers and private sector operating in your country. (Musa and Staszewska 27)

### 3.4 The European Region – from WIDE+

#### **What are the priorities for advancing women's rights in the context of development cooperation moving forward?**

Priorities need to inform our strategies and these need to respond to the political and economic reality, which has changed profoundly since HLF-3 and HLF-2.

**Re-politicise:** As feminists in Europe, as feminists everywhere, we need to re-politicise and update our previous debates and strategies regarding the official development agenda in order to keep up with the changes. Our predominant focus is on watching aid for gender equality, for women's organizations, from the traditional modality perspective. We must go beyond that, analyze the recent trends and have our feminist responses to that, particularly when it comes to strengthened linkages with the private sector.

**Country level focus:** Busan (HLF-4) is not a binding instrument, yet as with PA and AAA, it will likely define the way of "doing development cooperation" in the next years. This is something we cannot ignore. Key now is to translate this agreement to the country level. One of the Busan mantras was that the BPd is supposed to be "global light and country heavy"; therefore the focus is supposed to be on country compacts and country results. Similarly, building blocks (see Chapter 4 of this primer) and the Gender Action Plan are initiatives pursued by specific countries. This is where women's groups can come in to bring our feminist analysis and demands to the discussion.

**Partnerships among women's organisations:** The linkages and real partnership among women's organisations in donor countries engaged in this agenda and women's organisations in the partner countries, and women's organisations on the ground are important. We need to work together to know what and how the implementation is going.

**Twin-track approach:** On the one hand prioritizing our feminist agenda over the official development agenda, keep on looking for and experimenting with the alternatives, challenging the power relations, debating the concept of development as such and struggling for rights. But on the other hand, be present at the official table and push for gender equality and women's rights, control the damage from official processes.

An analysis and evaluation<sup>32</sup> of the women's rights mobilization on the Road to Busan and beyond was conducted in mid-2012. As a result, additional conclusions and recommendations for international, regional, and local women's advocacy in development cooperation came to light that are mentioned in Chapter 5.

## 4. The Official post-Busan (HLF-4) Process and Next Steps

As highlighted previously, the aspects of governance and monitoring which are of major importance to women's rights groups and other CSOs did not get agreed to at HLF-4. However, the BPd sets out elements of a roadmap and commits governments and organizations endorsing it to:

- “Agree, by June 2012, on a selective and relevant set of indicators and targets through which [they] will monitor progress on a rolling basis, supporting international and regional accountability for the implementation of [their] commitments.” (para 35b).
- “Establish a new, inclusive and representative Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation to support and ensure accountability for the implementation of commitments at the political level”, and “agree, by June 2012, on light working arrangements for this Global Partnership, including its membership and opportunities for regular ministerial-level engagement that complements, and is undertaken in conjunction with, other fora.” (para 36a-b).
- To carry out these tasks, the BPd “call[s] on the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) to convene representatives of all countries and stakeholders endorsing this document with a view to reaching agreement on the working arrangements for the Global Partnership – and the indicators and channels through which global monitoring and accountability will be supported – in preparation for the phasing out of the WP-EFF and its associated structures in June 2012.” (para 36c).
- Furthermore, the BPd invites the OECD and the UNDP “to support the effective functioning of the Global Partnership, building on their collaboration to date and their respective mandates and areas of comparative advantage”(para 36d).

The mandate of the WP-EFF was extended until June 2012 to enable it to carry out the tasks assigned to it over this interim period. The membership of the WP-EFF has, through a written process, formed an interim group of negotiators, the Post-Busan Interim Group (PBIG), that led efforts to develop the post-Busan working arrangements and monitoring framework by June 2012. The role of the PBIG was to finalize proposals on the working arrangements of the Global Partnership and the framework through which progress in implementing the BPd would be monitored (OECD, 2012).

Civil society—including women's rights organizations— were represented in the PBIG<sup>33</sup> by the two BetterAid co-chairs Antonio Tujan, IBON and Mayra Moro-Coco, AWID. They ensured CSO participation in all three meetings of the PBIG that took place in Paris in February, April, and May 2012 and ensured that the demands and proposals from CSOs, collectively prepared in the BACG, were put on the official table.<sup>34</sup>

### **Update on the main outcomes of the final working party on Aid Effectiveness plenary<sup>35</sup>**

The final plenary meeting of the WP-EFF took place June 28-29, 2012 in Paris, France. This meeting marked the end of the WP-EFF and formation of the new framework, called the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). The working arrangements of the new GPEDC and main governance structures were agreed on to reflect a “global light-country heavy” approach, which sets the focus on in-country implementation rather than on global debate instances.

The GPEDC now has two representative levels: a Ministerial-level that will hold meetings every 18-24 months and a Steering Committee, currently composed of 18 members,<sup>36</sup> only one of which will represent civil society. In addition, the GPEDC will have three co-chairs but disappointingly they are all government representatives: one from a “recipient and provider of development co-operation”, another from a “recipient of development co-operation” and one from a “provider of development co-operation”.

Civil society organizations protested the move in a letter<sup>37</sup> sent to the WP-EFF members on June 27, 2012 demanding additional seats on the Steering Committee, a co-chair seat and gender balance, including a women's rights defender.

A set of 10 indicators for monitoring progress were approved--the bare minimum to safeguard the most critical commitments made in HLF-2 HLF-3 and HLF-4. Among the indicators there is a CSO enabling environment indicator (#2) and a gender equality and women's empowerment indicator (#8).

Indicator 8, on gender equality and women's empowerment, was developed by GENDERNET and UN Women and currently measures the percentage of countries with systems that track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. A group of women's rights organizations and gender equality advocates<sup>iv</sup> worked to ensure support for this indicator in the GPEDC, both amongst governments and within the BetterAid CSO platform. The indicator is now part of the monitoring framework and women's rights organizations are working to further strengthen and refine the indicator.

### **Building Blocks**

Other potential instruments for post-Busan (HLF-4) follow-up that drew attention before and during HLF-4 are the so-called Building Blocks (BBs). BBs are initiatives among interested stakeholders to unite behind pressing development issues and to make concentrated efforts to further progress in these areas of the BPD.<sup>38</sup>

Each BB is different and advancing (or not) at different speeds. In general, so far none of the BBs appear to have a fully operating working structure and all are suffering from one or more of the following: lack of resourcing, political will, institutional/secretariat support, multi-stakeholder buy-in.<sup>v</sup>

While there is no BB on gender equality as such, the Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development initiative can be seen in the same light as the BBs. CSOs have started working toward the realization of a multi-stakeholder initiative on a Human Rights Based Approach in the post-Busan (HLF-4) framework.

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iv Particularly the ones part of the BetterAid Coordinating Group (BACG): AWID, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), and Coordinadora de la Mujer/Bolivia.

v AWID thanks Matt Simonds/BetterAid Liaison Officer for sharing his insights on the current situation of the BBs.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### Moving Forward

The road to HLF-4 and the negotiations that followed were far from a smooth path for civil society advocates and particularly for women's rights organizations that aimed for much bolder shifts in the development cooperation framework. Concessions had to be made and struggles will continue for a truly inclusive framework in line with human rights standards and internationally agreed development goals, building on the principles of social, economic, and gender justice, and sustainability for all.

International development cooperation, of which aid is but a part, should provide the basis for the achievement of human rights, including women's rights, and must address the structural and systemic factors that perpetuate poverty and oppression, not simply the symptoms. For this to take place, a multiple accountability framework is critical in which the full range of actors in development cooperation (including especially the private sector and civil society, as well as governments) are accountable to existing UN human rights accountability mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review within the Human Rights Council.

As the UN is grounded in the normative framework of human rights, discussions on development cooperation led by UN-DCF should--both in process and content--be shaped by and advance international agreements on human rights, particularly the Declaration on the Right to Development, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the CEDAW.

Unlike the OECD-led Busan process, the UN-DCF allows all countries to be represented on equal footing regardless of their economic power, providing a space for dialogue that is open, inclusive, multi-stakeholder, and transparent. For these reasons it is still relevant to push for a new development cooperation system under the auspices of the UN, the only legitimate space for these discussions. A better coordination between the GPEDC and the UN-DCF is a good step forward in this direction.

#### **Recommendations for women's organizations**

On the process of mobilizing towards HLF-4 and strengthening common positions among civil society to effectively influence its outcome, women's rights organizations identified areas for improvement on the way forward. A detailed survey and evaluation report (Pittman, 2012) commissioned by a group of women's rights organizations part of the BACG in mid-2012 included a set of recommendations, the highlights include:

- Develop stronger links between the local, regional, and global levels, translating international agreements into locally relevant language and developing indicators for advocacy monitoring at the country level.
- Ensure there are strong regional platforms and voices from women's rights organizations and civil society to influence important blocs, such as the EU.
- Focus on building partnerships and developing outreach to women's rights organizations and movements at the national and local levels.
- Need to increase feminist power and influence in the official process and to influence substantive decision-making processes of concern post-Busan.
- Continue to advocate and lobby for the continuation of feminist leadership and representation within the new CSO architecture.
- Make the agenda sexier for feminist organizations and directly relevant to the political issues they care about —move beyond the technical language and official process.
- Explicitly link women's demands with economic justice discourses, pushing back against instrumentalist and economic growth debates.

In addition to the above recommendations, women's rights organizations will continue to push for the realization of those proposed demands that have not been achieved. In particular, that the international development cooperation framework be built upon human rights commitments, and that women's rights are at the center of development efforts.

## **Creating an enabling environment for civil society. Recommendations on the way forward**

Development cooperation can play a key role in creating and ensuring there is an enabling environment for civil society organizations, particularly women's rights organizations, to conduct their work. Responding to a DAC paper on CSO partnerships, BA member Brian Tomlinson proposes a few recommendations:

- Focus on the objective of empowering citizens and take up democratic ownership as a pillar of effective development.
- Recognize explicitly that CSOs are development actors in their own right, in line with commitments made in Accra and Busan and strive to have funding modalities with flexibility tailored to the diversity of CSOs.
- Strategic objectives rather than donor funding mechanisms should drive and determine the choice of partners.
- Undertaking regular, inclusive and transparent policy dialogue with CSOs is an essential dimension of effective donor CSO partnerships.
- Balanced partner conditions in ways that strengthen CSO independence.
- Accountability to longterm development results making transparency the foundation for accountability.

These recommendations could be useful for women's rights organizations and other CSOs to demand their governments in order to guarantee an enabling environment, independence, and effective impact of their work at the national and local levels (Tomlinson, 2012).

### **Final reflections**

International development cooperation is at a turning point after HLF-4 in terms of progress towards women's rights. There was greater opening of official spaces of participation for CSOs and women's rights organizations in the official HLF-4. Overall, feminist inclusion and access to power and decision-making was at unprecedented levels in comparison to previous years and the gender-blind PD.

But hard work remains. Although gender equality was included in the BPd, there was no specific mention of women's rights commitments. The demand for governments and donors to commit to a human rights based approach to development, and to create a just, accountable multi-stakeholder architecture for development cooperation was not achieved. Women's rights organizations along with other civil society actors learnt that having a seat at the table did not guarantee negotiating power to influence the agenda and that participation cannot be taken for granted. Among the issues that remain unaddressed is an in-depth debate on the mainstream development model that looks into the root causes of poverty, inequality, including gender inequality, and a global governance system in crisis.

Women's rights organizations have already committed to continue the struggle for a world where aid is no longer necessary, in the knowledge that women's empowerment and full and equal participation in all spheres are fundamental for the achievement of social and economic justice, substantive democracy and peace for all.

## Further Reading

1. For further information on the PD process from a gender equality and women's rights perspective see AWID's primer series on Aid Effectiveness, available here: <http://awid.org/Library/Aid-Effectiveness>.
2. For more information on the High Level Forum processes see the OECD page: *The High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness: A history*: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/aideffectiveness/thehighlevelforaonaideffectivenessahistory.htm>
3. For further analysis on the five principles for aid effectiveness see Alemany C., Craviotto N. et al. *Implementing the Paris Declaration: Implications for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality*: <http://www.awid.org/Our-Initiatives/Influencing-Development-Actors-and-Practices-for-Women-s-Rights/Resources-on-Aid-Effectiveness/Implementing-the-Paris-Declaration-Implications-for-the-Promotion-of-Women-s-Rights-and-Gender-Equality>
4. For more information on aid allocation and women's rights see *2009-2010 Fundher Research Update: Trends in Bilateral and Multilateral Funding*, page 17: <http://awid.org/Library/Brief-1-FundHer-Research-Update-Brief-Series>
5. For more information on the HLF-3 consultations see *Primer 7: Gender Equality and Aid Effectiveness: Regional perspectives in the preparation process towards Accra*: <http://www.awid.org/content/download/51693/575199/file/Primer7.pdf>
6. For an analysis of HLF-3 see *Primer 8: The Accra Agenda for Action: A brief review from a women's rights perspective* <http://www.awid.org/content/download/103005/1189184/file/Primer8.pdf>
7. For further analysis on aid effectiveness see *Development Cooperation Beyond the Aid Effectiveness Paradigm: A Women's Rights Perspective*: <http://www.awid.org/Library/Development-Cooperation-Beyond-the-Aid-Effectiveness-Paradigm-A-women-s-rights-perspective>
8. The July 2011 and the updated October 2011 versions of the *Women's Key Demands* are available in full at: <http://www.awid.org/Library/Key-Demands-from-Women-s-Rights-Organizations-and-Gender-Equality-Advocates-To-the-Fourth-High-Level-Forum-on-Aid-Effectiveness-Busan-Korea-2011-and-the-Development-Cooperation-Forum-2012>
9. For more information read the full document released April 2011: *CSOs on the Road to Busan: Key messages and proposals*: <http://betteraid.org/en/betteraid-policy/betteraid-publications/policy-papers/447-cso-asks-on-the-road-to-busan.html>
10. Read the full document *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation document* (BPd) available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/aideffectiveness/fourthhighlevelforumonaideffectiveness.htm> - agreement
11. For more information on the HLF-4 process see *Primer 10 : On the Road to Busan: What is at stake for gender equality and women's rights?*: <http://awid.org/Library/Primer-10-On-the-Road-to-Busan-What-is-at-stake-for-gender-equality-and-women-s-rights> and [www.betteraid.org](http://www.betteraid.org)
12. See the full list of sherpas in the OECD document: *Meeting of the group of HLF-4 outcome document sherpas. Draft summary record of the first meeting*, pages 15-17 : [http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/dcd\\_dac\\_eff\\_m\\_2011\\_4\\_prov\\_-\\_draft\\_summary\\_of\\_meeting\\_of\\_hlf-4\\_sherpas\\_04nov11.pdf](http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/dcd_dac_eff_m_2011_4_prov_-_draft_summary_of_meeting_of_hlf-4_sherpas_04nov11.pdf)
13. For more information see the CSO HLF-4 meeting report (March 2011) at : <http://betteraid.org/en/news/events/442-civil-society-organizations-strategy-meeting-to-hlf4.html>
14. For more details on the CSO HLF-4 selection process including oversight group, methodology, and accountability of the CSO participants see: [http://betteraid.org/en/member-downloads/doc\\_download/241-busanselectionprocess.html](http://betteraid.org/en/member-downloads/doc_download/241-busanselectionprocess.html)
15. For more information read the full CSO statement to HLF-4 at: <http://www.betteraid.org/en/betteraid-policy/betteraid-publications/statements/524-civil-society-statement-to-the-fourth-high-level-forum-on-aid-effectiveness.html>
16. For more information see the BetterAid final statement *Global Civil Society Forum ends as CSOs look forward to new beginning at HLF4* available at: <http://betteraid.org/en/fronendblog.html?view=entry&category=cat1&id=33%3Aglobal-civil-society-forum-ends-as-csos-look-forward-to-new-beginning-at-hlf4>
17. For more information about the BACG and other key official and civil society actors see Primer 9 *The Road to Korea 2011: Key official and civil society actors*: [http://www.awid.org/Media/Files/IDeA\\_Primer9](http://www.awid.org/Media/Files/IDeA_Primer9)
18. For more information on the women's international consultations on the road to Busan see *Women's Organizing: Key Demands on Development Cooperation Towards Busan HLF-4 and Beyond* : <http://www.awid.org/Library/Women-s-Organizing-Key-Demands-on-Development-Cooperation-towards-Busan-HLF-4-and-Beyond>
19. For more information read the full document released April 2011: *CSOs on the Road to Busan: Key messages and proposals*: <http://betteraid.org/en/betteraid-policy/betteraid-publications/policy-papers/447-cso-asks-on-the-road-to-busan.html>.

20. Read the full Busan Global Women's Forum political statement available at: [http://awid.org/content/download/130089/1460438/file/Global Women's Forum Political Statement\\_final.pdf](http://awid.org/content/download/130089/1460438/file/Global%20Women's%20Forum%20Political%20Statement_final.pdf)
21. The July 2011 and the updated October 2011 versions of the Women's Key Demands are available in full at: <http://www.awid.org/Library/Key-Demands-from-Women-s-Rights-Organizations-and-Gender-Equality-Advocates-To-the-Fourth-High-Level-Forum-on-Aid-Effectiveness-Busan-Korea-2011-and-the-Development-Cooperation-Forum-2012>
22. For more information read the various BetterAid submissions into the HLF-4 drafting process of the BPD available at: <http://betteraid.org>
23. For more information read the complete *CSO Analysis of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation* available at: [http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/doc\\_download/720-cso-analysis-of-busan-partnership-for-effective-development-cooperation-english.html](http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/doc_download/720-cso-analysis-of-busan-partnership-for-effective-development-cooperation-english.html)
24. For more information read the various BetterAid submissions into the HLF-4 drafting process of the BPD available at: <http://betteraid.org>
25. For more information on the New Deal see: [http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3746,en\\_21571361\\_43407692\\_49151766\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html#endorse](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3746,en_21571361_43407692_49151766_1_1_1_1,00.html#endorse)
26. See the full Busan Global Women's Forum political statement at: <http://awid.org/Library/Busan-Global-Women-s-Forum-Political-Statement>
27. For more information read the complete CSO Analysis of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation available at: [http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/doc\\_download/720-csoanalysis-of-busan-partnership-for-effective-development-cooperation-english.html](http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/doc_download/720-csoanalysis-of-busan-partnership-for-effective-development-cooperation-english.html)
28. For more information read the *Women's Organizations Position Paper on the The Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development* available at: <http://awid.org/Library/Position-on-the-proposed-Busan-Joint-Action-Plan-on-Gender-Equality-and-Development>
29. See the *Busan Joint Action Plan for Gender Equality and Development* document in full available at: <http://www.oecd.org/social/genderequalityanddevelopment/49503142.pdf>
30. For more information on the 12<sup>th</sup> AWID International Forum on Women's Rights and Development see: <http://www.forum.awid.org/forum12/>
31. Read the original statement in Spanish that includes the list of signatories: <http://www.coordinadoradelamujer.org.bo/observatorio/index.php/destacado/mostrar/id/266/tem/2/boton/2/sub/1>
32. The evaluation report *Learning Assessment for the Mobilisation of Women's Rights Organizations and Networks on the Road to Busan and Beyond* project was conducted by Alexandra Pittman, October 2012.
33. The composition of the PBIG is available in Annex A of the OECD paper: <http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DCD/DAC/EFF%282012%291&docLanguage=En>
34. The submissions by BetterAid on governance and monitoring as well as other CSO and official documents on the three PBIG meetings are available at: [http://betteraid.org/en/resources/post-busan-global-cso-meeting/cat\\_view/253-post-busan/281-post-busan-interim-group-pbig.html](http://betteraid.org/en/resources/post-busan-global-cso-meeting/cat_view/253-post-busan/281-post-busan-interim-group-pbig.html)
35. For more information read the AWID Friday File *A New Development Cooperation Framework That Works For Whom?* available at : <http://www.awid.org/Library/A-New-Development-Cooperation-Framework-that-works-for-whom>
36. More information on the GPEDC Steering Committee is available at: <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhl4/en/component/content/article/748.html>
37. Read the complete civil society organizations letter available at: [http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/letter\\_on\\_cso\\_representaiton\\_in\\_the\\_gp.pdf](http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/letter_on_cso_representaiton_in_the_gp.pdf)
38. More information on post-Busan (HLF-4) Building Blocks is available at: <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhl4/en/topics/building-blocks.html> and in BetterAid: [http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/cat\\_view/253-post-busan/275-post-busan-building-blocks.html](http://www.betteraid.org/en/resources/cat_view/253-post-busan/275-post-busan-building-blocks.html)

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# WHY SHOULD WOMEN'S RIGHTS GROUPS CARE ABOUT THE AID EFFECTIVENESS AGENDA? WHAT IS AT STAKE FOR WOMEN AND GENDER JUSTICE?

**GOAL: To promote a new framework for development cooperation from a women's rights perspective** that includes: i) Human Rights, including environmental, economic, social, and cultural rights, with an integrated gender perspective; ii) A truly democratic, inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach ensuring participation of women's rights organisations; iii) systematic coherence among global policies, including fulfillment of women's rights and a just global governance framework; and iv) the goal to eradicate the root causes of poverty and structural inequalities.

## **The Paris Declaration is gender blind!**

Respect, protection and fulfillment of women's rights and gender equality must be ensured in all areas and spheres. Thus, gender sensitive and gender specific indicators measuring progress on development effectiveness outcomes must be integrated into development cooperation processes.

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

The new aid architecture was designed to align aid to nationally determined development priorities - this is problematic in some national contexts where gender-sensitive strategies are neither practiced nor promoted. Alignment with a country's priorities, while desirable in theory, can negatively impact the lives of women and hinder the achievement of key development commitments when implemented in political, cultural contexts characterised by gender inequality and human rights violations, for example. In sum, developing countries' priorities and development plans must be aligned with international and regional agreements on human rights and gender equality (including the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW), with no policy conditionalities and no tied aid. The same applies to donors policies and practices.

## **Government actions alone will not reduce poverty!**

The Aid Effectiveness agenda focuses particularly on institutional reforms in government for a more effective and efficient aid system, instead of the social, cultural, economic and political conditions for effective and sustainable development and for democratizing the international development cooperation processes. We call for a broader vision of development cooperation promoting development effectiveness for all.

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

Civil society and women's rights organisations are key development actors and are essential for creating a climate of social, political, and economic change and reducing poverty, social inequality, and gender inequality. Furthermore, predictable, long-term and diversified funding for women's organisations promoting gender equality and women's rights should be ensured.

## **Why should international development priorities be agreed at the OECD instead of at a multilateral/multistakeholders' forum such as the UN!**

Nowadays, civil society groups and several development actors understand development effectiveness (not aid effectiveness) as a more comprehensive framework for development cooperation. As women's rights activists we should aim for a shift in the development cooperation system and the aid effectiveness paradigm towards an inclusive, sustainable, and just paradigm. The ultimate goal is to contribute to social justice and engage substantively in building participatory democracies at the local, national, regional, and global levels, towards an equal and inclusive global governance system.



Association For Women's Rights In Development

## ABOUT THIS PRIMER

Primer 11: A feminist perspective on the Busan 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and its outcomes  
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS SERIES

This primer provides a critical assessment of the gains and setbacks for women's rights as a result of the new Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation established after the HLF-4. What does it mean for the advancement of women's rights?